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Clean Boats – Clean Tournaments

Best-Management Practices to Inspect and Wash Fishing Tournament Boats

FISHING TOURNAMENTS HAVE THE POTENTIAL to spread aquatic invasive species (AIS) through both the movement of tournament equipment between tournament locations and through the movement of the tournament anglers themselves between events. These best-management practices (BMPs) are designed to be effective and easy to implement. Using a “Good-Better-Best” approach allows organizers to select their level of AIS prevention based upon available resources. AIS such as zebra mussels, Eurasian watermilfoil, diseases or pathogens, and AIS used as bait, can spread via tournaments. By implementing these BMPs, tournament organizers can prevent the spread of AIS, protect natural resources and help ensure the future of tournament fishing. Diligent record keeping in combination with use of the BMPs will document your commitment to AIS-free tournaments.

AIS can spread as visible plant fragments, organisms attached to plant stems or the boat and equipment. But AIS can also be invisible to the naked eye as minute eggs, larvae or pathogens in water. Taking a few, quick and simple steps will help assure that tournament or angling activities do not allow the spread of AIS between waters.

Inspection and removal of vegetation, organisms and debris is the first step and the backbone of the Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers! campaign. Drying tournament anglers’ boats for five days may not be possible, so rinsing the boat is an appropriate next step. Rinsing with high pressure water removes nearly all the organisms visible that may be adhering to the hull and trailer. *Hot*, high-pressure water kills attached organisms as well as removes them.



How Anglers Can Spread AIS

Organism	Pathway	Solution
Vegetation	Tangled on boat, motor, trailer or anchor	Inspect and remove; pressure wash
Invertebrates	Tangled on gear, debris or vegetation Attached to the boat, debris or vegetation In live well, bilge or bait bucket water	Inspect and remove; drain; pressure wash
Fish & Live Bait	AIS used as bait AIS mixed with wild-caught bait	Inspect, remove Buy bait from dealer
Disease & Pathogens	Associated with live or dead fish With fish flesh, slime	Don't move fish Disinfect/treat live well

Tournament Organizers

Organizers should always promote AIS awareness and prevention practices at the rules/registration meetings as well as during the event, for example during weigh-in. Brochures and other informational materials are available

from Sea Grant or natural resources agency offices. In the example below, we use the steps for the “BEST” approach for organizers and anglers to be certain they are taking effective actions to help Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers!

AIS Best-Management Practices

Good	Better	BEST	Exceptional
Inspect, Remove, Drain	Inspect, Remove, Drain, Rinse	Inspect, Remove, Drain, Pressure Wash	Inspect, Remove, Drain, Hot Pressure Wash
Visually inspect boat, motor, trailer and equipment. Remove vegetation, debris and any animals. Drain standing water from motor, bilge, live wells, tanks, tubs and bags – all equipment.	Inspect, drain and disinfect PLUS: Rinse off boats, trailers and equipment with a garden hose. Rinse tournament equipment and live wells with a mild bleach solution (1/2 oz bleach/quart water) or salt solution (2/3 cup salt/gallon water).	Inspect, drain and disinfect PLUS: Use a pressure washer to rinse off the boat.	Inspect, drain and disinfect PLUS: Use hot, high pressure water.

Boat Wash Team

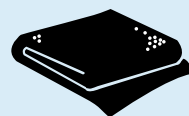
The goal is to quickly and effectively inspect and clean as many boats as possible. Equipment needed:



One or two pressure washers



Signage



Towels or chamois



One or two hand sprayers with bleach or above salt solution

You will need three to five people to staff the station – one to direct traffic through the station, one or two people on the pressure washers and one or two people to inspect boats for vegetation. Meet with the team ahead of time to describe their roles and conduct a brief training and walk-through.

SAMPLE BOAT WASH RECORD SHEET

Date: _____ Number of anglers/boats: _____

Tournament: _____ Record Keeper: _____

Location: _____

INSPECT, REMOVE, DRAIN

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tubs | <input type="checkbox"/> Bags | <input type="checkbox"/> Hoses | <input type="checkbox"/> Nets |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pumps | <input type="checkbox"/> Docks | <input type="checkbox"/> Scale | <input type="checkbox"/> Judge boat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bump tank | <input type="checkbox"/> Release boat | <input type="checkbox"/> Measuring board | <input type="checkbox"/> Angler boats |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Totes | <input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>please specify</i> | | |

RINSE TYPE

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tap water rinse | <input type="checkbox"/> Pressure wash | <input type="checkbox"/> Mild bleach/salt rinse | <input type="checkbox"/> Hot pressure wash |
|--|--|---|--|

OUTREACH

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information at rules meeting | <input type="checkbox"/> Reminder/booth at weigh-in |
|---|---|

TIMING OF INSPECTIONS

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-fishing | <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Launch | <input type="checkbox"/> Weigh-in |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|

COMMENTS

CREW MEMBERS



**STOP AQUATIC
HITCHHIKERS!**

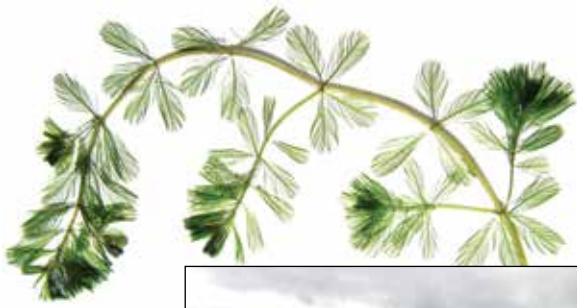
✓ Inspect ✓ Remove ✓ Drain

I certify that the selected AIS prevention actions were performed.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

These best-management practices were produced by Wisconsin Sea Grant and the Great Lakes Sea Grant Network in partnership with the National Professional Anglers Association, Wildlife Forever, Cabela's Masters Walleye Circuit, The Bass Federation and the Walleye Federation. Funding was provided by the National Sea Grant College Program and the U.S. EPA Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.



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Locating the Boat Washing Station

You will need a city or well water supply and adequate drainage. Select a location that is near the boat parking but does not obstruct traffic flow. Drivers must be able to pull through the station and move out of the way once their boat is washed. Alternatively, if the trailered boats will drive past the weigh-in stage, you can position the wash station along the line of boats so that each one can be washed as the boats slowly proceed toward the stage.

Boat Inspection/Washing Process

Begin with inspection of the boat and trailer for vegetation or clinging debris. Check the axles, cross members, wiring near the lights and fenders, and brake lines. Examine the motor, trolling motor, through-hull fittings and transducers. Remove any clinging material, organisms or mud.

Following inspection, the boat can be moved into the wash area. Keep the pressure washer nozzle at a right angle to the hull and about 12 inches from the hull to avoid damaging/removing decals. Beginning at the gunwale and moving down to the keel, move the sprayer side to side covering about a 3- to 4-foot wide section of the hull. Be sure to spray the trailer frame, cross members, axles, wiring and brake lines. When done with one part of the hull move along the boat to begin washing a new portion. Spend about 45 seconds washing one side of the boat and

the transom. Using two pressure washers and two inspectors, a boat can be inspected and washed in about a minute.

Either after the wash or during the inspection, hand the boat operator a hand sprayer so that they can disinfect the live well. Once the wash is completed, have the driver move forward out of the area. If you have extra people, they can help wipe down the hull after washing or provide support as needed.

Safety

Everyone should wear closed-toe shoes. The people using the pressure washers should wear eye protection. If the vehicles will drive over the hoses, protect the hoses by placing two-by-fours or other arrangement on either side of the hose where the tires will cross.

Record Keeping

Develop a Standard Operating Procedure or checklist for cleaning equipment to make AIS prevention steps easy to follow and documentable. Records will become increasingly important as states impose tighter restrictions on tournament fishing. Complete the checklist for each tournament with date, location, the recorder's name and what was done. These records over time demonstrate a solid commitment to AIS prevention and will help build a standard cleaning protocol for future events.

