

# NEWS

Oregon State Marine Board  
**Boat Oregon**



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## **Boaters Reminded to “CLEAN, DRAIN and DRY” Boats and Equipment to Protect Oregon’s Waterways**

The Marine Board, Oregon Invasive Species Council and Department of Fish and Wildlife are reminding boaters to “[CLEAN, DRAIN and DRY](#)” their boats and equipment to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species. This effort, in conjunction with border inspection stations will help protect the fragile balance of Oregon’s aquatic ecosystems.

“Clean, drain and dry your boat after every outing,” said Glenn Dolphin, the Marine Board’s Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Program Coordinator and 2018 Chair of the Oregon Invasive Species Council. “Recreational boaters, whether propelled by paddle, oar or motor, can help protect our waterways by draining all water within any interior compartments and letting everything thoroughly dry. If every boater embraces this practice, it will go a long way in preventing the spread of invaders that are already in Oregon.”

Aquatic invasive species (AIS) are non-native animals, plants, microorganisms and pathogens that out-compete or prey on Oregon’s native fish and other wildlife. They can harm the environment, hinder salmon recovery efforts, negatively impact human health and hurt local business economies. They come to Oregon from other states and provinces on trailers, boat hulls, motors, wading boots, fishing equipment and via many other vectors. Once they become established in one lake or river, they can easily spread to more waterways in Oregon.

In addition to boaters taking personal responsibility to ensure their boats are clean, six inspection stations are operating along the Oregon borders targeting out-of-state boats. Inspection stations are open in Ashland, Ontario, Brookings, Klamath Falls, Umatilla, and Burns. Ashland and Ontario operate year-round, while the others are seasonal.

All boats being transported are required to stop if an inspection station is open. This includes mounted kayaks, canoes, inflatable boats, stand up paddle boards, catarafts, and trailered boats (including commercially transported boats). Inspection teams are made up of specially trained personnel from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife who look inside and outside of boats for invasive species. Inspections take approximately 10 minutes. If a boat is contaminated, the inspection team will decontaminate the boat on-site. Decontamination can take anywhere from 20 minutes to one hour. There is no cost to the boater for decontamination. “It’s extremely important that people stop at these stations to get their boats inspected,” Dolphin said.

“We need to make sure plants and mussels are kept out of the state. Right now, on average between 20-30% of the people transporting boats don’t stop for inspections and that’s too much of a risk. All it takes is one contaminated boat. The cost of an AIS infestation is enormous. We’ve already experienced our worst fears with Diamond Lake. All of us need to take action to protect our waterways,” Dolphin added.

The inspection stations, equipment and personnel are paid for through funds generated from the sale of AIS permits, which are required on all motorboats and non-motorized boats over 10 feet when boating on Oregon’s waterways. Oregon registered motorboats pay the AIS fee as part of their boat registration, so no additional AIS permit is required. Out-of-state registered motorboats and sailboats must purchase a \$20 annual permit. Non-motorized boats have the option of purchasing a \$5 annual or \$10 two-year permit. The Marine Board’s [Aquatic Invasive Species FAQ page](#) lists all of the purchasing options.



**To do your part to help protect Oregon’s waterways, follow these steps:**

**Clean:** When leaving the water, clean all equipment that touched the water by removing all visible plants, algae, animals and mud. Equipment includes watercraft hulls, trailers, shoes, waders, life jackets, engines and other gear.

**Drain:** Drain any accumulated water from boats or gear, including the bilge and live wells and transom wells, before leaving a water access point. Pull the boat’s bilge plug and allow water to drain.

**Dry:** Once home, fully dry all gear before using it in a different waterbody.

In 2017, ODFW technicians inspected 21,035 boats and intercepted 17 with quagga or zebra mussels and 283 with other types of aquatic invasive species such as Eurasian milfoil and brown mussels.

“There is so much at stake,” Dolphin added. “If quagga or zebra mussels get into our waterways they will have a huge impact on dams, irrigation systems, drinking water supplies and our fisheries.”

Researchers estimate that invasive zebra and quagga mussels alone could cost the power industry more than \$3 billion, and industries, businesses and communities more than \$5 billion nationwide over 6 years.

“The Pacific Northwest states (OR, WA, ID, WY, MT) are the last region of the country that is not yet invaded by mussels,” said Dolphin. Tribes, the federal government, states and nonprofit organizations have come together to address aquatic invasive species contamination through research, inspection and decontamination efforts and rapid response exercises. “We’ve got a great communication network but we have to remain vigilant. Inspection stations aren’t open 24/7 so we need everyone’s help.” Learn to recognize aquatic invaders and report any you find to the toll-free Oregon Invasive Species Hotline: 1-866-INVADER.

The Oregon Invasive Species Council is the main coordinating organization for all taxa of invasive species (terrestrial and aquatic) and includes a wide variety of stakeholders, along with state and federal agencies tasked with managing invasive species. Their next quarterly meeting will be held in Charleston and Bandon on June 19 and 20.

During 2016, the Council spent a considerable amount of time developing a state-wide strategic and action plan that covers a 10 year time-frame for implementing important management activities. However, the necessary fiscal resources are not available at this time to fully implement the plan. The Council has submitted a funding proposal for the 2019 legislative session with the hopes that adequate resources can be allocated to the Council to be able to meet their mission of working to protect Oregon against all taxa of invasive species. More information can be found at <https://www.oregoninvasivespeciescouncil.org/>.

You can also learn which waterbodies already have aquatic invasive species, view the 2017 Annual AIS Program Report, and the Least Wanted list of invaders at <https://www.oregon.gov/osmb/boater-info/Pages/Aquatic-Invasive-Species-Program.aspx>.

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Pictured: An outrigger canoe with quagga mussels found during an inspection in 2017 from a contaminated state.