

FACT SHEET FOR BIG MARINE LAKE

Checking for Zebra Mussels at the End of the Summer Season

Zebra mussels are currently (as of September 2015) not observed in Big Marine Lake. When boats, swim rafts, boat docks, and boat lifts are removed in the fall for the season, it is a great time to inspect them for zebra mussels. Zebra mussels can be found on any hard surface that has been in a lake for at least a month or so.

To inspect a structure, first visually look for anything that does not belong on the structure and remove the foreign object. Then, run your hand over the sides of the boat, swim raft, or dock, if it feels smooth you can move on. If it feels like sand paper, take a closer look. Young zebra mussels and some aquatic plants can feel like sand paper on the side of recreation items. If there is anything attached, remove it and place it in a plastic bag. Next, look at the items removed. If it is algae, invertebrate eggs, or plants the objects can be discarded. If the object is not algae or plants, look to see if you can identify it. If not, does it look like the picture below. If yes, call the Big Marine Association contact person or take the item to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to have the object correctly identified.



This is a zebra mussel on a rock in Lake Minnetonka. Notice the alternating dark and light stripes.



This is a boat lift removed from Lake Minnetonka. The circled area has a couple of zebra mussels attached to the pad. When looking for zebra mussels make sure to check all the hidden areas as well.



The wheels of this dock, removed from Pelican Lake, Otter Tail Co, have lots of zebra mussels still attached even after snow has fallen on them. The crevices of the wheels are also good places for zebra mussels to grow.