

Special Alert

Zebra mussels found in Cass County lakes

You can help prevent their spread.
Here's the facts:

Zebra mussels (*Dreissena polymorpha*) are small freshwater mussels (clams) that are not native to Minnesota. They grow to be about one to two inches long and have yellow and brown striped shells. Unlike native mussels, they attach to any hard surface in the water. First discovered in Lake Superior in 1989, zebra mussels originate from the Black and Caspian Seas bordering Russia. Since then they have been found in thirty eight Minnesota lakes and rivers.

In the fall of 2010, **Gull Lake was added to the list of infested waters**. Cass County now has six lakes and one river with known zebra mussel infestations, which along with Gull Lake, includes Bass, Green's, Margaret, Spider and Upper Gull lakes as well as the Gull River.

Zebra mussels spread from one lake or river to another on boats, docks, recreation devices or the movement of aquatic vegetation. The microscopic larvae may be carried in bait buckets and live wells. Currently there are no environmentally safe methods to kill zebra mussels once they become established in a natural system.

Zebra mussels **kill native mussels, alter aquatic food chains, block underwater intake pipes, and impede boat performance**. The sharp shells can cause physical harm to pets and people. While certain fish, crayfish and ducks will feed on zebra mussels, none of these predators will eliminate them from a lake or river once infested.



What this means for Cass County. Cass County commissioners share the concerns they are hearing from citizens about zebra mussels and other aquatic invasive species. A Kandiyohi County commissioner recently stated "Lake shore property values in Alexandria where there are zebra mussels are down thirty percent", a statement reflective of worries about future resale value and property tax revenues. The Cass County board strongly encourages property owners to get involved with local efforts to halt the spread of zebra mussels and other aquatic invasive species.

What you can do to help. The most important thing you can do is clean off your boat and trailer whenever you leave any lake or river access point. Since zebra mussels attach to aquatic vegetation, remove all aquatic plants from your boat, motor and trailer. Inspect your boat for visible attached mussels, particularly in the stern, trim tabs, and lower unit areas. Bringing the boat engine up to operating temperatures will kill the heat sensitive, free swimming larvae. Drain the water from bait buckets, live wells, and bilges. Another precaution is to wash your boat with hot (120°F or hotter) water and allow it to dry completely for 5 - 7 days. Try to store your boat out of water to reduce encrusting. Make sure to inspect docks and lifts before transporting to other bodies of water. Remove irrigation intakes from water when not in use.

What to do if you find new zebra mussel infestations. Make note of the date and exact location of shell or mussel. Take the mussel with you, store it in alcohol and contact the Minnesota DNR Exotic Species Program toll free at 1-800-766-6000, or contact your local MN DNR office.

**It is illegal to transport zebra mussels
on boats or equipment !!**

To become a zebra mussel volunteer monitor for your lake please contact:

- Darrin Hoverson, MN DNR Invasive Species Specialist, darrin.hoverson@state.mn.us (218) 699-7293
- John Ringle, Cass County Environmental Services, john.ringle@cass.co.mn.us (218) 547-7256
- MN DNR website - www.dnr.state.mn.us

CASS COUNTY GOVERNMENT OFFICES

Cass County Courthouse, 303 Minnesota Ave West
PO Box 3000 Walker MN 56484-3000

Cass County District Court

Citations 1-800-657-3611
Court Administration 547-7200
Guardian Ad Litem 824-1361
Jury Information 547-7248
Website/Self Help/Court Forms www.mncourts.gov

Cass County Offices

Assessor 547-7298
Attorney 547-7255
Auditor-Treasurer (and **General Information**) 547-7260
Central Services - Buildings & Grounds 547-7230
-Management Information Systems 547-7389
County Board - Administrator 547-7419
Crime Victim Services 547-7422
Emergency Management 547-7437
Environmental Services 547-7241
Internet Access www.co.cass.mn.us
Probation 547-7212
Recorder 547-7381
Sheriff 547-1424
Soil & Water Conservation District 547-7399
TDD Number 547-1424

Other Offices at Courthouse

Natural Resource Conservation Service 547-7254

Offices at other locations

Cass County Economic Development 947-7522
Cass County Extension 4-H 587-8280
Cass County Housing & Redevelopment Authority 947-3993
Extension Regional Center - Brainerd 828-2273
Mississippi Headwaters Board 947-7524

Health, Human & Veteran Services

400 Michigan Ave. West, Walker 547-1340

Highway Department

8045 County 12 NW, Walker 547-7368

Historical Society & Museum

201 Minnesota Ave. West, Walker, Hours are seasonal 547-7251

Land Department

218 Washburn Ave. East, Backus 947-3338

Law Enforcement Center

301 Minnesota Avenue West, Walker

All Emergencies Toll Free Dial 911

Non-Emergency 547-1424

Detention Center 547-2441

Sheriff's Office Toll Free 1-800-450-2677

1st District Commissioner

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2nd District Commissioner

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3rd District Commissioner

Jeff Peterson
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Hackensack MN 56452
(218) 675-6086
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4th District Commissioner

Jim Dowson
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Walker, MN 56484
(218) 547-1894
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5th District Commissioner

Dick Downham
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Remer, MN 56672
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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Cass County Public Health

Free vaccinations for certain adults

Cass County Health, Human and Veterans Services will be offering free pertussis and pneumonia vaccination for adults that are **un-** or **underinsured**, funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

PERTUSSIS (WHOOPING COUGH): Due to an increase in pertussis in Minnesota, the Minnesota Department of Health is urging immunization of adults and adolescents who have contact with infants even if it has been less than 10 years since the previous booster.

PNEUMOCOCCAL: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Advisory Committee recommends the PPSV (pneumonia) vaccine for all adults age 65 years and older and adults 19-65 years with chronic health conditions or diseases and/or who smoke cigarettes.

Cass County Public Health will offer these two vaccinations at no cost to **qualifying** adults at immunization clinics scheduled throughout the county during the month of May. For dates and more information contact Deb Andrews, Public Health Nurse, at 218-547-1340 ext 218.

Our "SHIP" came in...

Cass County has received State Health Improvement Program (SHIP) grant funding to work for policy, systems, and environmental changes to decrease obesity and prevent tobacco use and exposure. The focus will be on preventative health care within schools, worksites, health care systems, and the community.



- Four Cass County schools have implemented policies and practices to increase physical activity and/or to increase access to nutritious foods
- Two worksites are implementing a comprehensive worksite wellness initiative to promote healthy weight and healthy behaviors
- Two health care facilities are partnering with community resources to provide active referrals to reduce obesity and tobacco use
- Through menu labeling with five restaurants and promotion of four farmer's markets, access to nutritious foods is increasing.

Visit the Cass County website for the latest information about SHIP initiatives, or contact SHIP coordinator Leslie Staker at 218-280-2277.

PROPERTY FRAUD ALERT

According to the FBI, property and mortgage fraud is the fastest growing white-collar crime. The **Cass County Recorder's Office** has teamed up with Property Fraud Alert to create a notification service to help you stay informed, alert and notified of any attempts to defraud. Subscribe free at www.propertyfraudalert.com/cassmn or call 547-7381 for more information.



Pay property taxes securely over the internet (OR BY PHONE) using Visa, MasterCard, American Express, or Discover credit or debit cards. One

time e-check and automatic payment options are also available. For more information visit www.co.cass.mn.us "Paying Property Taxes" under Quick Links or call the Cass County Auditor-Treasurer's Office at 218-547-7260. To make a payment by phone, call 1-877-695-3729. (Convenience fees charged by the payment processor apply.)

Cass County Sheriff Tom Burch invites your questions and comments. Watch for his monthly column in area newspapers for up to date information and answers to questions submitted by citizens.



Sheriff's Office 218-547-1424
Toll-Free 800-450-2677
Crime Stoppers Tip Line 800-222-8477
Sheriff Tom Burch 218-547-7308
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