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## Okanagan Basin Water Board launches "Have... The Talk" campaign in invasive mussel defence

Posted on 8/10/2016 1:30 PM by [Monika Gul](#)





The Okanagan Basin Water Board is expanding its "Don't Move a Mussel" campaign.

Started in 2013, the campaign raises awareness about invasive zebra and quagga mussels, and the importance of keeping them out of BC waters.

Communications Director Corrine Jackson says now, they are asking residents to "Have... the talk" with out-of town guests.

"We're asking people to go from raising awareness around the mussel issue to really encouraging people to have that talk, and we know it's not always easy to talk to people about behaviour change but it's so critical. It's critical to the safety of our water, to our beaches"

It's estimated that an introduction of invasive mussels in the Okanagan could cost over \$40 million each year in lost revenue, added maintenance of aquatic infrastructure, reduced property values, and irreparable ecological damage.

Operations and Grants Manager James Littlely says it would be much more detrimental and costly than milfoil has been.

"Milfoil, it's a nuisance for people while they're swimming, it gets caught up in boat motors, its ecologically harmful, but we've got it somewhat under control in the valley. If zebra and quagga mussels get here there's no form of control, it's not gonna be \$600,000 a year, it's gonna be \$45 million a year for this valley"

Inspection stations across the province have inspected almost 13,000 watercrafts this year. 9 were found carrying invasive mussels. Another 50 were quarantined to meet the 30-day drying off period to ensure any mussels attached were dead.

The board is pushing the province to expand the hours of the inspection stations, and to revise its legislation to require all watercraft entering B.C. to report to an inspection centre before launching in provincial waters.