

Aquatic Invasive Species Cleaning Units

The ISC deployed two mobile cleaning units to support watercraft users in curbing the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS). The cleaning units provide boaters with the tools to properly clean, drain, and dry their equipment to safely remove any species that can otherwise be transported on watercraft or equipment to lakes without AIS. In 2022, over 1000 people contributed to stopping the spread of AIS with the use of the units!



About AIS

AIS harm ecosystems, species at risk, the economy, and society. Zebra mussels, flowering rush, and European water chestnut are all examples of AIS that have significant impacts including outcompeting native species and reducing biodiversity. Preventing AIS from entering lakes and waterways is the most cost-effective means of managing invasive spread.

What can a cleaning unit do?

AIS can attach to parts of watercraft including the anchor, propeller, dock lines, live wells, hull, rollers, bunks, bilge, motor, as well as part of the towing trailer including the axle, rails, or even the licence plate. Cleaning units can clean these locations on all types of watercrafts including motorboats, bowriders, fishing boats, canoes, and kayaks.

Brush

Similar to a broom, use the brush to push debris off the sides of the boat or any other surfaces that were submerged.

Grabber

Use the grabber to seize any visible debris in hard-to-reach places.

Blower

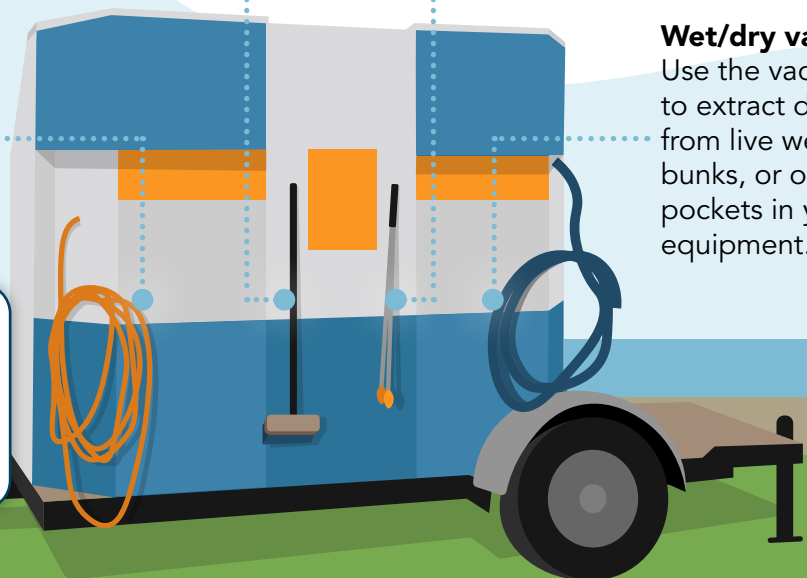
Use the air from the blower to drive out debris in propellers, motors, or other places where there may be cavities that were submerged.

Wet/dry vacuum

Use the vacuum to extract debris from live wells, bunks, or other pockets in your equipment.

Using a cleaning unit ensures:

- AIS prevention is taking place
- Legislation is being followed
- Gear maintenance is occurring (bonus!)



Strategic Use of Cleaning Units

Cleaning units are an effective means of fostering community awareness and improving social behaviours related to the prevention of AIS. The accessibility of tools through free, and time-efficient services allows for boaters to seamlessly participate in best practices and protect waterways.

ISC has deployed two cleaning units as part of a bigger effort to curb the spread of aquatic invasive species in order to protect species at risk throughout the Southern Prairie Priority Area.

Case study: Iskatewizaagegan #39 Independent First Nation

Iskatewizaagegan #39 Independent First Nation is located near the town of Kenora, Ontario on Shoal Lake and a cleaning unit is based at a boat launch on the reserve. Shoal Lake is a popular destination for recreational watercraft from Winnipeg and other parts of Manitoba, as well as many communities across northern Ontario. Shoal lake has several jurisdictional complexities which make this an ideal location to emphasize preventative action of westward spread of AIS such as invasive phragmites and zebra mussels.

Case study: Lake MacGregor, Alberta

Lake MacGregor in Alberta is the unfortunate home of the only known population of Chinese mystery snail in Alberta. The snail, which may be distributed in the aquarium trade or food markets, is a nuisance species and alters food systems in the lake. The cleaning unit was located at a key boat launch on the lake and encouraged boaters to clean, drain, and dry their boats of all AIS including Chinese mystery snail.

Best practices for boaters:

- Always clean, drain, and dry when moving watercraft and equipment from any waterbodies. This includes:
 - **Cleaning your gear** of any mud, vegetation, algae, or mussels.
 - **Draining any water** from your transom, bilge, or livewell.
 - **Drying your watercraft** for several days or with tools where possible.
- Check the **rules and regulations** in the area where you are boating. In most provinces, it is mandatory to clean, drain, and dry your boat and equipment when moving it between waterbodies. invasivespeciescentre.ca/know-before-you-go/
- Avoid driving your boat through areas where aquatic plants are located.

Community Use

All visitors can freely use cleaning units to clean, drain and dry their watercraft and related fishing equipment when entering and leaving a waterbody.



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