

Being a **W₂O!** Volunteer: *What it means for you*

Weeds Watch Out! (**W₂O!**) volunteers play a fundamental role in stopping the spread of invasive aquatic plants in our local waterways. By adopting a piece of shoreline or portion of a local waterbody, volunteers relay important information about the presence (or absence) and abundance of invasive aquatic plants in their area.

First, some basics:

- The prime growing season of aquatic plants spans from about June through September; you only need to report to us during these months.
- You should check your adopted water at least once between mid-June and mid-July, and at least once between mid-July and mid-August.
- Invasive aquatic plants can be introduced anytime and by anybody, so checking more often is better - 3 or 4 checks per summer are ideal.

How to look:

- Pick a day when the water is calm, rough water makes plants harder to see.
- A kayak or canoe makes surveying easiest, but wading also works.
- Boat slowly around the shoreline; polarized glasses may help if there is excessive glare, and binoculars may be useful if water is too shallow to get close.
- Pay particular attention to new plant growth in familiar areas.
- Be sure to check marshy areas, inlets, coves, and under docks
- If you suspect that a particular plant is indeed an invasive variety, identification is much easier when you can look closely at the plant. Use a rake to help you pull a plant from the water if you cannot reach it by hand.

What do I do next?

- Report your findings to us at CCE with the enclosed forms.
- Send the form even if there are no invasive weeds. That information is just as important to us!

Remember, monitoring your area is key to the “Early Detection and Rapid Response” strategy. The data you submit not only helps track the status of invasive aquatic weeds that may already be established in the area – but it also ensures that the presence of new invaders will be made known and can be dealt with quickly!



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Department of Planning
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