

# Basic Inspection and Cleaning Checklist: All Watercraft



Photo credit: Ken Breitag

## Whenever you leave freshwater, take the following actions:

- 1. Remove the boat from the water and away from the launch ramp** for vessel inspection and cleaning.
- 2. Thoroughly inspect all exposed surfaces on your vessel and trailer.** If you find any mussels, scrape them off and kill them by crushing them. Dispose of the remains in the trash. Alert the Department of Fish and Game at 866-440-9530.
- 3. Remove all plants and mud** from your boat, trailer, and all equipment. Dispose of all material in the trash.
- 4. Carefully feel your boat's hull** for any rough or gritty spots, which may be young mussels that have settled on your vessel and cannot be seen. Microscopic Quagga/Zebra mussels will feel like sandpaper.
- 5. Away from the waterway, wash your boat's hull,** trailer, equipment, bilge, and any other exposed surfaces with high-pressure, hot water. When possible use water at a temperature of 140° F (60° C) at the hull – or about 155° (68° C) at the nozzle – which will kill the mussels. Dry the boat as much as possible.
- 6. Drain all water from your boat** (pull all plugs) and **dry all areas,** including the motor, motor cooling system, live wells, ballast tanks, bladders, bilges, and lower outboard units. Make sure that all life jackets, water skis or other items that have been in the water, including anchors, ropes, etc., are inspected, cleaned, and dried.
- 7. Empty and dry all buckets** and **dispose of all bait** in trash receptacles before you leave. Do not take bait home, or leave it on the ground or dump it in any waterway.
- 8. Thoroughly clean all fishing and recreational equipment** (nets, too).
- 9. Clean and dry personal belongings, clothing, and footwear** that have come in contact with the water.
- 10. Wash, dry, and brush pets** that have been in the water.
- 11. Keep your watercraft dry** for at least five days in warm, dry weather and up to 30 days in cool, moist weather before launching into any freshwater.

**Day boats or those that “come and go” and spend only a few hours in the water are still at risk for picking up and transporting mussels that may be attached to aquatic weeds. The basic cleaning steps apply to ANY and ALL watercraft. Vessels that are slipped and moored at infested waters run greater risk of having settlers and adult mussels.**