

Whirling Disease Decontamination Protocols for Shoreline Anglers, Waders, and Recreational Users

Walking and wading in water infected with whirling disease can spread the disease to other waterbodies. Organic matter, such as sediment or vegetation, can cling to boots, waders, and fishing rods, particularly in hard to clean places such as boot treads. Sediment can contain *M. cerebralis* spores, which can easily be relocated to uninfected water bodies. Cleaning all fishing equipment and clothing is extremely important for reducing the spread of Whirling Disease. Recreators should adhere to the following procedures when using waterbodies that are infected or suspected to be infected:

- Bring a change of clothing and boots
- Remove all residual water from clothing and equipment. THIS MUST BE DONE STREAMSIDE
- Use a nylon bristle brush to remove all plant matter and sediment from boots, clothing, and equipment
- Immerse waders, boots, clothing, and equipment 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 clothing and equipment)
 - Items must soak for 10 minutes
 - **Users must be familiar with Quat Plus safety protocols**
- After 10 minutes, clothing, boots, and equipment 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.

Items to consider disinfecting:

- Fishing Rods, flies, nets, and other equipment that has come into contact with water
- Waders, boots, sandals, or boat shoes
- Bathing suits and clothing

*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