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Washburn County
Land and Water Conservation Department

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Hi Everyone.

As you may have heard, the Washburn County Board of Supervisors recently passed a new ordinance regarding boat decontamination as a tool for stopping the spread of zebra mussels and other AIS.

The new ordinance basically states that if a decontamination station is present at a boat landing, the boater is required to use it. A decontamination station could consist of a high-powered pressure sprayer operated by trained personnel, but more likely in our area its using a simple bleach/water solution or a household disinfectant such at Formula 409 to spray the boating equipment. While the ultimate goal is boater compliance, I think the important thing we want to get out of the first year is education. We really want to let boaters know about the zebra mussel presence in the County and what can be done to help prevent them from spreading. Offering the bleach spray solution is a good start to killing off the adult mussels as well as their microscopic larvae and other AIS. The solution is 2 tablespoons bleach per gallon water.

Burnett County passed the same ordinance. We are working together to develop a sign and work with interested lake associations to set up a small decontaminations station at their boat landings. The sign would have hooks on it for scrub brushes and grab hooks to help remove potential weeds or mud. The mild bleach solution in garden sprayers could be provided by the CBCW inspectors or volunteers. A simple spray around the boat is all it takes. This decontamination station can easily be staffed while CBCW inspectors are on shift, if volunteers are helping out or can be self-service.

I am looking for your help to get the word out about this new ordinance and encourage you to consider setting one of these stations up at your boat landing(s). I am happy to help with anything you may need and a simple training could be done. I know there are a lot of questions that come with this, so feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Lisa Burns-Conservation Coordinator
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