



MAINE'S LAKE AND RIVER PROTECTION STICKER PROGRAM

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INVASIVE SPECIES

Invasive species are non-native plants, animals, and microbes that are introduced from other regions and aggressively out-compete native species. According to the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, every year in the United States, government agencies and private citizens spend over \$100 million to combat invasive aquatic plants.

QUESTION

Describe Maine's lake and river protection boat sticker program.

SUMMARY

Maine law requires all motorized watercraft operated on inland waters to display a lake and river protection sticker. The sticker costs \$10 for Maine-registered boats and \$20 for boats registered out of state. Two state departments share the boat sticker revenue: the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), which receives 60% of the revenue, and the Department of

Inland Fish and Wildlife (DIFW), which receives 40%. The funds are used for invasive aquatic plant and nuisance species prevention, eradication, management, and enforcement. On average, the sticker program raises about \$1.1 million per year, according to DEP.

For more information about Maine's sticker requirement, see DEP's website [here](#) and DIFW's website [here](#).

LAKE AND RIVER PROTECTION STICKER PROGRAM

Maine's lake and river protection sticker program began in 2002. State law requires all motorboats, personal watercraft, and seaplanes to display a lake and river protection sticker, which says "Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers! Preserve Maine Waters." No sticker is required for boats operating in tidal waters.

By state law, boaters must purchase a sticker annually and affix it to the motorized watercraft (Me. Rev. Stat. Ann. tit. 12 §§ 13056 and 13058). Since 2008, owners of a Maine-registered watercraft receive a combined boat registration and “Preserve Maine Waters” sticker. For Maine-registered watercraft, \$10 is added to the in-state watercraft registration fee. Owners of watercraft registered outside of Maine receive a separate nonresident lake and river protection sticker that costs \$20.

A person who violates the sticker requirement is fined between \$100 and \$250. The fine cannot be suspended by the court. A person who commits three or more violations within a five-year period commits a class E crime, which is punishable by up to six months’ imprisonment and a \$1,000 fine.

STICKER REVENUES

All fees collected from the sale of lake and river protection stickers are paid to the state treasurer, who credits them to two dedicated accounts: DEP’s Invasive Aquatic Plant and Nuisance Species Fund and DIFW’s Lake and River Protection Fund. By law, 60% of the sticker revenues are credited to DEP’s account and 40% are credited to DIFW’s account (Me. Rev. Stat. Ann. tit. 12 § 10206).

Invasive Aquatic Plant and Nuisance Species Fund

DEP can use the Invasive Aquatic Plant and Nuisance Fund to conduct (1) a state watercraft inspection program; (2) invasive aquatic plant prevention, containment, eradication, and management activities; and (3) enforcement activity. DEP may also use funds to contract with municipalities or other entities to conduct inspection, prevention, or eradication programs to protect the state’s inland waters from invasive aquatic plant and nuisance species (Me. Rev. Stat. Ann. tit. 38 § 1863).

Lake and River Protection Fund

DIFW can use the Lake and River Protection Fund for (1) enforcing laws related to invasive aquatic plants and nuisance species; (2) inspecting watercraft for invasive aquatic plant and nuisance species material; (3) educational and informational efforts targeted at invasive aquatic plant and nuisance species prevention, eradication, and management activities; and (4) producing and distributing lake and river protection stickers (Me. Rev. Stat. Ann. tit. 12 § 10257).

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