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**Kern County Water Agencies Launch Regional Campaign to  
Prevent the Spread of Invasive Golden Mussels**

*The Golden Rule campaign urges boaters and users of Kern waterways to  
always Clean, Drain, and Dry their vessels, and report any golden mussel  
sightings to help stop the spread.*

**BAKERSFIELD, Calif. (May 21, 2026)** — Today, a coalition of local Kern County water interests announced the launch of a coordinated public awareness campaign – calling on boaters and the public to remember **The Golden Rule: Clean. Drain. Dry.** The campaign will focus on engaging recreational users of Kern County waterways to help prevent the spread of golden mussels and protect our water.

“So far, we haven’t detected golden mussels at Lake Isabella or in the Kern River upstream of Bakersfield, but with summer boating season around the corner, we need the public’s help to keep it that way,” said **Art Chianello, Kern River Watermaster**. “Once golden mussels get into a system, they are hard to remove and can cause significant, expensive damage to important water infrastructure. This campaign is about letting everyone know that they can play a part in protecting our water so we can continue to provide reliable water for Kern County’s families, farms, and businesses.”

The campaign emphasizes the importance of always following the Clean, Drain, and Dry approach when boating or recreating — especially if you are moving between different lakes or rivers.

Being part of the solution is as easy as remembering to:

- **Clean** vessels and gear inside and out right after leaving the water.
- **Drain** bilge, ballast, wells, and buckets before you leave the area.
- **Dry** equipment completely before launching into another body of water.

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Golden mussels can travel between water systems while attached to boats, kayaks, jet skis, and other watercraft. Once they are introduced into rivers or reservoirs, they are extremely difficult to remove, and they reproduce rapidly — attaching to hard surfaces like pipes and pumps, reducing water conveyance capacity, damaging infrastructure, and increasing maintenance and operational costs.

Just last week, [Kern County declared a state of local emergency](#) due to the presence and threat of invasive golden mussels within systems essential to the county's municipal water supply, agricultural operations, groundwater recharge programs, and industrial uses.

With peak water recreation and boating season approaching, the City of Bakersfield, California Water Service, Kern County Water Authority, Kern Delta Water District and North Kern Water Storage District are collaborating to raise awareness of the harms posed by golden mussels and the steps residents can take to help protect Kern County water infrastructure from the invasive species.

Residents are encouraged to stay informed, follow posted signage, and report suspected sightings to the [California Department of Fish and Wildlife](#) at <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Invasives/Species/Golden-Mussel>.

**Here's what our campaign members had to say:**

"The City of Bakersfield relies on shared water infrastructure that supports residents, businesses, and essential services. Public awareness and early action are critical to prevent the introduction of golden mussels and reduce the risk of contamination and infrastructure damage," said **Daniel R. Maldonado, Assistant Water Director at the City of Bakersfield.**

"Golden mussels can clog pipes, damage infrastructure, and increase maintenance and operational costs for water systems. This collaborative campaign helps ensure our customers understand how their actions can make a real difference in protecting our local water resources," said **Rafael Molina, District Manager at California Water Service.**

"Keeping golden mussels out of the Kern River takes coordination across every agency that depends on it. This campaign brings that coordination together

behind a single, shared message to the public: prevention is the key," said **Eric Averett, General Manager of the Kern County Water Authority.**

"This campaign is about increasing public awareness and promoting simple steps the public can take to prevent the spread of this invasive species. We need everyone's help to avoid introducing golden mussels in Lake Isabella and the upper Kern River. Prevention is far less costly than having to mitigate future infestation of this key water resource," said **Steven Teglia, General Manager of Kern Delta Water District.**

"The invasive golden mussels pose a serious threat to the systems that deliver water to the farms that put food on the table for communities here and around the country. By working together and engaging Kern County residents, we can all help prevent the spread of golden mussels into the Kern River," said **David Hampton, General Manager of the North Kern Water Storage District.**

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### **About The Golden Rule Campaign**

*The Golden Rule Campaign is a partnership between local Kern County water interests to help protect our water resources from the threat of golden mussels. To learn more or get involved, reach out to [Info@GoldenRuleKernCounty.com](mailto:Info@GoldenRuleKernCounty.com).*

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