



BOATERS | Action Plan

Letting invasive species aboard your boat helps them spread in our lakes, rivers and streams and costs us millions to repair their damage. Learn what you can do to help stop the spread.

Follow the clean, drain, dry method

Clean your boat and gear

Before transporting your boat overland, clean any mud, vegetation, algae, mussels or any other animals from your boat, motor, trailer, vehicle or equipment. Zebra and quagga mussels are happy to hang onto your hull, while aquatic plants like Eurasian water-milfoil hide on your motor, anchor and trailer.

Drain all water by opening or removing your drain plugs

Drain all water by pulling the plug on your transom, bilge, livewell (unless you are lawfully transporting live fish), or any other water containing devices at the boat launch and before transporting your boat overland. Never take an aquatic invasive species from one body of water to another.

Dry or disinfect

Some aquatic invasive species can survive up to two weeks out of water and not every invader attached to your boat can be seen with the naked eye. To remove invaders you can't see before travelling to a new body of water, it is recommended you either:

- dry your boat in sunlight
- clean your boat from top to bottom with hot water or pressurized water

Avoid aquatic plants

Avoid driving your boat through aquatic plants. Propellers can break them loose and spread invasive species.

Know the rules

As of January 1st, 2022, Ontario has regulated watercraft (boats, canoes, kayaks) as a carrier of invasive species under the Invasive Species Act.

Boaters are now required to take the following steps before transporting a boat or boat equipment overland:

- remove or open drain plugs to allow water to drain from the boat or boat equipment
- take reasonable precautions to remove all aquatic plants (weeds), animals and algae from any boat, boat equipment, vehicle or trailer

Before reaching a launch site or placing a watercraft in any body of water in Ontario, boaters are required to ensure their boat, boating equipment, vehicles or trailers are free of all:

- aquatic plants
- animals
- algae

It is illegal to place a boat, boating equipment or any vehicle or trailer into any body of water if there are any aquatic plants, animals or algae attached to it.

These rules recognize that it may not be possible to fully remove all aquatic plants, animals or algae (for example, hidden zebra mussels or small plant fragments in hard to reach locations) when removing the watercraft from the water at the launch site. Boaters can do a more thorough cleaning of their boat, utilizing special equipment, such as pressure washers at a more suitable location, to ensure their boat is completely free of aquatic plants, animals and algae.

Note: the requirement to remove drain plugs does not apply to:

- drinking water systems, marine sanitary systems or closed engine cooling systems
- a livewell, if the person transporting the livewell overland is transporting live fish in the livewell pursuant to a licence to transport live fish issued under the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997*

How to decontaminate your boat and boat equipment

Read our [guidance for watercraft users \(PDF\)](#) for more information about cleaning methods for boats and boat equipment.

REPORT INVADERS

Call the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters' Invading Species Hotline at **Toll-free: 1-800-563-7711** to report an invasive species sighting or download the [EDDMapS Ontario app](#) to report an invader on the spot.

For more information on invasive species and a list of our partners, visit ontario.ca/invasionON