

Clean all gear after stream investigation

To prevent the spread of invasive species from one stream to others, it is important follow appropriate procedures to clean gear after visiting the stream, as described. Many invasives may not be visible or identified, therefore caution should always be taken. If you must move from one waterway to another, use duplicate gear or disinfect thoroughly.

- Footwear, nets and other gear: Make sure all debris and dirt is removed. Rinse nets as thoroughly as feasible in the stream, onsite.
- Shoes and boots should be cleaned thoroughly as follows, as soon as return from the stream visit. [could also remove them first streamside and change to dry footwear to walk or ride back]

→ Most thorough steps:

1. Wash in strong spray, with high temperature if possible (hot water machine wash)
2. Use disinfectant (*see box*)
3. Complete clean water rinse (e.g., hose off outside)

...OR... Dry completely in sunlight at least 48 hours.

...OR... Leave outside to dry, send dirty shoes home in a plastic bag, recommend hot water washing machine + some disinfectant.

Disinfectant easy choices:

Soak for more than 1 minute, allow to dry.

- 2 cups salt water per 2.5 gal water
- 1 cup household bleach / 3 gal water
- 1 cup dish detergent per 1 gal water (Palmolive or Dawn)

Children and adults should **wash hands** as soon as possible and thoroughly with hot water and **soap**. **Gel hand sanitizer is not sufficient.**

Do not release any insect, fish, or other animal to a waterway from which it was not originally collected.

SAFETY at the STREAM and after:

- Make sure the stream site is safe for students. Check the stream depth, **velocity** (especially after a rain!), and temperature. Also check for walking conditions, litter, poisonous plants, etc.
- Bring a first aid kit to the stream site.
- Prepare students before leaving school. Explain what the site is like, what they may see and do, what they should wear, and rules for safety.
- Define the boundaries for your visit. Make sure students understand that staying within these boundaries protects both them and wildlife. Students should always stay with their group.
- Students should wear old shoes that tie on or boots because they will likely get wet and muddy. Shoes must be worn at all times!
- If there is poison ivy near the site, be sure to point it out and have students avoid it.
- Do not touch any wildlife or taste any water or plants.
- Rocks and other debris in the water may be slippery. Give each other a hand.
- Reinforce the importance of hand washing as soon as possible after the visit, and especially before eating any food.

Avoid Damaging the Stream and Surroundings:

- Remind students that they are studying the stream in order to help protect or improve it. They should behave respectfully at the stream.
 - Move carefully – no running, rushing, pushing, etc.
 - Work in organized groups, assign duties (note taker, equipment manager; take turns using nets working in pairs or small teams).
- Remain on cleared earth or paths, try not to trample plants.
- Use caution on slopes or banks along the stream for safety and to avoid disturbing the soil. Step or climb down, no sliding or jumping.
- Do as much as possible from stable banks. Some exploration is fine, but limit foot traffic in the waterway, so the bottom is not disturbed a great deal.
- Rocks turned over or picked up should be placed gently back in the same place, with the same side in the water as found. Never throw rocks!
- Do not release any insect, fish, or other animal to a waterway from which it was not originally collected.