



NEWS RELEASE

QUAGGA MUSSEL INSPECTION PROGRAM KEEPS CONTROL OVER INVASIVE SPECIES

The Quagga Mussel is a destructive invasive aquatic species that infests and can literally destroy a water system.

PALMDALE, CA Date, May 3, 2010- For the first time since the Quagga Mussel Inspection Program began, inspectors at the Fin and Feather Club found Quagga Mussels on a boat that came in for inspection at Lake Palmdale. The Department of Fish and Game trained inspectors discovered the mussels underneath the boat, near the propeller. The good news is, the inspection program worked and the boat never entered the lake. When a vessel owner wishes to enter Lake Palmdale they need to get their vessel inspected. If the vessel passes inspection a lock, cable, and a seal is connected to the boat and trailer, which carries a one time \$50.00 fee. There is a 10-day quarantine to ensure the vessel has not been launched on any other infested lake. The owner may take the boat home and the vessel will be allowed on the lake as long as the seal has not been broken.

If a vessel does not pass inspection the owner must take the vessel and have it thoroughly hot pressure washed to decontaminate and clean the vessel. Once the vessel has been cleaned, drained, and dried, the owner may then bring the vessel back for inspection.

In an effort to protect water quality for Palmdale Water District customers, reduce future operating costs and accommodate recreational boating, PWD coordinated with The Department of Fish and Game and the Fin and Feather Club to develop the Quagga Mussel Inspection. The program was launched on August 25, 2009, at the Fin and Feather Club. The Quagga Mussel is a destructive invasive aquatic species that infests and can literally destroy a water system. It is estimated that if the lake became infested additional maintenance and labor costs would be well over \$100,000.00 annually. “A Quagga Mussel infestation would have a devastating impact on plant operations, lake ecology, and recreational opportunities. The recent detection really drives home the importance of having an effective inspection program.” stated Peter Thompson Jr., Palmdale Water District’s Operations Manager.

The District's program was modeled & adapted from the program used at Lake Casitas and consists of three components; education, training, and inspection. Education is a key component and an educational packet is supplied to all vessel owners upon inspection. Over 20 staff including PWD and Fin & Feather Club personnel has passed inspection training.

The District is also working with the United States Forest Service to protect the waters of Littlerock Reservoir, which is a local water source for PWD, against a Quagga Mussel infestation. The District performs regular testing at both Palmdale Lake and Littlerock Dam to look for Quagga Mussels. The District's water quality staff also placed an artificial substrate (Quagga Condo) at the floating dock at Littlerock Reservoir, and the substrate is checked each month for indications of any mussels. Although PWD does not control recreation at Littlerock Reservoir the District is making every effort to help control contact with boats that otherwise would contaminate the reservoir.

About Palmdale Water District

The Palmdale Water District has grown from an agency providing irrigation water for 60 customers, to an agency providing domestic water to the thriving community we know today. Founded as an irrigation district supplying water mainly to farms for agricultural use, the District's boundaries have expanded with Palmdale's rapid population growth and the District has shifted to providing predominantly municipal and industrial water. The Palmdale Water District is currently divided into five divisions covering areas in East and South Palmdale. The Palmdale Water District remains dedicated to providing clean, pure water; state of the art facilities to meet current and future needs; attentive staff committed to customer satisfaction; treatment and testing to ensure high quality water; education on water conservation and safety; and reliable supply and resourceful planning insuring customer satisfaction and continued reasonable rates. The Palmdale Water District can be reached by calling (661) 947-4111. The Palmdale Water District is located at 2029 E Avenue Q in Palmdale, California.

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