

Fish Care 101

1. Livewells should be filled early in the morning when surface water is the coolest. You can then periodically add ice, if needed, to maintain the cool water temperature throughout the day. This will increase the oxygen carrying capacity of the water in your livewell and reduce heat stress on the fish.

After filling your livewell with cool water add the appropriate amount of Rejuvenade as outlined on the bottle and turn your aerator on to saturate the water with oxygen prior to catching your first fish. Preparing your livewell prior to takeoff will save you time and preserve the weight of your catch.

2. Never throw fish into the boat as this may cause internal injury. Land all fish using the Frabill Competition Series net provided by FLW Outdoors, and keep fish off the carpet at all times. Carpet fibers can remove the slime coat on contact, causing unnecessary stress to the fish.

Always wet the measuring board before measuring a fish. This will reduce the board temperature and also prevent damage to the slime coat.

Never use culling rings or balance beams that puncture fish, FLW Outdoors will provide culling clips that do not harm the fish.

Practice procedures for deep hook removal, there are many good articles available online.

3. Once a fish is placed in the livewell, the aerator should run continually. During summer months when water temperatures exceed 80 degrees, place the livewell on recirculation. Continuously flowing water from the lake through your livewell is not recommended since surface water temperatures generally rise throughout the day, thus adding warm water, which holds less oxygen, to your livewell.

Use ice to keep the livewell water temperature 8 to 10 degrees below the surface temperature of the water you are fishing.

4. When you have a limit of fish in the livewell, half the volume of water should be replaced, cooled with ice and recharged with the appropriate amount of Rejuvenade every two to three hours in order to remove metabolic waste. Be sure to repeat this procedure immediately before your final run back to weigh-in.
5. Upon arriving at the check-in point, check the livewell water level. If water is needed, it should be taken from the main channel or lake, cooled with ice and recharged with the appropriate amount of Rejuvenade. Water should not be taken in at the landing, as this water is generally warmer, holds less oxygen and may contain petroleum byproducts that can be harmful to your catch.

Fish should remain in the livewell until you are ready to proceed to the holding tank for weigh-in. Continue to run the aerator on recirculation until all fish are removed from the livewell.

6. When boats are docked at the weigh-in site and your catch is put into a weigh-in bag, the bag should be filled with the cooler, oxygenated water from the livewell rather than the surface water at the landing. Remember, the water at the landing is generally warmer, holds less oxygen and may contain petroleum byproducts that can be harmful to your catch.

Following these procedures should help reduce the chances of water weight loss, regurgitation weight loss and fish mortality.