



City of Big Lake Environmental Education Newsletter

July

Invasive Species in Minnesota

Invasive species are species that are not native to Minnesota *and* cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.

Minnesota's natural resources are threatened by a number of invasive species such as zebra mussels, Eurasian watermilfoil, common buckthorn, and emerald ash borer. Invasive species can occur on land or in the water.

The DNR works to help prevent the spread and promote the management of invasive species.

Aquatic Invasives

If you have taken a boat out on a Minnesota lake in the last couple of years, chances are you have already heard about AIS problems in Minnesota. These nonnative species (like zebra mussels, watermilfoil, quagga mussels, spiny waterflea, faucet snail, rusty crayfish, and silver carp) harm fish populations, water and recreation. You can help prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species by following both the required and recommended actions:

Required actions:

Clean all visible aquatic plants, zebra mussels, and other prohibited invasive species from watercraft, trailers, and water-related equipment before leaving any water access or shoreland.

Drain water-related equipment (boat, ballast tanks, portable bait container, and motor) and drain bilge, livewell, and baitwell by removing drain plugs before leaving a water access or shoreland property. Keep drain plugs out and water-draining devices open while transporting watercraft.

Dispose of unwanted bait in the trash. It is illegal to release live bait into a water body or release aquatic animals from one water body to another.

Terrestrial Invasives (Land)

Prevent the Spread

The best way to protect our natural areas from terrestrial invasive species is to prevent the spread of new invasives. To identify which plants are native and which are invasive, visit the DNR website:

<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/roadsides/vegetation/pdf/noxiousweeds.pdf>.



Don't Take Firewood Along for the Ride

Help protect Minnesota's trees. Harmful, invasive diseases and pests can be lurking in firewood. Buy local firewood to avoid moving these unwanted hitchhikers.

Firewood Restrictions Information

Emerald ash borer (EAB) and many other [forest pests and diseases](#) can be accidentally transported in firewood. In order to help prevent the introduction and spread of invasive pests, state statute was amended by a commissioner's order in December 2017 banning all firewood in DNR lands unless approved by the DNR. If you bring unapproved firewood with you to a state-administered campground, you will have to surrender the wood or be denied entry. If you are caught burning unapproved firewood on DNR lands, you may be fined.



What is Approved Firewood?

- Firewood sold by the DNR at state parks.
- Firewood purchased from a vendor that is either:
 - Non-ash firewood harvested from and purchased in the same county where it will be used (**be sure to keep your receipt to show proof of purchase**)
 - Firewood harvested in Minnesota that has been certified by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture or the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (**be sure to keep your receipt to show proof of purchase**).
- Kiln-dried, unpainted, unstained dimensional lumber that is free of any metal or foreign substances, or manufactured logs. Pallet wood is not approved firewood. Dimensional lumber does not require proof of purchase.



Use [Firewood Scout](#) to see where you can purchase approved firewood.

Don't Forget!

On Friday, July 13th the City will be hosting Climb Theatre to present an Aquatic Invasive Species play at Lakeside Park. This is a hands on educational experience geared toward 3rd to 6th graders, but anyone is welcome to attend. There will be free activities for kids of all ages from 6 to 7pm; the play will begin at 8pm. More information is available on the City Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/events/250318302186429/>.

Information on invasive species comes from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Any questions can be directed to Katie Stelzner (763)-307-6040 kstelzner@biglakemn.org