



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Conservation and Recreation

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Quabbin Reservoir Boat Seal Program – Private Boating Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

What is the Quabbin Boat Seal (QBS) Program?

The QBS is a security tag that seals your boat to its trailer. When the boat is launched at Quabbin, the QBS is inspected and removed by DCR staff. When you are done fishing, DCR staff attaches another QBS. If you have an intact QBS, the boat may be used on Quabbin throughout the fishing season. If the boat is used on another body of water, the boat must be decontaminated and a new QBS attached before it can be used at Quabbin again.

Why does my boat need a QBS before it is launched on Quabbin Reservoir?

The program ensures that boats launched at Quabbin have been properly decontaminated, thereby minimizing the threat of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) getting into the reservoir. AIS are plants and animals that are not native to New England and can potentially spread rapidly if accidentally introduced. If they get into Quabbin Reservoir or other lakes and ponds, they could take over and disrupt the natural balance, degrade water quality, and interfere with recreation such as fishing. Maintaining the quality of Quabbin water is critically important, as it is the principal drinking water source for 2.7 million Massachusetts residents.

How do I get a QBS?

To get a QBS you need to go through the DCR Boat Decontamination (BD) or Cold Weather Quarantine (CWQ) program.

What is the difference between the BD Program and the CWQ Program?

- ***The BD Program*** is a complete decontamination and washing of the boat, motor, and trailer. No carpeting is allowed anywhere on the trailer, including bunks and side rails. Motors are flushed with high temperature water. Anything on the boat that touches the water when you are fishing is also sprayed down with high temperature water. This kills any aquatic invasive species. The cost of this program is \$60.

- The CWQ Program is a visual inspection of the boat and trailer that is done during the winter at least three months prior to the opening of the fishing season. Starting in 2026, no carpet is allowed anywhere on the trailer, including bunks and side rails. This program is free.

What must I do to get a QBS through the BD Program?

- BDs are done on selected days from April-September.
- Appointments can be made starting March 1 by calling the Quabbin Visitor Center at [\(413\) 323-7221](tel:4133237221) between the hours of 9 AM and 4 PM. When the recording starts, press zero to talk to a visitor center staff person. Please leave a message if necessary. Your boat registration number will need to be provided to make an appointment.
- BDs will be done by appointment only starting in early April at the House of Wax, 33 New Athol Road, Orange, MA 01364.
- The boat washing cost is \$60, paid to House of Wax. Cash or credit cards are accepted.
- The boat and trailer must be clean and in good condition without dirt, grease or excessive rust.
- Carpeting is not allowed anywhere on the trailer, including bunks.
- Motor must be able to start and have enough gas to run for at least five minutes.
- Bring with you anything that touches the water when you are out fishing including downriggers, anchors, and electric trolling motors.

What must I do to get a QBS through the CWQ Program?

- CWQs are done by appointment only on designated days in late October through December.
- Appointments can be made starting October 1 by calling the Quabbin Visitor Center at [\(413\) 323-7221](tel:4133237221) between the hours of 9 AM and 4 PM. When the recording starts, press zero to talk to a visitor center staff person. Please leave a message if necessary. Your boat registration number will need to be provided to make an appointment.
- CWQs will be done at the DCR Field Office in New Salem and the Quabbin Office in Belchertown.
- All surfaces of the trailer, boat, motor, live wells, and bilge that may come in contact with the reservoir water shall be cleaned by the owner prior to appointment.
- There shall be no dirt, grease, oil, leaves, rust, fungi, or other material that may hinder the inspection of the trailer and boat.
- There shall be no moisture or standing water in the bilge or live wells. The owner shall dry the interior of the bilge and live wells with a sponge or rag to remove water.
- Carpeting is not allowed anywhere on the trailer, including bunks.
- The motor shall be lifted to full up position either by hand or battery during the inspection so that the underside can be inspected.

For additional information please visit the [Quabbin Fishing Guide Website](#) or [Quabbin Boat Seal Program Website](#).