



720 W. St. Germain  
Suite 143  
St. Cloud, MN 56301

800-515-5253  
320-257-6630

[www.minnesotawaters.org](http://www.minnesotawaters.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For details, contact:

Carrie Maurer-Ackerman

Program Director

Phone #: 218-587-2980

Email: [carriea@minnesotawaters.org](mailto:carriea@minnesotawaters.org)

#### ADDITIONAL WORKSHOPS SCHEDULED FOR AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES TRAINING FOR LAKE SERVICE PROVIDERS

Saint Cloud, MN. February 21, 2012: Lake Service Providers are required by law to attend Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) training and obtain a permit prior to working in waters of the state. Four new training sessions have been added to the workshop schedule. The newly added workshops will take place in Prior Lake, Tonka Bay, Grand Marais and Ely. Lake Service Providers should act now to attend one of the training sessions and to obtain the new, mandatory permit before ice-out.

State laws passed in 2011 aim to help prevent the spread of AIS between waters in Minnesota. They also require service providers to apply for a permit, pay a \$50 application fee, attend training in person and pass a test. Upon completion of all the above-mentioned tasks a permit will be issued to the service provider.

Through a partnership with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Minnesota Waters is conducting the statewide trainings for businesses that install and remove water recreation equipment. The training sessions provide the information needed to understand and pass the required test. In addition, service providers are taught how to integrate AIS prevention strategies into their business practices.

More than 15 additional training sessions are scheduled for various locations across the state in the next few months. The schedule of training locations and dates are being updated periodically and service providers should check the Minnesota Waters' website ([www.minnesotawaters.org](http://www.minnesotawaters.org)) for the most up-to-date list of trainings.

"Hundreds of lake service businesses across that state have now attended one of the AIS trainings," said Lois Sinn Lindquist, Executive Director, Minnesota Waters. "We look forward to working with hundreds of more businesses in the coming weeks and are confident that the businesses receiving this mandatory training will undoubtedly play an integral role in helping to prevent the spread of AIS in Minnesota."

Information about the lake service provider training and permitting can be found on the DNR website ([www.dnr.state.mn.us/lsp/index.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/lsp/index.html)). The online permit application for lake service provider businesses is available on the DNR website. The service provider permit, which will be valid for three years, must be in possession while providing any services. Persons who work for a permitted service provider must take an online training course prior to working in waters of the state. The online training for the employees will be available after March 1, 2012 on the DNR website.

Minnesota Waters believes an engaged citizenry will effectively protect and restore Minnesota's irreplaceable natural assets -- clean and healthy lakes, rivers and streams -- for current and future generations. The non-profit organization provides issue advocacy, training, connections, and support to empower citizens and citizen-led groups to be active, effective advocates for Minnesota's unique waterscape.

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