



# Portage Lake Newsletter

## Groundwater: The Sixth Great Lake

By: Gary Wilson, Great Lakes Now September 24, 2018

When you're surrounded by the Great Lakes, there's a tendency to fix your focus on them when the subject is water. Why not? The Lakes supply drinking water to millions, provide multiple recreational opportunities and are a coveted natural resource asset for future economic activity in the region. For example, tech-giant Foxconn Technology is building a new plant in southeast Wisconsin that could bring up to 13,000 jobs because of its proximity to Lake Michigan. In Michigan, water and the Great Lakes are literally the state's public identity. But what about a



hidden water source that's sometimes referred to as the Sixth Great Lake? A source so plentiful that it's approximately the size of Lake Huron. It's groundwater. In Michigan, groundwater is buried out of sight in rock layers that serve as aquifers. Almost half of Michigan citizens are served by groundwater, and the state uses 700 million gallons of groundwater each day, according to a Department of Environmental Quality fact sheet. Public water supplies in Michigan provide groundwater to 1.7 million people and the state has nine percent of the nation's groundwater supply systems, the highest share of any state the DEQ says. What does the public know about groundwater and its quality? For the complete article, <https://www.greatlakesnow.org/2018/09/groundwater-the-sixth-great-lake/>

## New Boating Law to Prevent the Introduction and Spread of Invasive Species

Michigan's Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (Act 451 of 1994) Part 413 has been amended with changes for boaters and anglers that take effect March 21, 2019. The changes are intended to strengthen protection for Michigan waterways against the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species. Article and picture curiosity of Michigan.gov

**What boaters need to know: stop aquatic hitchhikers**—Prior to the amendment, the law only required that a person not place watercraft or trailers in the waters of Michigan if an aquatic plant is attached. In addition to this requirement, the new changes require all of the following prior to transporting any watercraft over land:

**Removing all drain plugs from bilges, ballast tanks, and live wells.**

**Draining all water from any live wells and bilges.**

**Ensuring that the watercraft, trailer, and any conveyance used to transport the watercraft or trailer are free of aquatic organisms, including plants.**

**This means that after trailering boats, and before getting on the road, boaters must pull plugs, drain water and remove plants and debris.**

Violation of the law is a state civil infraction and violators may be subject to fines up to \$100.

**What you should do: To comply with the law and prevent the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species, boaters should:**

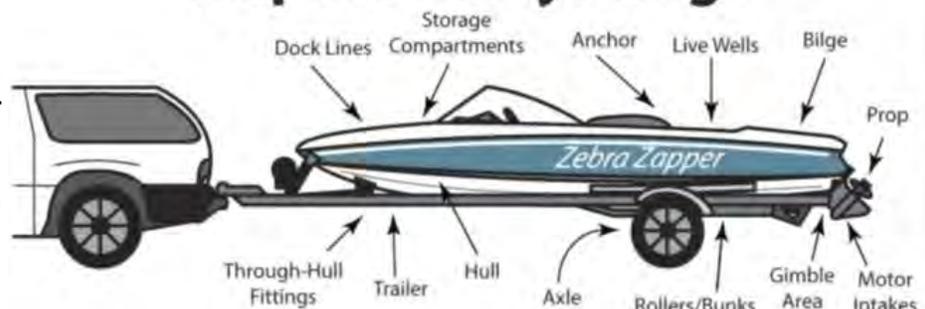
**CLEAN** boats, trailers and equipment.

**DRAIN** live wells, bilges and all water - pull all drain plugs.

**DRY** boats and equipment.

**DISPOSE** of unwanted bait in the trash.

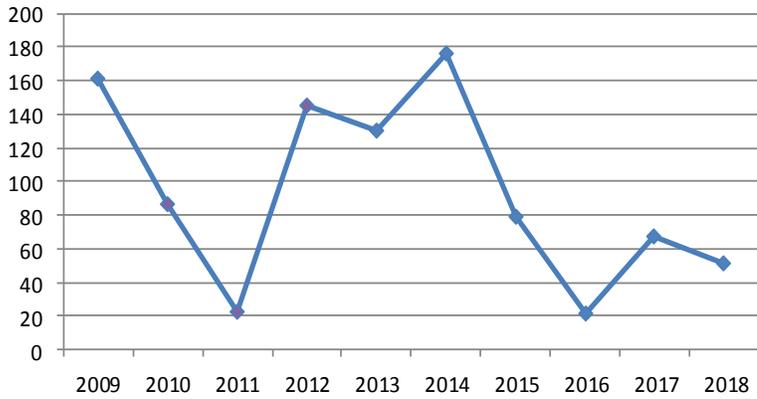
Before leaving and before launching...  
**inspect everything!**





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**Acres of EWM Treated Annually**



**Portage Lake Review**

In 2019, approximately 58 acres of Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM), Phragmites & Purple Loosestrife were managed in and around Portage Lake. As the graph to the left shows, the overall acreage of the EWM infestation has decreased over time, requiring substantially less treatment than when the program began. However, this does not mean our work is done. The Portage Lake Management Program is in place to continually monitor Portage Lake and keep the exotic plants under control, an annual maintenance program.

The abundance of healthy native plants in Portage Lake increases the long term stability of the lake. The native plant community is tracked annually, has been protected and is quite strong with over 17 native plant species found annually. Native plant populations will vary seasonally, but have remained strong despite the exotic plant control measures. Proper exotic plant control will selectively target exotic species, while promoting native plant growth.

## Yard Waste Littering Notice

- Disposing yard waste, including grass clippings and leaves, into our rivers, lakes and streams is bad for the water.
- Do not rake leaves into the lake. Decomposing leaves produces more muck.
- The practice violates Michigan’s Littering Law (Michigan Compiled Law 324.8902).
- For information regarding proper waste disposal and options for responsible yard waste management please refer to [www.mi.gov/deq/waste](http://www.mi.gov/deq/waste)
- (Select “Solid Waste,” “Recycling” then “How Do I Handle this Waste”) or call the DEQ Assistance Center at 800-622-9278.
- To report littering call your local police department or in environmental emergencies the Pollution Emergency Alerting System at 800-292-4706.



## Burning Leaves

- Keep all burn piles and debris piles away from lake. Do not burn near the water. The ash is concentrated nutrients!



**MISIN** Midwest Invasive Species Information Network

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

**A Simple Mapping Tool  
Phone app or Web**



Download Now

What species?  
Where – GPS point, phone, web  
How big is the infestation?  
How dense is the infestation?

This effort is being led by researchers with Michigan State University's Applied Spatial Ecology and Technical Services Laboratory in conjunction with a growing consortium of Supporting Partners

ID Training Modules

Report Sightings



Report invasive species in your area. Your sightings are an important part of any successful control effort.

MISIN Alerts



Create custom email alerts for new observations in your area of interest.

Species Distribution



Browse the distribution of reported invasive species. Search by common name and geography.



**Lake Manager**  
Bre Grabill, PLM  
PO Box 424 Evart, MI 49631  
[www.plmcorp.net](http://www.plmcorp.net)  
800-382-4434

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