

Aquatic Invasive Species FAQs for Municipalities

LEGISLATION

What are the relevant AIS provincial legislations and regulations?

The Government of Manitoba's relevant aquatic invasive species (AIS) legislation falls under The Water Protection Act and Aquatic Invasive Species Regulations which came into force in November 2015.

For more information on the Water Protection Act, visit:

https://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/_pdf.php?cap=W65

For more information on The Water Protection Act Aquatic Invasive Species Regulation, visit:

https://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/current/_pdf-regs.php?reg=173/2015

Are there penalties for non-compliance with provincial AIS regulations?

Yes, there are set fines outlined within provincial regulations for more than 40 AIS-related offences. Manitoba's set fine levels remain the second highest in Canada. The Manitoba government streamlined the enforcement efforts aimed at water-users regarding the required steps to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species. As of October 17, 2018, enforcement officers have the option to issue a ticket, with a specific fine that can be paid voluntarily without having to appear in court.

For a complete list of aquatic invasive species fines under the Preset Fines and Offence Description Regulation, visit:

manitoba.ca/asset_library/en/ais/preset_fines.pdf

Are municipalities authorized to enact or enforce additional by-laws related to AIS prevention?

Yes, municipalities can develop by-laws related to aquatic invasive species prevention. Several municipal governments are developing by-laws surrounding the use of municipal infrastructure. The AIS Unit can provide a template by-law to assist interested municipalities. By-laws should align with provincial and federal Regulations and it is recommended that municipalities consult with provincial AIS Unit staff prior to finalization.

Enforcement of by-laws is at the discretion of municipalities and could be enforced by by-law enforcement officers.

Information regarding the development of municipal by-laws can be discussed with provincial AIS Unit staff by reaching out to:

AIS@gov.mb.ca

WATERCRAFT INSPECTION

What is the difference between inspection and decontamination?

Inspection is a form of physical AIS prevention, in which a watercraft inspector performs an inspection on watercraft and water related equipment, to evaluate if they are clean, drained, and dried. This is done to ensure compliance with provincial regulations, such as the removal of drain plugs when transporting watercraft

Decontamination is a procedure meant to kill any remaining AIS, as a further prevention step that allows watercraft deemed high-risk to become compliant with provincial regulations and reduces the risk of spreading AIS.

What is Clean, Drain, Dry and Decontaminate?

The Clean, Drain, Dry, and Decontaminate actions are sequential steps that each add layers of protection against the human spread of AIS.

CLEAN is physical removal of visible AIS, debris, animals, mud, and plants including algae.

This step removes AIS itself or substances where AIS can hide. It should be removing watercraft or water-related equipment from the shore of a water body.

DRAIN is the action of getting rid of standing or residual water. Standing water is where hard-to-see and microscopic AIS can live and would not be otherwise removed by cleaning. To facilitate draining, remove watercraft plugs and keep them out when transporting watercraft overland, and raise, lower and move the outboard motor from side to side. This should be completed before removing watercraft or water-related equipment from the shore of a water body.

DRY is the act of eliminating any residual wetness or dampness missed in the cleaning and draining steps. The action of wiping down internal watercraft compartments and surfaces of gear can help crush any AIS and remove trace habitats that would not be otherwise removed by cleaning or draining steps further decreasing the chance of their survival. For watercraft, the interior compartments, or accessible spaces where water can accumulate (e.g., transom), must be dried before leaving the shore of a water body. Water-related equipment doesn't need to be dried before leaving the shore of the water body. Instead, equipment must be dried completely before its used in a different water body.

DECONTAMINATE is a procedure that aims to kill any overlooked AIS. Decontamination is an additional step following Clean, Drain, Dry and applies only when items have been removed from an area known to have AIS, such as a control zone. The risk of humans spreading AIS to other areas is much greater after being in an AIS invaded area. A greater risk of spreading AIS is met with a correspondingly greater level of AIS protection.

Together, Clean, Drain, Dry, and Decontaminate are legally-required, additive steps to become free of AIS. They target various stages and types of AIS to offset the level of risk human behaviours pose for spreading AIS to new areas.

When is decontamination required?

Decontamination must be done if watercraft or water-related equipment were last used in an invaded area, such as an AIS Control Zone, a waterbody with other listed conditions, or at provincial inspector discretion, and before the items are placed into a different water body or control zone. If returning to the same AIS Control Zone you last left, decontamination is not required.

Where are AIS Control Zones located?

An AIS Control Zone is an area of Manitoba prescribed in regulation. Current AIS Control Zones have been described where AIS already occur or where AIS are expected to spread due to natural water movement. More information on AIS Control Zones can be found here:

manitoba.ca/stopais/spread/controlzone.html

How are provincially-run inspection and decontamination sites chosen?

Provincial inspection and decontamination stations are strategically chosen to intercept the highest number of watercrafts between invaded waterbodies and non-invaded waterbodies. Stations are typically set up along major highway pinch-points within the province, and are chosen based on a province-wide risk assessment. Additional factors attributed to site location include proximity to invaded waterbodies, appropriate site availability, and road safety.

Where are provincially-run inspection and decontamination sites located in Manitoba?

A full list and schedule of all provincially run Watercraft Inspection Station locations can be found online at:

manitoba.ca/stopais/spread/watercraft_inspection.html

How can a municipality request an inspection or decontamination if a local Council feels there is geographic gap or concern with a local uncovered waterbody?

Reducing the risk of introduction and spread of AIS is not a task that can be undertaken by the Manitoba government alone.

Provincial inspection and decontamination stations are strategically located to provide prevention capacity at a province-wide scale, intercepting highest number of watercrafts between invaded waterbodies (e.g., Control Zones) and non-invaded waterbodies.

Municipalities can assist by adding local AIS prevention capacity. Municipal inspection and decontamination capacity would provide prevention to a specific waterbody, or group of waterbodies. As such, provincial site locations are relocated to optimize provincial strategic objectives.

Any municipality interested in opportunities to introduce local AIS prevention capacity can contact Manitoba's AIS Unit directly to discuss those needs and available provincial supports, by contacting:

AIS@gov.mb.ca

For additional related information, please also see Manitoba's Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention and Response Plan:

https://www.manitoba.ca/asset_library/en/ais/prevention-and-response-plan.pdf

COMMUNICATION / EDUCATION

Can the province provide sample social media campaign posts for municipal offices for use in their local areas?

Yes, the Manitoba government also routinely posts AIS information on social media. These posts can be shared by municipalities to help amplify the message on a local scale.

The province can provide support on social media for municipal use. For more information on social media posting, please reach out to:

AIS@gov.mb.ca

Can municipalities request signage to help prevent the spread of AIS?

Yes, requests for standard signage can be made to the provincial AIS unit by contacting:

AIS@gov.mb.ca

What type of signage is available to municipalities?

Manitoba has standardized signage available, which can be requested by municipalities based on their needs. Municipalities can request AIS boat launch signage for installation at local boat launches which promotes Manitoba's AIS Regulation and direction to Clean, Drain, Dry and if necessary, Decontaminate.

Municipalities may also request roadway signage. It is the responsibility of the municipality to ensure all appropriate approvals are in place prior to erecting new signage along municipal roads.

PREVENTION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

Is the province able to meet one-on-one with local Councils to discuss AIS prevention in their local areas?

Yes, the province can meet one-on-one with municipal councils to discuss AIS prevention efforts specific to their area. It is encouraged that municipal representatives with interest in taking on AIS prevention capacity determine what types of prevention they may be able to implement, and at what geographic range.

To request a meeting with provincial AIS Unit staff, please reach out to:

AIS@gov.mb.ca

What provincial resources or supports are currently available to municipalities?

The province can provide a wide range of resources and support including:

- *Web content*
- *Social media resources*
- *AIS Inspector Training*
- *Municipal by-law template*
- *Signage*
- *Resources/communications materials*

Does the Province of Manitoba offer funding support to municipalities to help prevent the spread of AIS?

Yes, the province has developed the Manitoba Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Fund. This is a new program in 2025, and interested municipalities can contact the AIS Unit directly to discuss what supports might be available and application information that would need to be submitted.

For future years, applicants will be able to apply during the application period for funding towards local AIS prevention projects. More information on the application process, deadlines, eligibility, projects, and the schedule of the Manitoba Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Fund, will be posted and updated at the this website:

manitoba.ca/stopais/index.html

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Are there additional provincial funding and support programs available for AIS prevention?

Please see the below funding opportunities that have been previously identified to the provincial AIS unit. Note that these funds are not guaranteed and are unaffiliated with the AIS unit, and some deadlines for the year may have passed.

Urban/Hometown Green Team - Green Team grants are awarded to non-profit organizations and municipal governments to hire youth between the ages of 15 and 29 to work on community projects between May and August.

For more information on the Urban/Hometown Green Team program, visit:

manitoba.ca/asset_library/en/grants/greenteam_faq.pdf

Canada-Manitoba Job Grant - is a cost-shared funding program that provides funding to employers to help cover training costs of new and existing employees to meet business needs, support the development of a highly skilled workforce, boost economic growth, and increase employment opportunities across Manitoba.

For more information on the Canada-Manitoba Job Grant, visit:

manitoba.ca/jec/busdev/financial/cmjg/index.html

Is there available funding and support through the federal government?

Please see the below funding opportunities that have been previously identified to the provincial AIS unit. Note that these funds are not guaranteed and are unaffiliated with the AIS unit.

The Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Fund – Is a fund developed by Fisheries and Oceans Canada. The Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Fund supports projects and partnerships that will help prevent the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species.

For more information on the Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Fund, visit:

www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/species-especes/ais-eae/funding-financement/index-eng.html

IDENTIFICATION AND REPORTING

Is there training for municipal staff and individuals to identify AIS?

There is not provincial training on AIS identification, but the province does offer AIS Inspector Training which delivers education on the basics of AIS knowledge and self-inspection.

What should municipalities do if zebra mussels, or other AIS, are detected in local waterways?

All water-users play an important role as additional eyes and ears on the landscape to protect water bodies from new AIS invasions. If individuals suspect that they have identified an AIS outside of an existing control zone, please report immediately.

If suspected zebra mussels or other AIS are found, individuals should take photos and contact the Manitoba AIS Unit by visiting:

manitoba.ca/stopais/ais_reporting.html

Emails can also be sent to AIS@gov.mb.ca. Be sure to include the following: name; phone number; email contact; location of AIS (waterbody name and coordinates); date found; suspected species; and any additional information.

These provisions relate to the discovery of an AIS in a previously undetected waterbody.

How should individuals dispose of zebra mussels, or other AIS, if found on equipment?

AIS cannot be removed from a waterbody and must therefore be returned to the waterbody in which it was caught, unless otherwise instructed by the AIS Director.

Disposal of any AIS within an AIS Control Zone or other regulated area must be done through an AIS Permit from the province.

For more information, please visit The Water Protection Act Aquatic Invasive Species Regulation:

https://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/current/_pdf-regs.php?reg=173/2015