



Department of Public Works

Streets Division – Urban Forestry

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Name

Address

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Notice of Intent: Spongy Moth Pesticide Application

Dear Resident,

City of Madison Streets & Urban Forestry, Parks, and Engineering Divisions are working together to control spongy moth populations on public land. This invasive insect is capable of defoliating trees. While the spongy moth is not lethal to trees by itself, the extra stress caused by defoliation paired with dry conditions and other pests can lead to disease or tree loss.

The City has hired a certified arborist to spray select trees within Glen Oak Hills Park and the Kenosha Greenway from the ground. A map showing the approximate area receiving the application is included on the reverse side of this letter.

Spraying the trees may require a temporary closure of streets next to the park and greenway, like North and South Kenosha, while the work is in process. The arborists will be using lift trucks in order to treat the tree canopy. For work safety, the road may need to be closed for a short time.

When will this occur?

The tentative dates for the application will be April 25 and April 26, 2024. The spray must be used at a very specific time in the caterpillar's life cycle, and weather conditions need to be taken into account as well.

What is the "pesticide"?

The spray contains a naturally occurring bacteria that is fatal to small spongy moth caterpillars when ingested. It's the caterpillars of the spongy moth that causes harm to trees.

The technical name for the bacteria is *Bacillus thuringiensis kurstaki* (Btk). Btk affects the ability of the spongy moth caterpillar to digest, eventually killing them.

Btk has not been shown to be harmful to people, birds, pets, or pollinators, like bees or species of butterflies native to Madison. Also, by targeting the application at this time of year, it will limit any possible harmful effects to other insects that may ingest the bacterium.

Where to learn more...

A wealth of additional resources regarding the spongy moth can be found on the City of Madison's spongy moth website, www.cityofmadison.com/SpongyMoth.

On the spongy moth website, you can find more information on the City's efforts to control spongy moth, including the spraying effort in your neighborhood.

You can also find links to more information about Btk, links to the Wisconsin DNR, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection moth control information and operations, and more.

Thank you for your understanding and assistance in this effort.

Ian Brown,
City Forester

