

CHAPTER 20. RESTRICTION ON AQUATIC SPECIES INTRODUCTION

SUBCHAPTER 2. INTRODUCTIONS OF FISH AND AQUATIC ORGANISMS

800:20-2-3. Introductions of fish and aquatic organisms

(a) No person shall release, deposit, place or permit to be released, fish, crayfish, mussels, other aquatic organisms, or non-native plant species in any of the public streams, public lakes or public ponds whose stocking is controlled by and so designated by the Wildlife Conservation Commission without the consent of the Wildlife Conservation Director.

(b) Upon leaving any waters of the state and within 100 yards of the launch area, persons must drain all water from their vessel, equipment, and other water-retaining compartments prior to transport. Bilges, live wells, ballast tanks, motor wells, motors or outboard units, and all other compartments containing water on board the vessel must be emptied, and devices used to contain or prevent the release of water from the vessel or associated equipment, including drain plugs, valves, and bailers, shall be removed or remain open while the vessel or equipment is in transport. Exceptions include:

(1) Persons transporting a vessel or related equipment on a public roadway using the most direct route to another access point located on the same waterbody, provided the travel begins and ends within a single 24-hour period. For purposes of this paragraph, a reservoir and its tailwater shall be considered the same waterbody only when the vessel or related equipment is transported downstream from the reservoir to the tailwater. Transport from the tailwater to the reservoir is not authorized under this exception, and all water must be drained upon departure.

(2) Persons employed by, or under contract to, a governmental entity in the performance of official job duties.

(3) Persons participating in an organized fishing tournament transporting fish in a live well to an official off-site weigh-in location designated by the tournament. The exemption applies only when the tournament activities occur on a single waterbody within a 24-hour period and all other compartments subject to draining requirements have been emptied. Following off-site weigh-in activities, all compartments, including live wells, must only be drained into soil with no direct, wetted connection to any waterbody.

(4) Water from a domestic or municipal source is not required to be drained unless there has been exchange with water from the waterbody being used.