

Aquatic invasive species harm our natural areas, outdoor traditions, and recreational opportunities like boating, sport fishing, birdwatching and swimming. They can damage recreational equipment, cost millions of dollars to control and are often impossible to eradicate.

Join the 95% of Illinois boaters and anglers fighting the spread of aquatic invaders by following these laws and recommendations while caring for your equipment.

## How to fight the spread of aquatic invaders



*What to do after boating and angling*



*Targeted plants, animals and microbes*



*How to comply with Illinois invasive species laws*



*Additional recommended actions*

Regulations, Offences and Maximum Penalties:

\*625 ILCS 45/5-23 Boater Regulations

\*\*Ill. Admin. Code tit. 17 § 875.50 VHS

\*\*\*515 ILCS 5/10-100 Aquatic Life Release

Violating these laws could result in misdemeanor charges with penalties of up to 1 year in jail and \$2,500 per offense.

Visit **TRANSPORTZERO.ORG** for more information on aquatic invaders and iFishIllinois.gov for up-to-date fishing, boating and prohibited species regulations.

To report aquatic invader sightings in Illinois, e-mail:

[dnr.ans@illinois.gov](mailto:dnr.ans@illinois.gov)

Produced by Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant & Illinois Natural History Survey, Prairie Research Institute with funding from Illinois Department of Natural Resources. ©2021 The Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois.

IISG21-HCE-BRC-043



**FIGHT THE SPREAD OF  
AQUATIC INVADERS**

**Illinois Boaters and Anglers  
DO YOUR PART!**

**Observe these laws and  
recommendations**

## REMOVE

plants, animals and mud from all equipment



Invasive mussels and aquatic plants like hydrilla and Eurasian watermilfoil



Do not leave a water access area, get on a highway or enter a new Illinois waterbody with aquatic plants and animals on the exterior of watercraft or boat trailers. \*



Remove mud, which can conceal aquatic animals, plant fragments and seeds.



## DRAIN

all water from your boat and gear



Many invasive species and pathogens like viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS), a fish disease that harms sport fish like bluegill, muskie, largemouth bass and yellow perch



Do not leave a water access area without emptying any compartment capable of holding natural waters, such as a bait bucket, livewell, bilge, etc. \*\*



## DRY

everything thoroughly with a towel



Organisms that can survive attached to equipment like zebra mussel larvae, or in small amounts of water like spiny water fleas, a plankton-sized crustacean



Towel dry gear to remove aquatic invaders that can attach to watercraft and fishing equipment.  
Alternatively, air dry watercraft and other equipment for five days before using them in a new waterbody.



## DISPOSE

of all unused bait properly

Many invasive species like round gobies, earthworms and rusty crayfish

Do not release unused, purchased live aquatic bait into any waterbodies. \*\*\*  
Live wild caught or trapped bait can only be used on waters where legally caught. \*\*\*  
Do not transport it to another waterbody. \*\*  
Do not use live prohibited species as bait. \*\*\*

Dispose of all unused bait, including worms, in the trash.  
Remove non-bait fish, plants or other hitchhikers from your bait bucket before fishing.