

Check Clean Dry update for North Island swimmers

The unwanted organism freshwater gold clam has been found in the Waikato River from Lake Maraetai (Mangakino) and downstream (as at 25 October 2023).

There are **new requirements** for how to Check Clean Dry your gear so you do not spread this or any other invasive species around when you swim—including training or competing in events. Then you won't accidentally take a nasty hitchhiker with you.



Before you move

- From any part of the Waikato River and lakes to any other lake, river or estuary
- Between any lake, river or estuary in the North Island, or when going from North Island to South Island
- Or, from Lake Maraetai (Mangakino) on the Waikato River to anywhere upstream.

CHECK—for what is visible

- CHECK and flick off any visible matter, like weed, mud, algae or adult clams, at the site.
- Shake or squeeze out as much river or lake water as you can from your gear.

Clean—for what is not visible

You may need to do this step at home. Juvenile clams may be invisible, and some may have mucous strands attached.

- Lay out your gear and blast it, inside and out, with tapwater.
- Use one of the treatments (below) for absorbent materials that have been in the river or lake water, as they can stay wet longer—including wetsuit, neoprene cap, booties, towel.

TREATMENTS—(1) Soak in hot tapwater (55 degrees C) for at least 5 minutes; or (2) soak in diluted household bleach (10%, or 1 in 10 ratio) for an hour, or (3) freeze until solid (overnight). Refer to the manufacturer's instructions if needed.

Tip: If you freeze a wetsuit, lay it flat or in half, not rolled up as it will not freeze in the middle.

DRY — to be sure

- Hang your gear to dry to touch, inside and out. You will need to turn the wetsuit inside-out to dry properly.
- You could speed up the DRY process by rubbing your wetsuit with an old towel.
- Then leave dry for 2 days (48 hours) before using again.