



City of Sarnia

MEDIA RELEASE

DATE: May 11, 2021

RELEASE DATE: Immediate

FROM: Patti Ross, Manager of Parks, Forestry and Horticulture
Stacey Forfar, General Manager of Community Services

SUBJECT: Gypsy Moth Control Program – Aerial Spray Date **Update**

The Gypsy Moth Control Program has been rescheduled for **Friday May 14, 2021**. Treatment will focus within an area 49.2 hectares large, with four areas determined to have severe infestations.

Aerial spraying will be used to ensure adequate coverage and effectiveness. Zimmer Air Services are scheduled to administer the aerial spray program between 5:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. using a twin engine helicopter; residents can expect high audible levels as the helicopter completes its path. Expect brief road closures during spraying.

Weather is the primary factor in the day and time of the spray. If the weather is not cooperative, the spray will not occur and the City will update its website and social media pages.

Members of the public are unlikely to experience any health effects, and no special precautions are necessary or required. Individuals who have concerns should take reasonable precautions to avoid exposure during an application period of the program.

While no special precautions need to be taken, the following measures may be considered by residents living in treatment areas:

- Whenever possible, remain indoors for 30 minutes after spraying to allow for the droplets to deposit onto the tree leaves.
- Bringing laundry, toys and pets indoors before spraying begins.

- Practice good personal and food hygiene (e.g., hand washing after outdoor activities, especially after gardening; leaving outdoor shoes at the door; washing all fruits and vegetables before eating or cooking).
- Covering lawn furniture, outdoor tables, pools, BBQs, play equipment and sandboxes and/or rinsing them off with water after spraying is finished.
- Minimize opening and closing windows and doors during the spraying.
- Shutting off the heating/cooling vents or selecting the recirculate setting.
- Contacting your family physician if you are concerned that a personal medical condition may be aggravated by the spraying.

The second spray application will occur within 5-10 days of the first spray, weather depending.

The helicopter will apply the biological pesticide Foray 48B Biological Insecticide Aqueous Suspension. During the spray, to assist Zimmer Air Services, City staff will be controlling traffic in the spray areas.

The active ingredient in the spray is *Bacillus thuringiensis v. kurstaki* (Btk), Registration No.24977 under the Pest Control Products Act (Canada).

Btk is a bacterium found naturally in soils, and has been used for some 30 years successfully world wide as a biological pest control agent. Btk has been used on millions of acres of wooded areas and agricultural crops in many countries worldwide. More information on this biological pest confirm agent, is available on the Government of Canada's website: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/consumer-product-safety/reports-publications/pesticides-pest-management/fact-sheets-other-resources/bacillus-thuringiensis-subspecies-kurstaki.html>

Homeowners within the four spray areas have been sent a letter. Additional information about the Gypsy Moth, spray maps and the City of Sarnia's approach to mitigating the damage of this invasive species is available online: <https://www.sarnia.ca/gypsy-moth-control-program/>



GYPSY MOTH

The caterpillars are often a nuisance during the last two weeks of June

Image: visual of gypsy moth and the defoliation damage it can cause.



Image: visual of pre-emergence monitoring plots established throughout the spray zone. Egg hatching and leaf development will be monitored on the trees with pink bands on them. This is done to determine the most effective time to complete the aerial spray program.

For further information, please contact:

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