

Step-By-Step Procedures for Inspections: Exit Inspection Step-By-Step Procedure - Prevention Waters

Exit Inspections are performed at lakes, rivers, and reservoirs only. It is critically important to make an additional educational contact with the boater reinforcing that watercraft should be clean, drain and dry in between each use. It also verifies that the boater has followed the proper procedures to clean off the watercraft and completely drain all compartments prior to leaving. Repeat the primary educational message Clean, Drain, Dry and explain why boaters need to do it each time they use their watercraft.

The priority for exit inspections is to inspect for invasive species, drain water, remove plants, and apply a seal and receipt to the watercraft. Perform the exit inspection below to ensure the watercraft leaves clean and drained to the best of the inspector's ability.

Step 1 – Greeting, Safety and Educate the Boater

- Introduce yourself
- Inspectors should ask the driver to turn off the engine, put on the parking brake and step out of the vehicle
- Provide a brief verbal explanation of the purpose of the exit inspection
- Provide guidance on Clean, Drain, and Dry practices

Step 2 – Initial Assessment

- Record on the Activity Log or in the Mobile Application (Data Collector) the following information
 - Outgoing
 - Boat Registration or HIN Number
 - Boat Trailer License Plate
 - Boat Type

Step 3 – Ask About Live Aquatic Bait, if applicable

- Ask the boater if they have live aquatic bait.
 - If yes, follow bait procedure in the decontamination chapter
 - If no, continue with the inspection

*Note: Some jurisdictions may not have the authority to inspect for live aquatic bait.

Step 4 – Perform the visual and tactile exit inspection of the watercraft, using the acronym H.E.A.D. to ensure that the watercraft is properly inspected.

Hull and Trailer – Rapid Exterior Inspection

- Look over (visual) and feel (tactile) the entire watercraft on both sides of the hull and trailer.
- Physically inspect the through hull fittings.
- Check trailer bunks or rollers, tire wells, lights and electrical.
- Remove any plants or plant fragments that are present.
- Ask the boater to remove the bilge plug to drain the watercraft when inspecting the transom.
- Physically and visually inspect the bilge area and use a flashlight to visually see if any AIS or standing water are present.
- If applicable, have the boater activate the bilge pump.
- If the watercraft has an inboard engine, be certain to carefully inspect the prop, prop shaft and rudder.
- Inspect intakes for ballasts, engines, and other interior compartments.
Note: Thru hull intakes and discharge ports will be a good indicator that more complicated systems may be onboard.

Engine or Motor

- Visually and physically inspect the drive unit with a flashlight when it is in trailer mode (up).
- Ask for the outboard or I/O to be lowered.
- Visually and physically inspect the gimbal area of the outboard or I/O with a flashlight.
- Visually and physically inspect the transom or rear of the watercraft and any attached instruments including but not limited to:
 - Pitot tubes, trim tabs, transducers, etc.
- Ask the boater to raise the drive unit to avoid damage during transport.

Anchor and Equipment Check

- Ask to see the anchor and anchor rope or chain.
- Visually and physically inspect the anchor and rope or chain for mud, plants and/or AIS.
- Ensure all water-related equipment is clean and dry including but not limited to:
 - Bait buckets, water toys, fenders, auxiliary pumps, etc.

Drain and Check Interior Compartments

If all interior compartments cannot be fully inspected from outside the watercraft, you will need to enter the watercraft to inspect interior compartments that could hold standing water. Ensure that the watercraft is drained to the best of your ability.

- Ask for permission to board the watercraft and ask the boater to climb in first. Follow the boater into the watercraft the same way they entered. Be careful to prevent either the boater or inspection staff from falling or getting hurt. Always maintain three points of contact with the watercraft and never jump off. Ask the boater if they would like you to remove your shoes if allowable.

- Ask the boater to open up compartments so you can see all bait wells, live wells, equipment lockers and verifiable ballast tanks. The inspector should work with the boater to remove standing water from the watercraft using a pump, sponge, or towel. Ensure that the compartments are drained to the best of your ability. Remind the boater to dry at home.
- If the watercraft has a ballast system, inspect for standing water.
 - Request that the boater activate all discharge pumps for the ballast system.
 - Inspect any accessible ballast tanks/bags through ballast ports
- If the watercraft has an inboard or I/O engine, inspect the engine compartment and its bilge. Have the operator run the bilge pump, if applicable.
- If the watercraft has any sea strainers or water filtration devices, request that they be removed by the boat owner. Inspect all sea strainers once removed from the watercraft. Recommend sea strainers remain out during transport.

Step 5 - Apply Seal and Provide Valid Receipt

- Properly apply a seal to watercraft and trailer.
- Provide a copy of the seal receipt properly filled out.
- Explain that the seal is valid only if the receipt is kept and the seal remains intact.

Step 6 - Closeout

- Ask the boater to leave the bilge plug out during transport to ensure extra dry time.
*Many states require drain plugs out while transporting vessel.
- Ensure the drive unit has been raised to avoid damage during transport
- Ensure all inspectors are finished looking at the watercraft and that nothing was found.
- Provide the boater with any additional educational materials.
- Thank the boater for their efforts to Clean, Drain, and Dry.
- Yell “stand clear” to ensure the safety of staff and the public.
- Complete the WID Activity Log or submit the mobile application record.