



STATE LEGISLATURE APPROVED
New Quagga/Zebra Mussel
Vessel Registration Fee
(AB2443)

**WHAT IS THIS NEW FEE AND HOW DOES IT AFFECT
BOATERS IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY?**

Assembly Bill 2443 (Chapter 485, Statutes of 2012) authorized the California Department of Parks and Recreation, Division of Boating and Waterways to require the DMV to collect an additional Quagga and Zebra Mussel Infestation Prevention Fee (“Mussel Fee”) effective December 31, 2013, on all vessels subject to registration in the State.

Funds from this State fee will be used to implement and administer non-native dreissenid mussel monitoring, inspection, and infestation prevention programs throughout the State. Additional information regarding quagga and zebra mussels is available from the California Department of Parks and Recreation, Division of Boating and Waterways at www.dbw.ca.gov or by calling 1-888-326-2822.

MUSSEL FEE

The new fee is \$16.00 for each biannual (every two years) vessel registration renewal, pro-rated based on the effective date of the new law.

MUSSEL FEE STICKER

Unless exempt from the program, a unique identifying sticker will be issued by the DMV as evidence of payment of the fee which must be attached to the vessel (see Attachment A). If your vessel is used exclusively in marine waters, you may claim an exemption from the fee by notifying the DMV.

The sticker allows the vessel to be operated in **ALL** waters of the State unless expressly prohibited by other State or Local ordinance.

If a vessel owner / operator has claimed a marine exemption, and arrives at a Santa Clara County waterway without evidence of paying the mussel fee to the State, the vessel owner /operator will be turned away as the vessel is entitled to launch on marine waters only. To launch on non-marine inland waters, the fee must be paid.

Vessels that are exempt from the fee are not required to display the sticker.

PROGRAM EXEMPTIONS

- Vessels not required to be registered in California
- Vessels used **only** in marine waters
- Annual exempt youth group issued by the DMV
- Annual exempt government issued by the DMV
- CF numbers issued to dealers by the DMV
- CF numbers issued to manufacturers by the DMV

The owner of a vessel used only in marine waters must notify the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to claim exemption from the fee upon original vessel registration and each time the vessel registration is renewed.

After claiming an exemption with the DMV, a vessel owner may pay the Mussel Fee for the current registration period at a later time with no penalty for the registration period if the vessel will begin operating in non-exempt inland waters.

DEFINITION OF MARINE WATERS

Marine waters are defined by the California State Parks Division of Boating and Waterways (DBW) as coastal and bay waters, which include Suisun Bay. Owners of vessels operating in inland waterways, rivers, lakes, reservoirs, wetlands, or the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta cannot claim a marine water exemption.

The following Santa Clara County boating reservoirs are non-marine waters: Anderson Reservoir, Calero Reservoir, Coyote Lake, Lexington Reservoir, and Stevens Creek Reservoir. Owner / operators seeking to launch on these waterways must have a Mussel Fee Sticker on their registered vessel unless a program exemption applies.

LOCAL VESSEL INSPECTION FEES ARE STILL DUE

The fee being collected by the DMV is to augment vessel inspection programs throughout the State. Vessel owner / operators are still required to pay any vessel inspection fee being collected by local jurisdictions.

In Santa Clara County, the vessel inspection fee is \$7.00 per inspection for unbanded vessels. There is no fee for vessels that display an intact Santa Clara County vessel inspection band. For frequent boaters, and owners of vessels that can't be readily banded, there is a \$35.00 annual vessel inspection pass available.

2015 MUSSEL FEE PAID STICKER

Front



Reverse

<p style="text-align: center;">HOW TO APPLY</p> <p>READ APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY BEFORE APPLYING</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO REMOVE OR REPOSITION THIS STICKER AFTER APPLICATION. TO DO SO WILL RESULT IN THE DESTRUCTION OF THIS STICKER. 2. REMOVE ANY PRIOR YEAR STICKER. 3. BE SURE THE SURFACE WHERE THE STICKER IS TO BE MOUNTED IS CLEAN AND DRY. 4. PEEL OFF THE PROTECTIVE BACKING. 5. POSITION THE STICKER AND SQUEEGEE DOWN FIRMLY. <p style="text-align: center;">← 3" →</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">WHERE TO APPLY</p> <p>AFFIX ONE STICKER TO EACH SIDE OF THE VESSEL, NEXT TO, AND IN LINE WITH THE CF NUMBER AND REGISTRATION STICKER, AS ILLUSTRATED BELOW.</p> <p>THIS STICKER IS EVIDENCE OF PAYMENT OF THE QUAGGA AND ZEBRA MUSSEL INFESTATION PREVENTION FEE AND ALLOWS THIS VESSEL TO BE OPERATED IN ALL WATERS OF THE STATE UNLESS EXPRESSLY PROHIBITED.</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">← 3" →</p>
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Frequently Asked Questions Quagga and Zebra Mussel Infestation Prevention Fee

Q: What are quagga or zebra mussels and why is infestation prevention needed?

A: Quagga and zebra mussels are small (¼ inch to 2 inches) freshwater non-native mussels. Wherever quagga or zebra mussels have spread, they have altered the ecology (food chain) and caused economic damage by attaching in large colonies to the outside and/or inside of underwater structures, pipes, water intakes, vessels, and vessel engines. They spread by releasing microscopic larvae into the water, so any water left in the boat, engine, livewell, bilge spaces, trailer, or vehicle from an infected body of water can spread the mussels to a new area. Once there, they are extremely difficult and costly to eliminate. Additional information can be obtained from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife website at www.dfg.ca.gov/invasives/quaggamussel/.

Q: Why does my boat (vessel) registration include an additional fee for Quagga and Zebra Mussel Infestation Prevention?

A: Recent legislation requires the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to collect the additional fee on behalf of the Division of Boating and Waterways (DBW) within the Department of Parks and Recreation on all vessels subject to registration in California.

Q: When is the fee due?

A: The fee is due upon original vessel registration and biennially upon vessel registration renewal.

Q: How much is the fee?

A: If the date fees due for an original vessel registration is in an odd-numbered year, the initial fee is \$16. If the date fees due for an original vessel registration is in an even-numbered year, the initial fee is \$8. For vessel renewals, the fee is \$16.

Q: Are there any exemptions?

A: Vessels used exclusively in marine waters are exempt from the additional fee. Fee-exempt vessels (government, qualified youth groups, etc.) and CF Numbers issued to vessel dealers and manufacturers (type license codes V3 and V4) are exempt from the new program and fee.

Q: What is the difference between marine waters and freshwater?

A: Marine waters are bodies of water that contain saltwater (oceans, seas, etc.) while freshwater consists of water that is not salty (lakes, rivers, etc.). Additional information can be obtained from the Division of Boating and Waterways.

Q: How do I claim the exemption?

A: To claim the exemption on a renewal application, the vessel owner may notify DMV by checking the appropriate box on the vessel renewal notice or on the DMV website, verbally notifying the department when using the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system at 1-800-777-0133), or submitting a completed Statement of Facts (REG 256) form. For original vessel registration applications, the vessel owner may claim the exemption by checking the appropriate box on the Application for Registration Number Certificate of Ownership and Certificate of Number for Undocumented Vessel (BOAT 101) form or submitting a completed REG 256.

Q: Will I receive an additional sticker?

A: A unique identifying sticker will be issued for the vessel as evidence of payment of the Mussel fee which must be attached to the vessel. The sticker allows the vessel to be operated in all waters of the state unless expressly prohibited. Fee-exempt vessels and CF Numbers issued to vessel dealers and manufacturers (type license code V3 and V4) are exempt from the program and fee. These vessels are not required to display the sticker.

Q: What is the additional fee used for?

A: Funds from this additional fee will be used to implement and administer non-native mussel monitoring, inspection, and infestation prevention programs.

Q: What is the fee for a replacement sticker?

A: The fee for a replacement sticker is \$16.

Q: Can the fee be waived?

A: The fee can be waived only for a replacement/substitute sticker when the vessel owner indicates on DMV's Application for Replacement Plates, Stickers, Documents (REG 156) form that the original Mussel fee sticker was not received from the department.

Q: Can I pay for the Mussel Fee sticker for a vessel for which an exemption from the fee has been previously reported to the DMV?

A: Yes. A vessel owner may choose to pay the fee after claiming an exemption for a vessel "used exclusively in marine waters." The fee remains \$16. The same rule applies to a vessel that is sold after an exemption has been reported to the DMV and the new owner wishes to pay the fee.

Q: If I pay for the vessel registration renewal and \$16 for the Mussel Fee sticker, but later decide not to operate the vessel in fresh waters, can I get a refund?

A: A refund of the Mussel Fee is subject to established DMV business rules and processing procedures for an application for refund. Contact the DMV for more information.

Q: Will I still need to have a boat inspection even if I have the quagga and zebra mussel sticker?

A: Certain lakes and other bodies of water throughout the state of California require inspections prior to launching a boat. These inspections are not administered by DMV. Contact the specific water body you plan to visit for information regarding whether an inspection and/or fee will be required.

Q: Why do I have to pay a vessel inspection fee to the another jurisdiction?

A: Local jurisdictions may be implementing their own mussel control measures and may have a local fee that supports local program efforts. The fee being collected by the DMV is to support statewide efforts and will be available to augment local efforts through grant funding.

Q: How do I document to a local jurisdiction that I am entitled to an exemption because my vessel is not required to be registered in California because I am in the Military?

A: Vessels that are not required to be registered in the State of California are not required to pay the fee. Active military members are not required to register their vessel in the State of California while stationed in California. In Santa Clara County, an active military member can show that the boat is properly registered in their domicile State and show documentation of active military status in California. *If the vessel is registered in the State of California then the DMV fee must be paid.* Military members will still need to pay the local inspection fee and the vessel must pass inspection. This may be different for other local jurisdictions, so check with other jurisdictions before traveling to their waterway.

Q: How do I document to a local jurisdiction that I am entitled to a government or youth group exemption?

A: Vessels owned by governmental entities, or certain youth groups are not required to pay the fee. The current registration for the vessel issued by the DMV will document whether the vessel has an exempt status. In Santa Clara County, you will be required to show your current vessel registration so we can ascertain whether the vessel has exempt status with the DMV. You will still need to pay the local inspection fee and the vessel must pass inspection. This may be different for other local jurisdictions, so check with other jurisdictions before traveling to their waterway.

Q: How do I document to a local jurisdiction that I am entitled to a dealer or manufacturer exemption?

A: Vessels owned by dealers or manufactures are not required to pay the fee. In Santa Clara County, you will be required to show proof of your dealer or manufacturer status. This is usually accomplished by showing us your DMV issued dealer or manufacturer plate. You will still need to pay the local inspection fee and the vessel must pass inspection. This may be different for other local jurisdictions, so check with other jurisdictions before traveling to their waterway.

Q: Who can I contact if I would like more information regarding the State's Quagga and Zebra Mussel Infestation Prevention program?

A: For additional information, visit the California Department of Parks and Recreation, Division of Boating and Waterways' website at www.dbw.ca.gov or call 1-888-326-2822.

Q: Who can I contact if I would like more information regarding the Santa Clara County's Vessel Inspection Program?

A: For additional information, visit the Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department's website at www.parkhere.org or call 1-408-355-2200.