



Invasive Species Fact Sheet - Goldfish



HUTCHINSON

PUBLIC WORKS AND ENGINEERING

Municipal Stormwater Program

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The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources classifies goldfish as a regulated invasive species, meaning it is legal to possess, buy, and sell them but not permitted to release them into public waters. The law indicates that you cannot release a regulated invasive species without a permit, as indicated under MR 6216.0265.1. Goldfish are tolerant of poor water quality and may threaten native species in degraded ecosystems.

Impacts of Goldfish

Goldfish reduce an ecosystem's biodiversity through their effects on native species. The primary threat is competition for food and other resources. Another issue is the change in ecosystem structure due to reduced aquatic vegetation.

- ◆ Goldfish eat small insects, snails, fish eggs, and small fish making them predators of native fish.
- ◆ They have the potential to produce large populations given the right circumstances.
- ◆ Goldfish increase the cloudiness of water when feeding by stirring up mud which impairs the growth of native aquatic plant species.
- ◆ They can carry diseases such as koi herpesvirus and the *Lernea* sp. parasite which are both harmful to local fish populations. Neither are harmful to humans.



Why Can't Goldfish be in Stormwater Ponds?

Stormwater retention ponds filter sediment and contaminants from rainwater runoff before flowing into the South Fork Crow River. Invasive goldfish have easy access to local lakes and rivers through these stormwater ponds, which is why it's vital to not release goldfish into them.

Although releasing a few goldfish into a pond might not seem harmful, their ability to reproduce quickly turns four or five goldfish into hundreds.



What You Can Do To Help

It's easy to protect Minnesota's waterways against invasive species. A little effort goes a long way to protect water resources. Some ways to help:

- ◆ Do not release live fish into any lakes, rivers, or ponds.
- ◆ Contact the City of Hutchinson if you observe illegal releasing of invasive goldfish into local water habitats.

Understanding why it is important to not introduce goldfish into public waters helps protect the environment and benefits your neighborhood.

**For questions, or more information, contact
City of Hutchinson staff at 320.234.5682
www.hutchinson.mn.gov**