

March 10, 2021

Aquatic Invasive Species Found In Moss Balls

Alberta Environment and Parks is asking Albertans to destroy moss balls that were purchased after January 1, 2021

Live zebra mussels (*Dreissena polymorpha*) have been detected in moss (Marimo) balls being sold at various plant and pet stores across Alberta. Moss balls are primarily sold for decorative purposes in aquariums and are a unique spherical growth form of a green algal species named *Aegagropila linnei*. It may also be sold under its former name, *Cladophora aegagropila*. Zebra mussels are listed as an aquatic invasive species under the *Fisheries (Alberta) Act* and if introduced would have severe impacts on Alberta's economy and environment.

The Government of Alberta's Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) team is working with jurisdictional partners to trace shipments of moss balls that have been received in Canada from the contaminated source. Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) is asking Albertans to destroy moss balls that were purchased after January 1, 2021. AEP has provided an alert which goes into further detail on how to destroy moss balls.

If you see moss balls still being sold in Alberta, please contact AIS hotline at 1.855.336.2628.

To stay up to date on this quickly evolving situation, follow AIP on Facebook.

For questions or concerns, please contact Janine Higgins at janine.higgins@gov.ab.ca.

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