

Seeking Providers of Quarantine Treatments

AQIS is seeking QAPs interested in providing quarantine treatments as a commercial service to incoming passengers and importers of used freshwater equipment such as kayaks, wetsuits and fishing gear.

This is 'rock snot'...

AQIS has recently become aware of a new quarantine risk facing Australia.

Didymosphenia geminata is a type of fresh water algae that occurs in Europe and North America and has recently invaded many rivers in New Zealand. This algae out-competes other organisms and drastically changes the ecological balance of rivers and lakes. Add to this, the unattractive nature of this organism – earning it the name, 'rock snot' – and you can appreciate that this is a pest that everyone wants to keep out of Australia.



Photos of 'rock snot' courtesy of Biosecurity New Zealand

Items of Risk

Overseas experience suggests that rock snot could be introduced to Australia via porous items that have been used in freshwater recreational pursuits in contaminated waters.

These items include:

- felt-sole waders/boots
- leather top boots
- Neoprene wetsuits
- foam inserts and seats in kayaks.

Rock snot could also be introduced on contaminated non-porous items such as kayaks, rods, reels, fishing lines, flies, tackle boxes and nets.

Treatments for Rock Snot

AQIS is now introducing control measures for items such as these to try to keep Australia rock snot-free. Different treatments are required depending on the nature of the goods. In each case, AQIS will specify the treatment that is to be applied. The treatment will be specified in a *Quarantine Direction*.

Any porous personal effects that may have been used in freshwater recreational activities in New Zealand and other countries where rock snot is known to occur must receive one of the following three treatments:

- **complete immersion in water containing 2% dishwashing detergent or nappy cleaner at a temperature of at least 45°C for at least 30 minutes**
- **complete immersion in water alone at a temperature of at least 45°C for at least 40 minutes**
- **exposure to a temperature of -18°C or less for at least 24 hours**

Any non-porous personal effects showing obvious algal contamination will require the following treatment:

- **complete immersion in water (at any temperature) containing 5% dishwashing detergent for at least 1 minute**

Any non-porous personal effects that may have been used in freshwater recreational activities in rock snot countries but which do not have obvious algal contamination will require one of the following four treatments:

- **complete immersion in water alone at a temperature of at least 60°C for at least 1 minute accompanied by scrubbing**
- **complete immersion in water (at any temperature) containing 2% household bleach for at least 1 minute accompanied by scrubbing**
- **complete immersion in water (at any temperature) containing 5% dishwashing detergent, nappy cleaner, antiseptic hand cleaner or salt for at least 1 minute accompanied by scrubbing**
- **complete immersion in a 1% Virkon® solution (at any temperature) for at least 30 seconds accompanied by scrubbing**

What can my QAP do?

If your QAP is interested in offering the above treatments as a commercial service to incoming passengers and importers, you will need to set up some basic equipment to carry out these treatments. As soon as you are able to offer these treatments, AQIS will be able to direct passengers' and importers' goods for treatment at your QAP.

What equipment does my QAP need to do these treatments?

To conduct the hot water treatments, your QAP will need equipment that can:

1. completely immerse items to be treated; and
2. maintain a temperature of more than 45°C; and
3. monitor the water temperature.

To conduct the dishwashing detergent, nappy cleaner, salt and Virkon® solution treatments, your QAP will need equipment that can:

1. accurately measure the volume of detergent etc. to be added; and
2. completely immerse items to be treated.

To conduct the cold treatment, your QAP will need equipment that can:

1. maintain a temperature of -18°C or less; and
2. monitor the air temperature.

Immersion

As a guide, items such as wetsuits could be immersed in water in a container such as a barrel, large tub or tank. The container would need to be fitted with a device (e.g. a heavy frame) to ensure that the wetsuits remain submerged and do not float to the surface. Another alternative would be to weight the wetsuits. With items such as wetsuits, it is important to ensure that there are no air pockets as these would negate the treatment. Items such as foam inserts and seats in kayaks can be immersed by filling the kayak with water.

Maintaining Temperature

For the hot water treatment, the container could be fitted with an immersion heater in order to maintain the temperature above 45°C. Alternatively, if the container is not fitted with a heater, it could be filled up with water hotter than 45°C as long as this temperature does not drop below 45°C before the end of the treatment period.

For the cold treatment, a cold store could utilise its freezer facilities. Alternatively, a QAP could use a refrigerated shipping container.

Monitoring Temperature

For the hot water treatment, the temperature of the water must be monitored to ensure that it is above 45°C. As hot water rises, the temperature should be monitored from the bottom of the container. If the container is equipped with a device to circulate the water (e.g. a pump or agitator) to ensure uniform temperature, the temperature can be monitored from the top. Temperature at the top of a container could be monitored with a floating pool/spa thermometer. Such a thermometer could be weighted in order to measure temperature at the bottom of the container. Alternatively, a thermocouple could be set into the bottom of the container.

What do I do when I'm all set up and ready to start doing these treatments?

When your QAP is ready, you will need to contact your AQIS Approved Premises Officer (APO) so that your treatment set-up can be inspected and your premises can be activated in the AQIS system so that AQIS can start directing goods to be treated to your QAP. See below for your local APO:

region	APO	email	telephone
NSW	Debra Lance	debra.lance@aqis.gov.au	02 8334 7512
VIC	Cath Hill	catherine.hill@aqis.gov.au	03 8318 6946
QLD - South	Lyell Copeland	lyell.copeland@aqis.gov.au	07 3246 8685
QLD - Townsville	Ramona Dalla Pozza	ramona.dallapozza@aqis.gov.au	07 4789 7888
QLD - Cairns	Tim Meakins	timothy.meakins@aqis.gov.au	07 4030 7856
WA	Frank Gyoergy	frank.gyoergy@aqis.gov.au	08 9334 1523
SA	Chris Loechel	chris.loechel@aqis.gov.au	08 8201 6138
TAS	Noel Brereton	noel.brereton@aqis.gov.au	03 6233 4626
NT	Kim King	kimberley.king@aqis.gov.au	08 8920 7050