

NDG&F December 16th Newsletter

ANS Prevention in Winter

North Dakota ice anglers are reminded that regulations designed to reduce the spread of aquatic nuisance species also apply in winter, and law enforcement officials will continue their efforts to ensure compliance.

It's important to reiterate that only legal live bait can be transported in water in a container up to five gallons. Neither game nor nongame species can be transported in water, although a daily catch can be packed in snow.

Other simple methods to prevent winter ANS introductions are:

- Do not use illegally imported baits.

- Do not empty a bait bucket into any water body.

- Do not drop plant fragments into the water.

- Dispose any unused bait into the trash.

Fish House Regulations

Winter anglers are reminded that any fish house left unoccupied on North Dakota waters must be made out of materials that will allow it to float.

A popular question this time of the year is if campers qualify as legal fish houses. The answer is the same for any structure taken on the ice – if it's left unattended, it must be able to float; if it's not able to float, it must be removed when the angler leaves the ice.

Other fish house regulations include:

- Fish houses do not require a license.

- Occupied structures do not require identification. However, any unoccupied fish house must have the owner's name, and either address or telephone number, displayed on its outside in readily distinguishable characters at least three inches high.

- Fish houses may not be placed closer than 50 feet in any direction to another house without consent of the occupant of the other fish house.

- Fish houses shall be removed from all waters by midnight, March 15, of each year. They can be used after March 15 if they are removed daily.

Anglers should refer to the [2012-14 North Dakota Fishing Guide](#) for winter fishing regulations.

Winter Fishing Regulations

North Dakota anglers are encouraged to refer to the [2012-14 North Dakota Fishing Guide](#) or the State Game and Fish Department's website for winter fishing regulations.

In addition, anglers can visit the [Game and Fish website, gf.nd.gov](http://GameandFish.nd.gov), for an extensive list of fishing questions and answers, and a winter fishing preview from North Dakota Outdoors magazine. Some winter fishing regulations include:

A maximum of four poles is legal for ice fishing. However, when fishing a water body where both open water and ice occur at the same time, an angler is allowed a maximum of four poles, of which no more than two poles can be used in open water.

Tip-ups are legal, and each tip-up is considered a single pole.

There is no restriction on the size of the hole in the ice while fishing. When a hole larger than 10 inches in diameter is left in the ice, the area in the immediate vicinity must be marked with a natural object. See regulations for more information.

It is only legal to release fish back into the water immediately after they are caught. Once a fish is held in a bucket or on a stringer, they can no longer be legally released in any water.

It is illegal to catch fish and transport them in water.

It is illegal to leave fish, including bait, behind on the ice.

Depositing or leaving any litter or other waste material on the ice or shore is illegal.

Any dressed fish to be transported, if frozen, must be packaged individually. Anglers are not allowed to freeze fillets together in one large block. Two fillets count as one fish.

The daily limit is a limit of fish taken from midnight to midnight, and no person may possess more than one day's limit of fish while actively engaged in fishing. The possession limit is the maximum number of fish that an angler may have in his or her possession during a fishing trip of more than one day.