

## Coast wide Texas Seagrass Protection

AUSTIN- Beginning Sept. 1, a new law passed by the 83rd Texas Legislature takes effect all along the Texas coast, prohibiting the uprooting of seagrass with an outboard motor propeller. These measures have been taken in an effort to support the vital Texas' fisheries and promote sustainability of the state's coastal natural resources.

The importance of ensuring healthy seagrass beds goes far beyond people see from the surface of the water. The extensive root systems seagrasses establish help to stabilize the bay bottom and prevent erosion. The leaves help buffer currents and aid in water clarification and improve water quality. They also provide a hiding place for many recreationally and commercially sought after fish and shellfish. Like land vegetation, seagrasses need sunlight to photosynthesize taking in sunlight and carbon dioxide and converting it to oxygen which is used by other marine organisms. Their need for sunlight restricts them to living in shallow waters which also makes the susceptible to damage caused by boat propellers.

Uprooting seagrass with an outboard motor propeller causes scarring in the seagrass beds that can take years to reestablish growth. Furthermore, running boats through these areas may damage the boat's motor, hull or propeller. To protect this important habitat and your boat, remember to "[lift, drift, pole and troll.](#)"

A regulation has been in place since 2006 prohibited the uprooting of seagrass in the Redfish Bay State Scientific Area (RBSSA) with an outboard propeller. With this regulation in place and an extensive education and outreach effort, a 45% reduction in propeller scar in RBSSA was observed. "Based on the proven success of reduction of propeller scars in Redfish Bay Scientific Area, we are hopeful that we can educate boaters about seagrass and direct them to change boating practices to help reduce uprooting of seagrass," says Ed Hegen, TPWD — Coastal Fisheries Regional Director in Rockport, TX.

Hegen also recommends that boaters take a boater education course which includes a section on seagrass protection and familiarize themselves with their equipment and the area they'll be boating in before heading out on the water, "Those that have learned about the value and importance of seagrasses have demonstrated they still have successful fishing trips while they protect seagrass."

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department staff will be supporting these coast wide efforts to protect seagrass by spreading the word handing out brochures to boaters, posting signs at boat access points, including articles and advertisements in print media, and posting billboards. State game wardens will be on the water educating the public as well as enforcing the regulation. It's important to remember, boaters have continued access to the places they've recreated in prior to the regulation — there are no closed areas. It is the responsibility of the boater to be aware of their surroundings and to keep their propeller from digging up seagrasses as this habitat is essential in sustaining the natural resources and beauty of our Texas' bays.

For more information visit TPWD's [seagrass web pages.](#)

# New Rules in the Works to Fight Zebra Mussels

AUSTIN – In the state's ongoing effort to combat the spread of invasive zebra mussels, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission approved for public comment new proposed rules requiring that all boats operating on public water in 17 Northeast Texas counties be drained after use.

Zebra mussels became established in Texas in Lake Texoma in 2009. Last year, they were found in Lake Ray Roberts and the Elm Fork of the Trinity River. More recently, zebra mussels have spread to Lake Bridgeport on the West Fork of the Trinity River and into Lake Lewisville. They can expand their range even farther by hitching a ride on trailered boats that have been immersed in waters where they have established populations. The rapidly reproducing mussels, originally from Eurasia, can have serious economic and recreational impact to Texas reservoirs. They can clog public-water intake pipes, harm boats and motors left in infested waters by covering boat hulls, clog water-cooling systems, annoy boat-dock owners by completely covering anything left under water, and make water recreation hazardous because of their sharp edges.

From an environmental perspective, zebra mussels are filter feeders, which means they compete with baitfish such as shad for available forage. Any impact on baitfish in turn can affect their predators — game fish such as bass, striped bass and catfish. Zebra mussels are also very harmful to native mussel populations because they will colonize on their shells and essentially suffocate them. The commission's action in their Aug. 21 meeting is the result of additional rule-making authority granted to the TPW commission through House Bill 1241, passed last spring by the 83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature. Under the proposed regulations, persons leaving or approaching public water in the affected counties will be required to drain all water from their vessel before leaving the lake. This would apply to all types and sizes of boats, whether powered or not, personal watercraft, sailboats, or any other vessel used to travel on public waters.

The proposed rule will apply on all public waters in Collin, Cooke, Dallas, Denton, Fannin, Grayson, Hood, Jack, Kaufman, Montague, Palo Pinto, Parker, Rockwall, Stephens, Tarrant, Wise, and Young counties. Applicable in all areas where boats can be launched, the regulation would require the draining of live wells, bilges, motors, and any other receptacles or water intake systems coming into contact with public waters.

Activities that would be affected under this proposal are: live fish could not be transported in water that comes from the water body where they were caught; personally caught live bait could only be used in the water body where it was caught; and no off-site tournament weigh-ins would be allowed if live fish are being transported off a body of water in one of the affected counties.

Anglers would be allowed to transport and use commercially purchased live bait in water provided they have a receipt that identifies the source of the bait. Any live bait purchased from a location on or adjacent to a public water body that is transported in water from that water body could only be used as bait on that same water body. Movement from one access point to another on the same lake during the same day would not require drainage and there is an exception for governmental activities and emergencies. Marine sanitary systems would not be covered by the new regulations.

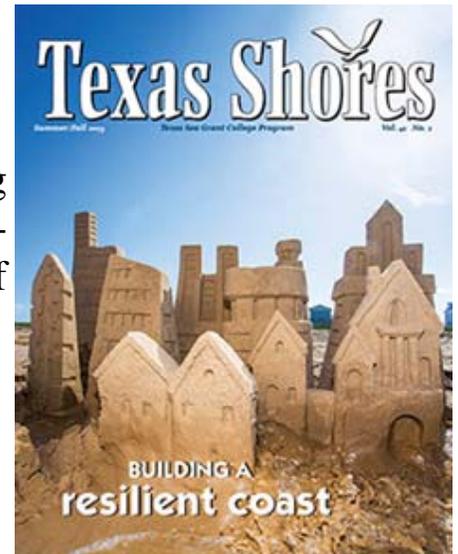
The public can comment on the proposed rules online at [http://tpwd.texas.gov/business/feedback/public\\_comment/proposals/201311\\_water\\_draining.phtml](http://tpwd.texas.gov/business/feedback/public_comment/proposals/201311_water_draining.phtml). Comment may also be made in writing to Ken Kurzawski, TPWD Inland Fisheries, 4200 Smith School Rd., Austin, TX 78744, by email at [ken.kurzawski@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:ken.kurzawski@tpwd.texas.gov), or in person at any of the following three public hearings. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission is expected to take action on the proposed change at its November 7 meeting.

## Texas Shores

*Texas Shores*, Texas Sea Grant's award-winning magazine, explores the major issues affecting the people, communities, industries and natural resources of coastal Texas and the marine environment.

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Just  
for  
Laughs



During late spring one year, a blonde was trying out her new boat. She was unable to have her boat perform, travel through water, or do any maneuvers whatsoever no matter how hard she tried. After trying for over three days to make it work properly, she decided to seek help. She putted the boat over to the local marina in hopes that someone there could identify her problem. Workers determined that everything from the engine to the outdrive was working perfectly on the topside of the boat. So, a puzzled marina employee jumped into the water to check underneath the boat for problems. Because he was laughing so hard, he came up choking on water and gasping for air. Under the boat, still strapped in place securely, was the trailer.



*Terrie Looney*



## TDA PESTICIDE APPLICATOR

Recertification Training

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2013

FORD PARK EXHIBIT HALL, BEAUMONT, TEXAS

Registration 8:00 a.m. - Beginning at 8:30 a.m. - Ending approximately 3:30 p.m.

RSVP to (409) 835-8461

Deadline for registration, November 13, 2013. No refunds given

TEXAS A&M  
AGRI LIFE  
EXTENSION

## Shrimp Alamo

### What you need:

#### Utensils:

- Measuring cups & spoons
- Knife & cutting board
- Large skillet with lid
- Stirring spoon
- Can opener

#### Ingredients:

- 1½ pounds peeled and cleaned shrimp, 26-30 count
- 1 cup uncooked, instant brown rice
- 1½ tablespoons canola oil
- 2 cups water
- 1 medium chopped tomato\*
- ½ cup chopped onion\*
- 1 can (10 ounces) tomatoes and chilies, drained
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- ¼ teaspoon cumin

\*WIC Approved Food Package

### What to do:

1. Wash your hands and clean your cooking area.
2. Clean the tops of canned food items before opening them.
3. In a large skillet over medium heat, stir together rice and oil and cook until rice is golden brown, about 5 minutes.
4. Add two cups water and remaining ingredients, except for the shrimp.
5. Cover and cook for 8 minutes.
6. Add shrimp and cook for 5 minutes.
7. Serve warm.

**Prep Time:** 15 minutes

**Cook Time:** 20 minutes

**Cost per serving:** \$1.94

### Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup	
Servings Per Container 6	
Amount Per Serving	
<b>Calories 180</b>	<b>Calories from Fat 45</b>
% Daily Value*	
<b>Total Fat 5g</b>	<b>8%</b>
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol 145mg</b>	<b>48%</b>
<b>Sodium 840mg</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate 16g</b>	<b>5%</b>
Dietary Fiber 2g	8%
Sugars 1g	
<b>Protein 17g</b>	
Vitamin A 10%	Vitamin C 10%
Calcium 8%	Iron 4%

**Note: Serve with guacamole, black beans, and warm corn tortillas for a hearty Mexican meal!**

Adapted from: *Hooked on Seafood*

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