

# QUICK FACTS PHRAGMITES



**Common aquaculture plants can become invasive if they are not native to Alberta. Wind and water can spread seeds and plant fragments beyond your garden, which creates new populations that can dominate ecosystems and ruin habitat for native species.**

## **DON'T LET IT LOOSE!**

Here's how you can help prevent the spread of Phragmites:

- 1.** Never release aquarium or domestic pond water, plants, dead or live animals into water bodies.
- 2.** If you see Phragmites, report it to the Aquatic Invasive Species Hotline or use EDDMapS Alberta from your smart phone.
- 3.** DO NOT pull or dig it as small fragments can break off and start new plants.
- 4.** Know the law! Phragmites is listed as a prohibited species under the Fisheries (Alberta) Act. It is illegal to sell, import, transport or possess prohibited species.  
Penalties can be up to \$100,000 and/or a year in prison.



## PHRAGMITES QUICK FACTS:

- Phragmites is an erect, aquatic or riparian, perennial grass native to Eurasia that was introduced to North America for erosion control and as an ornamental plant.
- *Phragmites australis americanus* is native to Alberta, complicating identification from invasive *Phragmites australis australis*. Due to similar appearance, DNA analysis is required to confirm species.
- Phragmites is rigid with many nodes and green, spear-like leaves that alternate and tightly adhere to stalks, which can reach up to six meters tall. Flowers are feathery spikes that range in colour from golden to purple in mid-summer.
- It is able to reproduce both by seed, easily dispersed by wind, and through rhizome (root) and shoot fragments.
- Phragmites infestations can displace native vegetation as it grows very fast and dense, reducing habitat for fish, wildlife and native plants.
- Dense stands in irrigation ditches, channels, or stormwater management ponds can increase sedimentation, and disrupt the flow and availability of water.
- Phragmites also presents a human safety concern, as dead stalks in the fall can burn very hot and fast, creating a fire hazard to surrounding communities and property owners.
- Control of Phragmites can be difficult, especially once well established. Methods for control or eradication by trained personnel include a combination of cutting and/or burning, and chemical treatment.
- Phragmites has been found in multiple locations in Alberta. Alberta Environment and Parks is working with other ministries, municipalities, and partners to control Phragmites.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REPORT INVASIVE SPECIES, CALL:  
**1-855-336-BOAT (2628)**