

HOW TO GET RID OF WATER WEEDS AND ALGAE

The following methods used as aquatic nuisance control techniques are listed in order of preference.

Pond Depth: Dig your pond to depths greater than six feet. This will help to naturally shade the pond surface and help eliminate plant growth due to lack of sunlight.

Organic Treatment: Addition of barley straw in a gunnysack has proven successful in killing water-weeds and algae. Fill the gunny-sack with barley straw and secure it below the plant life you wish to eliminate. Sacks can be secured in the water by tying them with a rope to a brick or cinder block. One gunny-sack full of barley straw per 10 square feet of water space has proven successful.

Shading water areas with soluble dyes can successfully inhibit aquatic plant growth. Especially made aquatic dyes such as Aquashade works especially well in clear water ponds and lakes with high nutrient levels. However, soluble dyes have limited effect in waters less than two feet deep.

Plant-eating fish: Grass carp have been stocked in lakes, ponds and canals to consume aquatic vegetation. Sterile (triploid) stocks may be shipped into Utah only after obtaining an entry permit from the Fish Health Program. Long-term effects of grass carp upon plant populations in ponds are questionable and unpredictable at best.

Chemical Control: The use of chemicals to control water plants is the most common method of treatment. Chemicals may be sprayed within particular areas to selectively control specific aquatic plants. To determine the best kind of chemical control the detrimental water plant must first be identified. After proper identification, the best chemical control for the specific plant may be determined. Determinations are also made as to the application rates and frequencies of treatment required to control the target aquatic plant species. Specific instructions and precautionary wording are clearly provided by the manufacturer on the label. Chemicals must be registered with the State of Utah and by the EPA before they can be used in the state. The Fish Health Program may be contacted to ensure the chemical is properly registered before usage. The drawbacks to this method are possible fish kills downstream and chemicals are heavily regulated.

Physical Removal: Hand harvesting of aquatic vegetation by pulling, raking, cutting or digging can be accomplished in small shoreline area. Specialized rakes and cutters are available to increase efficiency. However, re-growth from seeds and remaining underground plant parts can be expected. The drawback to this method is that too much work may be required.