

**Leadership:** Like all lake users, fishing tournaments must follow state law, but also can serve the State as role models. At a minimum, contests should strictly adhere to state laws regarding transport of aquatic invasive species (AIS) and demonstrate good practices that minimize the potential spread of AIS. Doing so not only is good for our lakes and streams, but shows other recreational users that fishing tournaments care about the environment. Also, becoming familiar with AIS and the means to prevent their spread will enable you to become a leader in this important natural resource issue.

**Laws and Required Actions:** It is against the law for anyone to move AIS on roads or into public waters. Specifically, Minnesota statute 84D prohibits the transportation of aquatic vegetation or prohibited invasive species on any public road. This statute prohibits placing any watercraft or trailer into state waters that have any aquatic vegetation, zebra mussels or any prohibited species attached. Additionally, a person leaving waters of the state must drain boating-related equipment holding water and live wells and bilges by removing the drain plug before transporting the watercraft and associated equipment on public roads. Drain plugs, bailers, valves, or other devices used to control the draining of water from ballast tanks, bilges, and live wells must be removed or opened while transporting watercraft on a public road. Water from portable bait containers must also be drained (a person may not dispose of bait in waters of the state). Marine sanitary systems (except at infested waters) are excluded from this requirement. Links to invasive species laws (hold down your control key and then click on link with mouse):

Statute: <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=84D>

Rules: <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/?id=6216>

Link to DNR Invasive species web page <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/invasives/index.html>

**Recommended Actions:** Draining boat livewells, bilges, bait containers, etc. should be a routine all boaters become accustomed to. Washing boats exteriors and interior areas and or flushing interior pumps and water lines is recommended. Fishing equipment also should be inspected, paying particular attention for spiny waterfleas, which commonly collect on fishing lines, poles, anchor ropes, etc.

### Summary of the Basics:

The objective of prevention actions is to **remove** plants, zebra mussels, spiny waterfleas, sediment, and water from the boats and equipment.

A) For removal of aquatic vegetation, hand removal and high pressure washing are equally effective. Low pressure washing is less effective.

B) For removal of small organisms such as attached zebra mussels, high pressure washing is more effective than low pressure washing or hand removal.

- For tournament series, where multiple contests are scheduled over a season, avoid scheduling infested-water contests before contests on non-infested waters. Instead, schedule contests on the non-infested waters first and schedule infested waters to be the last contest(s) in the series.
- Similarly, for contests involving multiple waters, schedule the non-infested waters before moving to the infested waters.

### **Good Practices**

- When registering participants, organizers should highlight the AIS status of contest waters and the rules pertaining to this.
- Review AIS fines and legal consequences
- Organizers should remind participants that transporting water in livewells is illegal.
- Contest organizers could provide participants a checklist to use to inspect their boats and trailers before entering contest waters.
- Enlist area volunteers/youth groups/lakeshore associations to assist.
- Provide signage/banner regarding Zero AIS Tolerance at Weigh-in site or Contest Headquarters.  
[http://www.protectyourwaters.net/resources/Std\\_2c.jpg](http://www.protectyourwaters.net/resources/Std_2c.jpg)
- Incorporate Prevent Aquatic Hitchhikers Logo and link in all Contest promotional brochures or posters.
- Obtain/purchase Tournament Towels with your Contest/tournament logo and the Prevent Aquatic Hitchhikers Logo and use as prizes or gifts
- Provide Tackle Box stickers to Contestants:  
[http://www.protectyourwaters.net/resources/07\\_Tackle\\_Box\\_w\\_o.eps.pdf](http://www.protectyourwaters.net/resources/07_Tackle_Box_w_o.eps.pdf)
- Provide contestants with a check-list, that they sign and turn in.
- Conduct courtesy boat inspections.
- Review common methods of transportation.
- Provide contestants with a practical AIS prevention and containment information sheet.
- Reward or recognize observed positive AIS behavior with prize or recognition at weigh-in.
- Provide fresh water to contestants wishing to save bait. Exchanging lake water with fresh water will allow contestants to transport bait for use on their next fishing trip – this step is mandatory on all waters, not just infested waters.

### **Better Practices**

- Sponsors will inspect participant boats and trailers to ensure participants have followed contest requirements and state laws on AIS.
- Sponsors will arrange for participants to have their boats washed, either at a commercial facility or provide a portable washing station.

### **Best Practices**

- In contests held on infested waters, sponsors will supply portable washing equipment and require participants to clean their boats before transporting boats and trailers away from contest waters. *High pressure* hosing of exteriors and hosing of interior water lines and pumps has been shown to be more effective than low pressure in removing small organisms (see next section for details).
- Organizers will encourage participants to have their boats washed both before entering contests waters and following completion of the contest.
- Assign a 'landing monitor' to check boats coming in and out.
- Create an AIS Contest Rule that if not adhered to – could result in DQ and/or forfeiture of winnings (including practice days if applicable)
- Provide power-washing equipment on-site or locations of wash stations such as gas station, etc.
- Set-up boat inspection area that ensures that water and plant materials are properly disposed of.

### **Power Washing Equipment**

- Currently there is a private vendor who rents portable power boat washing equipment. Contact info: <http://www.americanpressureinc.com/index.html> or 763-521-4442
- Occasionally, organizers can coordinate with DNR staff. Contact info: local staff with the Aquatic Invasive Species Program - Division of Ecological and Water Resources, MNDNR – click on link, below: <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/contacts.html>