



Aquatic Plant Management

the facts about the laws

Why should I care about aquatic plant management (APM)?

Aquatic plants are an important part of healthy ecosystems – both within lakes and rivers and on the shores around them. Aquatic plants provide habitat for fish, invertebrates, and wildlife; prevent shoreline erosion; and protect water quality by uptaking nutrients and producing oxygen. Furthermore, diverse native aquatic plant communities help prevent the establishment of nuisance exotic plants like Eurasian watermilfoil. In order to maintain healthy lakes and rivers, we must maintain healthy native aquatic plant communities.

What are the APM laws?

The Department regulates the removal of aquatic plants 1) any time that chemicals are used and 2) when plants are removed mechanically or manually from an area greater than thirty feet in width along the shore. Historically the Department required a permit only when chemicals were used to control aquatic plants as described in Administrative Rule NR 107 – Aquatic Plant Management. As of September 2001, however, the legislature passed a bill to further protect Wisconsin's invaluable aquatic plant communities. The result is NR 109 – Aquatic Plants: Introduction, Manual Removal & Mechanical Control Regulations.

Who needs a permit to remove aquatic plants?

Any person that controls aquatic plants with chemicals must apply for a Chemical Control of Aquatic Plants Permit from the Department. Any person or organization (e.g. a municipality, lake association, or lake district) that controls aquatic plants mechanically or manually must apply for a Mechanical/Manual Aquatic Plant Control Permit from the Department. The only time a permit is not required to control aquatic plants is when a riparian manually removes or gives permission to someone to manually remove plants, with the exception of wild rice, from his/her shoreline in an area that is thirty feet or less in width along the shore or when the exotic invasive plants Eurasian watermilfoil, curlyleaf pondweed, or purple loosestrife are manually removed.

How do I apply for a permit to remove aquatic plants?

Contact the aquatic plant management specialist in your area to discuss aquatic plant removal/control plans and request the appropriate application for your project.

When do I apply for a permit?

Upon receipt of a *complete* application, the Department has fifteen working days to issue or deny a permit to control or remove aquatic plants. Verification of a complete application and permit issuance, however, may depend on a site inspection of the aquatic plant community.

Where do I go for more information about aquatic plants?

The Department's webpage, www.dnr.state.wi.us, contains informational resources such as literature, links, and contacts regarding aquatic plants.



For more information on managing aquatic plants, please contact your local APM coordinator. For more information about the new aquatic plant management rules and their development, please contact Frank J. Koshere, Statewide Aquatic Plant Management Coordinator, at (715) 392-0807 or frank.koshere@dnr.state.wi.us.