

Herbicide and Pesticide Use in Beaumont

FAQs

May 8, 2017

Beaumont is committed to maintaining safe and healthy urban environments. Since controlling weeds and harmful pests is important for ensuring the enjoyment and sustainability of our park spaces and trees, we have reintroduced the application of herbicides and pesticides for periodic use in problem areas.

Prior to 2010, Beaumont contracted out spraying of green spaces. Limited spraying has been done since then on noxious weeds in outlying areas, and the result is increasing populations of broadleaf weeds and noxious species throughout town. Beaumont's Parks Services, in consultation with an external contractor, believe that currently infested areas could be controlled by 2018 if proper care and attention are provided now.

Why is Beaumont spraying to control weeds and Sawfly larvae?

Municipalities and private land owners in the province are required to remove and control populations of prohibited and noxious weeds, and assistance from herbicides is necessary in order for Beaumont to meet this requirement.

Also, we will spray spruce trees infected with the yellow-headed spruce sawfly, which has the potential to destroy all spruce trees in Beaumont if not controlled.

Who is doing the spraying?

Beaumont has contracted Green Oasis and Birch Fumigators and Tree Spraying, which have staff of licensed and experienced practitioners to ensure application is done effectively, safely and according to the herbicide/pesticide's application requirements. Contractors will be encouraged to work in the early morning or late evening hours to limit traffic in the area and prevent direct exposure while spraying is taking place.

The use of chemical controls will only be permitted when other mechanical and biological control options have been exhausted. There will be 30 m buffer zones where spraying cannot occur at any time, such as around playgrounds, day cares and bodies of water. School treatment will only take place in July and August when school is out.

When will spraying take place?

All work will be conducted by licensed contracted crews.

- We will start the herbicide trimming program beginning in June. We will be treating fence lines and shrub-beds, weather permitting, June 15 through July 15.
- Where required, the turf broadleaf program will begin on school sports fields only when school is out in July and August.
- The fall turf broadleaf program will begin September 15 and run through October 31, weather permitting.

- All broadleaf treatment locations will have signs posted indicating product used, application rate and date applied.
- Required noxious weed control will be completed throughout the year.

How do I know if the products being used are safe to humans and pets?

Only compounds that have been pre-approved by Health Canada will be considered for use and preference will be given to those herbicides that have low residual levels so as to minimize any impacts on the area. Studies conducted by Health Canada are very comprehensive and all pesticides being used have been deemed safe for both humans and the environment. Best Management Practices will also be followed, which encourage pesticide users to spot spray problem populations rather than blanket spray a large area. See below for the names of the compounds being used.

Many municipalities in the Capital Region support pesticide use when it is deemed necessary. The City of Leduc, Strathcona County, the City of Spruce Grove and the City of Fort Saskatchewan are just a few examples of municipalities who actively use chemicals to control and eliminate the presence of pests where mechanical and biological control methods have failed.

What are we spraying for?

Currently, certain green spaces in town suffer from very high concentrations of broadleaf weeds, such as dandelions. Also, we spray the spruce trees to control the spread and destruction caused by the yellow-headed spruce sawfly.

Where will the spraying happen?

Spraying will be done on an “as needed” basis in the following areas during the 2017 growing season:

- All infested shrub beds
- All areas with large populations of noxious and prohibited weeds where it is not practical to hand-pick;
- Sports fields and green spaces throughout Town;
- Green spaces with very high concentrations of broadleaf weeds, such as dandelions;
- Spruce trees infected with the Yellow-Headed Spruce Sawfly;
- Trees infected with scale insect larvae.

Spraying will **not** take place in the following areas:

- Within 30 m of a playground or daycare;
- In the flood zone surrounding any water body or waterway, including Storm Water Management Facilities.

How will I know if spraying is happening in my neighbourhood?

Extensive measures will be taken to inform the community when and where spraying will occur, including ample signage around the proposed spraying area a minimum of 24 hours prior to spraying and 48 hours after spraying.

What products are being used?

- For broadleaf applications, the product is called Par III. There are three active ingredients in Par III: 2-4-D, dicamba and mecoprop.
- For the shrub beds, Round-Up (or another brand name) containing the active ingredient glyphosate is used.

What's the plan for the future?

Beaumont has developed an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Program which have staff developing a prescriptive method for Beaumont's green spaces, urban forestry as well as outline when herbicides will be used. Under the IPM program the use of chemical control will only be permitted when other control options have been exhausted or ineffective. It also indicates where spraying cannot occur at any time, such as around playgrounds, or school yards.

For more information:

E: admin@beaumont.ab.ca

P: 780-929-8782