



# Aquatic Invasive Species are a Threat to BC

**BEST PRACTICES FOR MARINAS, MARINE REPAIR SHOPS, BOAT BROKERS, BOAT HAULERS & BOATERS**

Aquatic invasive species (AIS) are non-native plants, fish, and mollusks that negatively impact the environment, economy and society. AIS are known to easily and rapidly establish and reproduce, causing widespread impacts and costing millions of dollars per year in control efforts.

Once an AIS becomes established, it is very difficult and sometimes impossible to get rid of. Prevention and early detection are critical! Humans are a primary pathway for the introduction of invasive species — often through recreational activities such as boating, fishing and gardening. The boating industry is an essential partner in preventing the spread of AIS and protecting B.C.'s unique freshwater ecosystems.

## Zebra and quagga mussels — we don't want them here!

Zebra and quagga mussels can cause irreparable damage to our lakes in British Columbia. They first arrived in North America in the ballast water of ships in the Great Lakes, and have spread extensively by hitching a ride on boats and equipment. The mussels are very small (fingernail-sized) and can hide in the nooks and crannies of boats. Their larvae are microscopic, and can be easily transported in standing water. Adult mussels can survive out of water for up to 30 days when attached to boats or other equipment. These mussels cause significant economic and environmental damage due to their ability to spread rapidly, clogging underwater infrastructure such as hydroelectric intakes and irrigation pipes. They rapidly change freshwater ecosystems by outcompeting native species and impacting water quality as well as shorelines and property values. Under Provincial regulations, Zebra and Quagga mussels (dead or alive) are Prohibited Species and are illegal to possess, breed, transport or release. These mussels have not yet been detected in B.C. or in neighbouring provinces and states — let's work together to make sure they are kept out!



*Zebra (left) & quagga mussel (right)*



*Invasive mussels attach to hard surfaces and are easily transportable by boats and equipment.*



*The BC Mussel Defence Program has watercraft inspection stations at major entry points along B.C.'s borders during the boating season. It is mandatory that anyone transporting watercraft of ANY type must stop for inspection.*

## REPORT SIGHTINGS

Report any zebra or quagga mussel sightings to the RAPP hotline. If other AIS are found, report immediately using the BC Report-a-Species APP.

**RAAP HOTLINE: 1-877-952-7277**  
**WWW.GOV.BC.CA/INVASIVE-SPECIES**

## CHECK THESE COMMON HIDING SPOTS FOR INVASIVE SPECIES »



## CHECKLIST OF BEST PRACTICES FOR BOATING INDUSTRY »

Do your part to help protect BC's precious aquatic ecosystems, recreation opportunities and boating industry!

Boating industry staff, volunteers and clients should incorporate best practices to prevent and control aquatic invasive species into all plans and operations where boats and/or equipment will be moved from one body of water to another.



*Invasive mussels have NOT yet been detected in several provinces and states (shown in green).*

- ☐ Take extra care to Clean, Drain, Dry (see diagram above)
- ☐ Remember to pull the plug!
- ☐ Wash the exterior and interior of the boat
- ☐ Always ask if arriving boats have been inspected by a BC Provincial Mussel Inspection Team
- ☐ New boats also need inspecting! Many are tested in a lake or pond
- ☐ If a boat has not gone through provincial inspection, determine if it has come from an area where zebra and quagga mussels are present (see map below)
- ☐ If a boat is coming from a high risk region, call the **BC provincial government RAPP hotline: 1-877-952-7277. Note: there is no charge for decontamination**
- ☐ If you are bringing a boat to B.C. from an infested region, fill out the *Out of Province Watercraft Form* and follow instructions [www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/invasive-mussels](http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/invasive-mussels)



**CLEAN** all plant parts, animals and mud from boat, trailer, and equipment (e.g. boots, waders, fishing gear).



**DRAIN** onto land all items that can hold water (e.g. buckets, wells, bilge, and ballast).



**DRY** all items completely before launching into another body of water.



## FIND OUT MORE »

- » Stop the Spread of Invasive Mussels [www.gov.bc.ca/invasivemussels](http://www.gov.bc.ca/invasivemussels)
- » Report-a-Species APP [www.gov.bc.ca/invasive-species](http://www.gov.bc.ca/invasive-species)
- » Clean Drain Dry Program [www.bcinvasives.ca/commitments/clean-drain-dry](http://www.bcinvasives.ca/commitments/clean-drain-dry)
- » Any suspected transport, possession or release of invasive mussels should be reported immediately to the Conservation Officer Services **RAPP HOTLINE 1-877-952-7277**