

Whirling Disease Decontamination Protocols for Boaters and Anglers

Boats can carry infected water to new waterbodies, and can contain infected sediment and organic matter. All boats should be disinfected at site to reduce the spread of contaminated water, sediment, and plant material. Cleaning all fishing equipment and clothing is extremely important for reducing the spread of Whirling Disease. Boaters should adhere to the following procedures when using waterbodies that are infected or suspected to be infected:

Boat Equipment

- Remove all residual water from equipment. **THIS MUST BE DONE STREAMSIDE**
- Use a nylon bristle brush to remove all plant matter and sediment from boots, clothing, and equipment
- Immerse small equipment and parts, such as fishing equipment, rope, or paddles in a container of the disinfectant Quaternary Ammonium Compound (QAC)
 - **Quat Plus is the brand of QAC recommended by Alberta Environment and Parks**
 - Gloves and safety glasses should be worn while using Quat Plus
 - The disinfection bath should be at 1500ppm QAC, or 4.8% (2L of Quat Plus diluted with 62L of water is a suitable volume for soaking most equipment)
 - Items must soak for 10 minutes
 - **Users must be familiar with Quat Plus safety protocols**
- After 10 minutes, small equipment and parts can be rinsed in clean water
 - This water **CAN NOT** be stream water, and should be brought from offsite
- Items that can not be submerged can be sprayed with 1500ppm QAC, but must remain damp for 10 minutes
- Quat Plus can be disposed of by flushing it with water into municipal wastewater systems.

Hard-sided boats

- While on site, boats should be drained of excess water. This water can be drained back into the water body it came from
- Residual organic matter, such as plant material or sediment, should be removed from the boat using a scrub brush
- All surfaces of the boat should be sprayed or wiped with Quat Plus
 - Gloves and safety glasses should be worn while using Quat Plus
 - A pump-up style sprayer that is labelled for use with disinfectants can be used

- The spray should be at 1500ppm QAC, or 4.8% (This can be taken from the Quat Plus solution used to soak smaller equipment)
- Items must remain wet for 10 minutes
- Take care to avoid non-wetable surfaces, such as electronics
- **Users must be familiar with Quat Plus safety protocols**
- After streamside disinfection, boats must receive a hot water disinfection
 - Water must be at 90 degrees Celsius
 - Water should be applied at low pressure, to reduce the risk of spraying potentially contaminated water onto other surfaces
 - The boat must remain wet for 10 minutes, however, follow your boat's manufacturer instructions to ensure prolonged hot water will not damage it
 - **Ensure that motors, pumps, etc. that have been exposed to potentially contaminated water are also washed with 90 degree Celsius water**
- All surfaces of the boat should be sprayed a second time with 1500ppm QAC, and allowed to dry for 24 hours, preferably in sunlight

Rubber Boats

Some inflatable or rubber boats can not be exposed to the 90 degree Celsius disinfection, so the following protocols should be followed:

- While on site, boats should be drained of excess water. This water can be drained back into the water body it came from
- Residual organic matter, such as plant material or sediment, should be removed from the boat using a scrub brush
- All surfaces of the boat should be sprayed or wiped with Quat Plus
 - Gloves and safety glasses should be worn while using QAC
 - A pump-up style sprayer that is labelled for use with disinfectants can be used
 - The spray should be at 1500ppm QAC, or 4.8% (This can be taken from the Quat Plus solution used to soak smaller items)
 - Items must remain wet for 10 minutes
 - Take care to avoid non-wetable surfaces, such as electronics
 - **Users must be familiar with QAC safety protocols**
- After streamside disinfection, boats must receive a warm water disinfection
 - Water should be at a temperature approved by your boat's manufacturer (ex. Zodiac recommends temperatures of 38 degrees Celsius or less)
 - Water should be applied at low pressure, to reduce the risk of spraying potentially contaminated water onto other surfaces
 - The boat must remain wet for 10 minutes, however, follow your boat's manufacturer instructions to ensure prolonged warm water will not damage it

- **Ensure that motors, pumps, etc. that have been exposed to potentially contaminated water are also washed with 90 degree Celsius water**
- All surfaces of the boat should be sprayed a second time with 1500ppm QAC, and allowed to dry for 24 hours, preferably in sunlight

***Always refer to your boat manufacturer's guidelines before exposing it to hot water for long periods of time**

Items to consider disinfecting:

- Fishing Rods, flies, nets, and other equipment that has come into contact with water
- Rope, paddles, and bail buckets
- Bathing suits and clothing
- Footwear that may have been worn in the water while pulling your boat into shore

*Dogs that are swimming in infected water bodies should be bathed and brushed out before going to another water body.

*Decontamination is only necessary when leaving one water body and entering another.

While these protocols may seem time consuming and inconvenient, they are important for protecting Alberta's lake, rivers, and streams from Whirling Disease. Be part of the solution to protect Alberta's fish!

Please print this guide and keep it with you while you're enjoying Alberta's water bodies