

Aquatic Invasive Species Management

1 National Life Drive, Davis 3 Montpelier VT 05620-3522

www.dec.vermont.gov/watershed/lakes-ponds



VT Public Access Greeter: Intercepting Aquatic Organisms and Specimen Submission

Protocol for Vermont Public Access Area Greeters

Steps to follow when an aquatic organism has been found during a greeter inspection.

If a greeter finds plants or animals during an inspection on the watercraft, trailer or associated equipment, remove all material, record what water body the watercraft was last in, if known, and follow the appropriate protocol below for either plant or animal material. Vermont Aquatic Invasive Species Management program staff will follow-up with you on submitted samples.

Plant Material

1. If you can, use the guidance materials provided by the State of Vermont to identify the plant.
2. If you determine or suspect that the plant is an aquatic invasive species, cross reference it with the list of Vermont waterbodies known to have aquatic invasive species. If the plant came from a location where its establishment is known, record the incident, but no further action is required. If the plant is not on the list, continue to Step 3.
3. If you identified a plant species that is not on the list of water bodies known to have aquatic invasive species or are unsure of the identification, within two days either:
 - a. Take several photographs of the plant. Include a view of the entire plant as well as a close-up of the leaves or other relevant information. Please include a ruler, or a common object within the photo to demonstrate the scale of the specimen (see photos on right).
 - b. Email these pictures to kimberly.jensen@vermont.gov, or text photos to (802) 490-6120. In your message, include the suspected identification and the name of the water body it came from. Press or freeze the plant in the event its identity needs to be confirmed at a later date if the plant cannot be identified from the photographs. Or,
 - c. Mail the plant. Wrap the plant specimen in a wet paper towel and place it into a sealable plastic bag. If there is more than one species, wrap them individually. Fill out a sample submission form (see page 3) and follow the mailing directions on the form. Mail samples Monday through Wednesday only. Keep the sample(s) in a cool place until mailing can occur. Sample submission forms can be downloaded from the Vermont Aquatic Invasive Species webpage.



View of the entire plant



Close-up of a cross section of a plant stem with leaves

Animal Material

1. If you suspect that the animal found is invasive (e.g., zebra mussel), carefully check the watercraft, trailer or equipment again, removing all material found. Explain to the watercraft/equipment owner your suspicions, why it is of concern and encourage them to wash their watercraft/equipment before launching or after retrieving.
2. If you suspect that the animal collected is an aquatic invasive species, cross reference it with the list of Vermont water bodies known to have aquatic invasive species. If the animal is coming from a location where its establishment is known, record the incident, but no further action is required. If you are unsure of the identification or uncertain if the water body it came from has that species, continue to step 3.
3. Take several photographs of the animal. Include a view of the entire specimen as well as a close-up. Email these pictures to kimberly.jensen@vermont.gov, or text photos to (802) 490-6120. In your message, include the suspected identification and the name of the water body it came from.
4. Save the sample. Place the animal sample in a sealable plastic bag or container, note what you suspect the species is, the date collected and where it came from, and store it in a freezer.

Out-of-State Watercraft

If a suspected invasive species is intercepted from a watercraft, trailer or associated equipment last in a water body outside of Vermont, follow the appropriate plant or animal protocol above as if the species came from the list of Vermont water bodies known to have aquatic invasive species. Contact Kim Jensen at kimberly.jensen@vermont.gov or (802) 490-6120 and we will contact the appropriate authorities.

Aquatic Specimen Submission Form

Keep the sample in a cool place until it is mailed, then follow the directions below to mail this completed form with the sample (Monday – Wednesday only) at the address below. Questions? Call (802) 828-1115.

ATTN: Plant Sample, VTDEC – Watershed Management Division
1 National Life Drive, Davis 3, Montpelier, VT 05620-3522.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Are you a: VIP Greeter Other Waterbody: _____ Town: _____

If a Greeter, was this sample collected during a boat inspection? Yes No

If **yes**, name of previously visited water body: _____

If **no**, description of the location of collection: _____

Suspected Species ID: _____ Date Collected: _____

Have you contacted VTDEC? Yes No If **yes**, with whom did you speak:

Sample Packaging Directions:

- Please wrap a representative piece (collect 8 – 12 inches of a plant specimen, including any flowers or fruit, if possible) in a wet paper towel and place it into a sealable plastic bag.
- If there is more than one species obtained per waterbody, individually wrap them.
- If there are samples from more than one water body, divide the samples into separate plastic bags and clearly mark the different locations on the bags.
- Place the plastic bags in a manila envelope and mail the sample to the address above or use the mailing label below.



ATTN: Aquatic Specimen
VTDEC – Watershed Management Division
1 National Life Drive, Davis 3
Montpelier, VT 05620-3522

Are you a: VIP Greeter Other