



City Council Agenda Item Report

FROM: Ryan Cummins, City Manager

MEETING DATE: October 27, 2025

SUBJECT: Milfoil Treatment for 2026

DESCRIPTION:

Eurasian Water Milfoil is an invasive aquatic plant that is present in the Kalamazoo Harbor. In 2020 the City Council formed an Eurasian Water Milfoil Advisory Committee to address the Milfoil impacts including reviewing existing documentation, consulting with appropriate agencies and experts, identifying costs and reporting its recommendations.

For the last five years, the City of the Village of Douglas and the City partnered with Aquatic Doctors to treat the Milfoil.

Aquatic Doctors has submitted a proposal for 2026 treatment. Aquatic Doctors expects the cost to be similar to the 2025 season, which was \$69,570. Despite lower water levels that were anticipated to result in more issues, Aquatic Doctors advised they were able to reduce the area treated this year which saved close to \$7,000. The proposed treatment area for 2026 is as follows:



Aquatic Doctors will be at your meeting to talk more about the success of the treatments and answer your questions.

Workshop Discussion

At the workshop meeting, Aquatic Doctors advised they are shifting to more of a maintenance phase and this will be necessary on an annual basis. City Council expressed interest in a three year agreement to lock in pricing. Staff has also checked with Douglas to see if they are satisfied with Aquatic Doctors and whether they plan to continue treatments over the next few years. Douglas is hesitant to commit to a three-year term without knowing more about the ODC Network's pending invasive species grant application.

BUDGET ACTION REQUIRED:

Sufficient dollars were budgeted for this fiscal year. The second treatment will be included in next fiscal year's budget proposal.

LEGAL REVIEW:

Legal has previously provided analysis on the process to levy special assessments and the City's authority to treat invasive aquatic weeds. Legal previously reviewed the Aquatic Doctors agreement language.

SAMPLE MOTION:

Motion to approve a one OR three agreement with Aquatic Doctors to apply for permits and treat Milfoil in the areas presented in the not to exceed amount of \$69,570 per year.



AQUATIC DOCTORS LAKE MANAGEMENT, INC. ("Aqua Docs") of P.O. Box 150247, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49515 and City of Saugatuck of Saugatuck, Michigan agree:

Aqua Docs will provide a professional aquatic program for the control of weeds and/or algae in **Kalamazoo Harbor**. The program will consist of the following:

May/June: Weed and Algae treatment applying restrictive products such as Navigate (2,4-D), Diquat, Triclopyr, Aquathol K, Hydrothol 191, and non-water restrictive products such as copper sulfate, Cutrine-Plus, Cutrine-Ultra, Cygnet Plus, and shade as a tracer.

****3-4 weeks after initial treatment-** spot treat weed beds and algae treatment.

July and August: Algae treatments applying non-water restrictive products such as copper sulfate, Cutrine-Plus, Cutrine-Ultra, Cygnet Plus and shade as a tracer. Spot weed treatment for EWM and other nuisance plant growth.

Cost per Acre:

Navigate: Granular systemic 2,4-D herbicide to control Eurasian Watermilfoil	\$ 315.00
Triclopyr: Granular systemic herbicide to control Eurasian	\$ 560.00
Triclopyr: Liquid systemic herbicide to control EWM	\$ 285.00
Clipper: systemic herbicide to control Starry Stonewort	\$ 575.00
Harpoon: granular systemic herbicide to contro Starry Stonewort	\$ 425.00
Diquat: Liquid herbicide to control EWM, Curlyleaf, and Pondweeds	\$ 185.00
Aquathol K-Hydrothol 191: Liquid herbicide to control Pondweeds	\$ 205.00
Algaecides: Granular products to control Chara	\$ 50.00
Algaecides: Granular and liquid products to control algae	\$ 40.00
Water Quality Program:	\$ 50.00/sample

Description and Optional Services:

Weed Treatment: Milfoil, Curly-leaf, Coon-tail, Chara, and various pondweed treatments applying restrictive products such as granular Navigate (2,4-D), Aquathol K, Hydrothol 191, Diquat, Triclopyr, Komeen, Glyphosate, and Cygnet Plus.

Algae treatment: Non-water restrictive algaecides such as Copper Sulfate, Curtain-Plus, Cutrine-Ultra, Chelated Copper, Earthtech, Greenclean, and shade as a tracer. Treatments should occur monthly to prevent existing growth and prevent re-growth. Surrounding conditions (i.e. sunlight, temperature, nutrient concentration, etc...) may require additional treatments.

Muck/Enzyme Treatment: Designed to decrease levels of organic sediment in lakes and ponds while reducing odors and improving water clarity. The pellets sink quickly, targeting 'muck' on the bottom. Mukk Busster does not contain pathogenic bacteria and it is fish and wildlife friendly. Contains 3 billion CFU/gram (Colony-forming units).

Water Quality Program: Water quality program consists of lake samples taken and sent to an independent laboratory (Prein & Newhof). The samples can be tested for a variety of things including; fecal bacteria (E. coli), dissolved oxygen, conductivity, total dissolved solids, pH and alkalinity. Primarily E. coli is the focus.



- Specific treatment dates will be set by Aqua Docs, in cooperation with City Manager.
- Please be aware Aqua Docs can only treat weeds and algae present at the time of treatment. We have no control over future weed or algae growth based on the current chemicals registered for aquatic use in Michigan.
- Unless otherwise stated in the program, all other aquatic pest control will require a separate program (i.e. cattails, duckweed, largeleaf pondweed, lily pads, purple loosestrife, watermeal, etc...)

Aqua Docs will obtain the DEQ “Aquatic Nuisance Control permit” and post restriction signs as required. Any facility or location related permits/requirements, for example, “Discharge or Retention” permits will be the responsibility of the customer, association, resident or facility. It is your association’s/group’s responsibility to notify each resident within one hundred (100) feet of the treatment area at least seven (7) days in advance of the first treatment that chemicals will be applied. This notification requirement must be provided to every property owner who has consented to have their property treated. Lake boards and townships who assess the lake property owners are exempt from individual consent documentation. The property owner is responsible for removing any restriction signs ten (10) days after the conclusion of water use restrictions.

Aqua Docs carries a general liability policy of insurance for workmans comp, bodily injury and property damage with limits of \$1,000,000.00 per occurrence. Certificates of insurance will be provided upon request.

The State of Michigan requires a minimum fee of \$75.00 and increases the fee to \$1500.00 for treatment areas of 100 acres or more. Please make check to the State of Michigan. Application for the DEQ “Aquatic Nuisance Control permit” shall occur promptly after the fee is received from the customer.

Special Notes & Conditions of Treatments

- #1 – Our office must be notified of any inlets/outlets to meet specific permit requirements with the Michigan DEQ.
- #2 – If the water body is being used as a source of irrigation, please notify our office prior to any treatments.
- #3 – To minimize the possible effects on health and the environment, the treated waters MAY be restricted for such uses as swimming, bathing, irrigation, fish consumption and/or livestock.
- #4 – If an access site has not been determined or established prior to services rendered, then an access site must be determined at the discretion of the applicator at the time of treatment.

Payment in full is due within fifteen (15) days of each application. Any amount remaining unpaid when due shall accrue a penalty of 1.5% per month.

All materials utilized by Aqua Docs shall be of the highest quality and are registered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Michigan Department of Agriculture.

The accumulation of dying and decomposing plants and algae can deplete the dissolved oxygen supply in the water, which may result in fish mortality. Please note that such occurrences are minimal, however, the possibility does exist. Due to their level of sensitivity, Goldfish, Coy, and Trout are more susceptible to a treatment than other fish species. During Late Spring and Summer, many NATURAL fish kills occur due to an increase in water temperature and spawning habits, primarily.

Three or five year treatment program: As an incentive to establish a multiple year agreement we will treat your lake or pond at the same price structure as 2026 for 2027! The remaining years (2028-2030) will have cost increases of three percent or less. If total chemical costs exceeds 10% from the previous year a new agreement will have to be mutually acceptable. If during the life of the contract the DNR or other regulatory agencies significantly change the approved treatment procedures or the client finds the manner in which the work is performed less than satisfactory, either party may terminate this agreement upon giving ninety (90) days advance written notice thereof.



Contract:

Signature Page for “City of Saugatuck”

Program Option for City of Saugatuck:

One (1) Year Program- _____
Three (3) Year Program- _____
Five (5) Year Program- _____
(Just initial your choice)

Aquatic Doctors Lake Management, Inc.

By: MT Ryan Schauland B.S.
President

Signature

Date

For City of Saugatuck Representative:

Name (Print) _____
Title _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____
(Day): _____
(Eve): _____

Signature

Date

email: _____



Aquatic Doctors Lake Management, Inc.

Ryan Schauland BS

PO Box 150247

Grand Rapids MI 49515

(616) 365.1698

September 5, 2025

Dear Aquatic Doctors Family,

As the 2025 "Weed and Algae" season wraps up, we want to extend our sincere gratitude for your continued loyalty and support. We are truly honored to have you as a customer and thank you for choosing **Aquatic Doctors Lake Management, Inc.**, Michigan's fastest-growing lake management company.

This season brought with it an unusually aggressive start — and it stayed that way all summer. With record heat and a three-month drought, managing lakes and ponds became especially challenging. The intense sunlight and high temperatures fueled excessive weed and algae growth, while water levels dropped to historic lows across most bodies of water. Even beneficial aquatic growth became problematic in such extreme conditions.

Despite these challenges, your support allowed us to respond quickly and effectively, sometimes requiring additional treatments to keep nuisance growth in check. Together, we managed to successfully maintain the health and beauty of your lakes and ponds. We're hopeful that the 2026 season will bring more typical weather conditions.

Looking ahead, one of our top priorities for 2026 is the **early submission of permit applications**. Our goal is to file all permits by **January 1st**, giving the **DEQ** ample time to process them and help prevent the delays many of us experienced this year. We believe this proactive approach will allow us to begin treatments earlier in the season.

Enclosed is your **2026 contract** (if not included, that means a multi-year contract is already in place). Please review, complete, and return the contract at your earliest convenience. Be sure to also include a check made payable to the **State of Michigan** for the permit fee, as outlined in the attached "Permit Fees" letter. If no fee letter is included, you may disregard the permit fee.

We're excited to continue working with you and believe this is just the beginning of a long-lasting partnership. If you have any questions, want to adjust your treatment plan, or simply want to discuss your lake or pond, please don't hesitate to give me a call.

Thank you again for being a valued part of the Aquatic Doctors family. We look forward to speaking with you soon.

Warm regards,

Ryan Schauland

Aquatic Doctors Lake Management, Inc.

Avoid Permit Delays- Act Now

Aquatic Doctors Lake Management, Inc.

PO Box 150247 Grand Rapids MI 49515 Office: (616) 365 1698 Fax: (501) 647 3041 www.aquaticdoctors.com



Permit Fees for 2024

Act No. 164
Public Acts of 2003
Approved by the Governor
Aug 11, 2003
Filed with the Secretary of State
Aug 12, 2003
EFFECTIVE DATE: Aug 12, 2003

STATE OF MICHIGAN
92ND LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2003

ENROLLED SENATE BILL No. 596

States:

1. Until December 31, 2009, an application for a permit under this section for control work qualifying for a Certificate of Coverage under a general permit shall be accompanied by a fee of \$75.00. Until December 31, 2009, an application for a permit under this section for any other control work shall be accompanied by the following fee, based on the size of the area of impact:
 - a) Less than ½ acre, \$80.00.
 - b) ½ acre or more but less than 5 acres, \$225.00.
 - c) 5 acres or more but less than 20 acres, \$450.00.
 - d) 20 acres or more but less than 100 acres, \$875.00.
 - e) 100 acres or more, \$1,600.00.

The Department of Environmental Quality shall forward fees collected under this section to the state treasure for deposit in the land and water management permit fee fund created in section 30113 of the natural resources and environmental protection act, 1994 PA 451, MCL 324.30113.

- **The highlighted section is the fee for you and your association.**