

Do NOT Dump Goldfish Into ANY Body of Water

April 15, 2022

Dumping goldfish, even into isolated bodies of water, poses a great risk to our ecosystem. It is also **ILLEGAL**.

Many of us have had a pet goldfish in our home at some point. Sometimes, when they are no longer wanted, people release them into a pond or other body of water to give them a second chance. Unfortunately, these good intentions are **extremely harmful** to the environment.

Goldfish are in the DNR's "Regulated Invasive Species" category. This means that it is legal to possess, sell, buy, and transport goldfish, but they may **not be released or planted in public waters, which is prohibited under Minnesota state law**.



Just like the common carp, goldfish stir up sediment, uproot plants, & compete with native fish for food and shelter. Any would-be predators have little to no effect on their population because they multiply very rapidly. Goldfish also live up to 25 years. Their impact on ecosystems is generally severe.

A unique adaptation gives goldfish the ability to **survive without ANY oxygen**. They can go totally anaerobic, surviving solely off of sugars, and by producing alcohol (ethanol) to combat the biological effects of low or no oxygen.

This means they can survive almost anywhere, including in mud, ditches, and through bitter cold temperatures. Even isolated bodies of water pose a significant threat. A storm, quick spring melt, or a high water year can create the opportunity for these invasive fish to migrate to our lakes.

Goldfish that have been illegally released into public waters can be tricky to spot. Their bright colors are eventually bred out, because a gray or burnt orange color is more favorable in their new environment.

Unfortunately, Lindström is now facing a goldfish problem. They are in the ponds near Kroon Lake. Luckily, they are not known to be in our lakes- **yet**. The city has been in multiple discussions with the Chisago Lakes LID and the DNR to come up with a solution. Our only viable option is to completely drain the ponds and remove some of the soil to make sure all of the goldfish are eradicated. **This project will cost tax payers \$30,000-\$50,000**, but is necessary to try to keep them out of our lakes.

If you are looking to re-home a pet fish, please consider taking it to a "surrender event," which are often hosted by the Minnesota Aquarium Society. You can also check with a local vet clinic or pet store for suggestions on how to place your fish with a new owner.

There are several Minnesota lakes that are already facing a full scale goldfish invasion. A problem of that scale is incredibly expensive, challenging, and usually ends up a long-term issue.

Thank you for helping to keep this invasive fish out of our ponds & lakes!

Additional Articles:

<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/mcvmagazine/issues/2021/jan-feb/wrong-fish.html>

<https://www.kare11.com/article/news/local/goldfish-invasive-species-burnsville/89-9f1971b8-dac2-448c-b275-fae5238a7e3a>

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/science/2021/07/11/minnesota-goldfish-invasive/>