

Zebra Mussels



Photo Courtesy of Michigan Sea Grant

Stop the Invasion

What YOU can do to stop the spread of aquatic invasive species:

- Remove visible mud, plants, fish, or animals from your boat, trailer, or other equipment before leaving the water body.
- Drain all water from live wells, bilges, motor, transom, and other containers before leaving launch area.
- Wash your boat, trailer, and equipment thoroughly with hot tap water; if possible, to remove plants and organisms that were not visible at the boat launch.
- Allow your boat to dry for minimum of five days in a sunny location before transferring into a new body of water.
- Do not release live bait or aquarium pets into any waters.
- Discard fish waste in the trash.

For more information about invasive species, please contact Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council.

Eurasian Watermilfoil

Photo Courtesy of Michigan Sea Grant



VHS

Photo Courtesy of Mohamed Faisal, Michigan State University



While boaters individually may only contribute a small portion of the overall pollution entering our waters, **the cumulative impacts of the 4.3 million registered boaters in the Great Lakes Basin can be considerable.** It is important to recognize the potential negative impacts boaters can have on upon our Great Lakes ecosystem.

By making the simple changes to your boating routine outlined in this brochure, you can contribute to clean water and a healthy, vibrant fish and wildlife community that will enhance the boating experience for years to come.

Be part of the solution.

Be a Clean Boater.



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A Boater's Guide to Good Environmental Stewardship



BOATER BUNDLE SERIES

Boaters can do many things to lessen their impact on the environment and serve as good stewards for our precious recreational resources. Be a responsible boater and follow the steps outlined below to protect our waters. The small, extra effort required to practice clean boating makes sense for your family's health and safety, for the environment, and for the future of recreational boating.



Keep It Clean

What YOU can do:

- Wash your boat frequently.
Rinse frequently to reduce the need for cleansers, help stop marine growth, and extend the life of the protective coating.
- Use alternative cleaning products.
Use baking soda, vinegar, lemon juice, and borax. Although these are far less harmful than bleaches, scouring products, and detergents, they may still be harmful to marine life. Use all cleaning products sparingly to minimize the amount discharged into the water.
- Use phosphate-free, biodegradable cleaners.
If you use detergents, use them sparingly.
- Avoid cleaning your boat in the slip or dockside.
Wash your boat on land in an area that allows for infiltration of wash water, such as gravel or grass.
- Dispose of all cleaning products on shore.
Never dispose of cleaning products by dumping overboard or discharging overboard with a bilge pump. Take ashore and dispose of properly.

Be Astute - Don't Pollute!

What YOU can do:

FUELING

- Fill your tank just before leaving on a trip.
- Fuel on land whenever possible.
- Fill tanks no more than 90%.
Gas drawn from cool storage tanks expands as it warms up. Listen to the filler pipe to anticipate when the tank is almost full.
- Use an oil absorbent pad to catch drips from the fuel intake and the vent overflow.
- Do not use detergent or soap to clean up a spill!
It causes the oil to break up and sink to the lake floor where it becomes more toxic and more difficult to clean up. If a spill of fuel does occur, wipe the spill with an oil absorbent material and dispose of properly.

CONTROLLING THE BILGE

- Keep your engine well tuned to minimize the amount of oil that is released.
- Place oil absorbent material or bio-remediation bilge boom in the bilge.
- Place an oil absorbent pad under the engine.
- Replace oil absorbent materials regularly.
- Consider installing a bilge oil filter or oil/water separator in your bilge discharge line.



By law, any oil or fuel spill that leaves a sheen on the water must be reported.

If a spill occurs, notify your marina for assistance and call the U.S. Coast Guard National Response Center at 1-800-424-8802.

Use Your "Head"

What YOU can do:

- Never discharge raw sewage into waterways.
- Pump out and rinse holding tanks regularly.
- Avoid holding tank additives that contain formaldehyde, formalin, phenol derivatives, ammonia compounds, alcohol bases, or chlorine bleach - use safer enzyme-based products.
- Use restrooms on shore if possible.

Boat Maintenance Over "hulling"

What YOU can do:

- Always sand and scrape your boat on shore and away from the water.
- Collect all paint chips, dust, and residue and properly dispose of them in the trash.
- Use caution with anti-fouling paints for the hull - most contain toxic chemicals such as copper, mercury, and arsenic.

Remove and Recycle

What YOU can do:

- Whatever you take aboard, bring back.
- Contain trash - do not let trash get thrown or blown overboard and if it does, retrieve it and dispose of it properly ashore.
- Do not toss cigarette butts overboard.
- Purchase refreshments in recyclable containers and recycle them.
- Recycle used oil, oil filters, antifreeze, and batteries.
- Recycle used monofilament fishing line at your marina or tackle shop.