

DECONTAMINATION Protocols for Field Activities

REMEMBER:

To reduce the potential to spread aquatic invasives by our activities, it is important to decontaminate *between* watersheds. Thus, if moving to more than one watershed in a day, you must decontaminate *before* moving to the next site. At the end of the field day, also, decontaminate before leaving the last water feature visited or properly seal equipment in a bag or container for later decontamination at a facility.

2 sets of field gear could be rotated in and out of the field per cleaning cycle.

The following procedures should be used to decontaminate field gear (e.g. waders, wading boots, boot insoles, nets or any gear that comes into contact with the water):

Freezing Procedure *Use this procedure **only** if it is to be followed by **complete** drying (preferably in the sun) immediately afterwards

- Brush off any debris and then place gear into a new large plastic trash bag/s. Seal for containment before leaving the field location and prior to placement into a vehicle.
- Upon return to facility, place the plastic bag with the gear into a suitable freezer (<32deg F) for a minimum of 10 hours.

Chemical Procedure

- If field gear is to be transported prior to decontaminating, first brush off any debris, place in a new large trash bag and seal for containment.
- Prepare diluted concentrated quat solution (may substitute 10% chlorine) in a well-ventilated space using gloves and eye protection. *Exposure to concentrated solution may be dangerous (see MSDS).*
- Pour decontamination solution into a suitable holding container and submerge gear for at least 15 minutes. Gear may need to be weighed-down and/or rotated for complete and sustained immersion.

For dilution of concentrated quat solution, see dilution table below.

quat concentrate (oz)	Water (gal)
7	1
14	2
21	3
28	4
35	5

- Remove field gear from decontamination solution and inspect it to make sure all surfaces have been wetted.

- Rinse treated field gear with *fresh* water (not water from previous waterbody to avoid further contamination). Dispose of *rinse* water at least 100 ft. from any surface water.
- Do not re-use decontamination solution after one week or after it has been significantly contaminated with organic matter.
- Decontamination solution should be contained and stored after use, to be later disposed of in a **wastewater sewer facility only** (not in a septic system).

Spray Bottle Procedure

- Make up a decontamination solution of 10% concentrate solution (9 parts water to 1 part quat concentrate) in a spray bottle. (may substitute chlorine solution)
- Make up diluted decontamination concentrate solution in a well-ventilated space using gloves and eye protection. *Exposure to concentrated solution may be dangerous (see MSDS).*
- Saturate field gear making sure all areas are wetted thoroughly.
- Let stand for at least 20 minutes.
- Rinse treated gear with *fresh* water. Do not use water from previous waterbody to avoid contamination.
- Dispose of *rinse* water at least 100 ft. from any surface water.
- Dispose of decontamination solution to a **wastewater sewer facility only** (not in a septic system).
- Do not re-use decontamination solution after one week or if significantly contaminated with organic debris.

The spray bottle technique is not as reliable as freezing (followed by drying) or immersion methods, as complete wetting and adequate exposure times are difficult to control, and should be used only in cases where the other methods are impractical.

Watercraft Decontamination Procedure

- Prior to leaving a waterbody locale, 1) clean all mud and other debris from the watercraft, trailer and equipment 2) drain all water from the watercraft (i.e. motor, cooling system, live-wells, bilge and lower end unit) and allow to dry, as much as possible.
- Dry in storage for a week to thirty days (depending on ambient conditions) before using the watercraft again (unless dedicated to a specific water body, only).
- **Or--**Pressure wash all wetted surfaces with hot (≥ 140 deg F) water.

Sources of quat include: Metaquat , Sparquat 256, Quat 128, Path-X, etc. These are industrial/agricultural disinfectants and can be found at janitorial or agricultural supply companies.

For questions, contact :

*L. Breck McAlexander, Region 1 Aquatic Invasive Species
Coordinator*LMCALEXANDER@dfg.ca.gov ; off.: (530) 225-2317; mobile: (530) 510-2014.