

Zebra mussels confirmed in Lower Cullen Lake and nearby Lake Hubert in Crow Wing County

Invasive species found on boat, boat lift

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has confirmed zebra mussels in Lower Cullen Lake and nearby Lake Hubert in Crow Wing County.

A resort owner contacted the DNR after finding several zebra mussels on a boat moored at the resort on Lower Cullen Lake. DNR invasive species staff found no other zebra mussels during inspections of adjacent docks and a nearby stream.

A county watercraft inspector and a lake service provider business, both trained by the DNR, spotted adult zebra mussels on a boat lift as it was removed from Lake Hubert. DNR invasive species staff found and removed more zebra mussels on an adjacent dock and at a three-foot depth in the water.

“Several recent zebra mussel confirmations are thanks to vigilant lake property owners, lake service providers and watercraft inspectors checking docks and lifts coming out of the water this time of year,” said Heidi Wolf, DNR invasive species unit supervisor. “Minnesota law requires docks and boat lifts to be out of the water for at least 21 days before putting them in another body of water. This requirement is an important tool for preventing the spread of zebra mussels and other aquatic invasive species.”

Zebra mussels are an invasive (non-native) species that can compete with native species for food and habitat, cut the feet of swimmers, reduce the performance of boat motors, and cause expensive damage to water intake pipes.

Less than two percent of Minnesota’s 11,842 lakes are listed as infested with zebra mussels. Along with requiring docks and lifts to be out of the water for 21 days before putting them into another body of water, Minnesota law requires boaters and anglers to:

- **Clean** their watercraft of aquatic plants and prohibited invasive species.
- **Drain** all water by removing drain plugs and keeping them out during transport.
- **Dispose** of unwanted bait in the trash.

Some invasive species are small and difficult to see at the access. To prevent their spread, take one or more of the following precautions before moving to another waterbody, especially after leaving infested waters:

- Spray with high-pressure water.
- Rinse with very hot water (120 degrees F for at least two minutes or 140 degrees F for at least 10 seconds).
- Dry for at least 5 days.

More information is available at www.mndnr.gov/AIS.