



For many Labor Day weekend is the time to close up the cabin. This fall, as lake shore owners pull docks and boat lifts, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is encouraging them to look for aquatic invasive species when removing their docks, lifts, and all types of watercraft.

When removing boats, docks, and lifts, lake owners should perform careful inspections to ensure that there are no aquatic invasive species (AIS) such as zebra mussels, Eurasian watermilfoil, or New Zealand mudsnails attached. Individuals should visit the [DNR website for help in identifying plants or animals that you suspect are aquatic invasive species](#).

Posts, wheels, and underwater support bars of docks and lifts, as well as any portions of watercraft that may have been submerged in water for an extended period need to be inspected. Be careful during your inspections, since in newly infested waters, zebra mussels may not be abundant and you might notice only a few mussels on your equipment. This early detection of zebra mussels and other AIS is crucial in protecting your property, as well as other Minnesota lakes.

If you find something you suspect is a zebra mussel, faucet snail, or other aquatic invasive species, take a photo, note its exact location, leave the specimen in place, and contact a Minnesota DNR AIS Specialist. If you need to remove the specimen, it is important to place the item in a Ziploc bag with alcohol for preservation, which will enable it to be properly inspected by DNR.

It is legal to remove equipment from infested waters and place it on the adjacent shoreline property without a permit. However, if you want to transport a dock or lift from infested waters to another location for storage or repair, you must complete an "Authorization form to transport equipment." The form is easy to complete and can be found on the DNR website (http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/natural_resources/invasives/ais-auth-form-lift.pdf).

It is illegal to transport any watercraft with an aquatic invasive species attached away from a water access or other shoreland property, even if you intend to put it in storage for the winter without first completing an “Authorization form to transport watercraft.” The form is easy to complete and can be found on the DNR website

(http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/natural_resources/invasives/ais-auth-form-boats.pdf).

If you hire a business to remove your boat, dock, or lift make sure they have completed AIS training and are on the DNR's “List of Permitted Lake Service Providers,” located on the DNR website (https://webapps8.dnr.state.mn.us/aquatic_invasive_species_training/lake_service_provider_permits/public_website_list).

By following these simple steps, you can help limit the spread of aquatic invasive species.

Have a great Labor Day Weekend, and please keep in touch,



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