



INFORMATION - COMMUNIQUÉ

**For Immediate Release
Thursday, May 31, 2012**

Update on Insect Control Branch Activities

Winnipeg, MB. – Today, the Winnipeg Public Service provided an update on the nuisance mosquito control program, the cankerworm control program and Province of Manitoba/City of Winnipeg gypsy moth management program.

Nuisance Mosquito Control Program

Throughout the month of May, Winnipeg and the surrounding area have seen significant rainfall. Approximately 85 -130 mm of rain in the past week has created the potential for a large emergence of summer adult nuisance mosquitoes.

The City of Winnipeg Insect Control Branch is asking our citizens to do their part in curbing the potential for a significant emergence of adult summer nuisance mosquitoes. Now is the critical time for neighbours to be putting screens on rain barrels, dumping water out of objects that can hold water, cleaning eavestroughing, summer pools, toys and ponds. If every Winnipegger eliminated the standing water around their home, it could equate to 50 per cent less sites for mosquito larvae to develop.

The Insect Control Branch continues the aggressive larviciding program using all available resources including approximately 150 staff and four helicopters. Staff are checking and treating approximately 30,000 hectares of potential larval habitat in Winnipeg and the surrounding 10 kilometer treatment area to reduce the potential for a large emergence of summer adult nuisance mosquitoes.

Conditions are monitored on a daily basis, and the Insect Control Branch is ready to implement the range of control measures available as nuisance activity and environmental conditions vary daily.

The most recent New Jersey Light Trap count was Wednesday May 30; the city-wide average was one. Currently, the Adulticiding Factor Analysis (AFA) rating remains at Low.

PLEASE HELP FIGHT THE BITE!

The City is strongly encouraging property owners to also help “Fight the Bite” as approximately 50 per cent of standing water sites are located on private property. Homeowners can take one of the following steps to eliminate standing water on their properties:

- **Dump It!** - containers
- **Drain It!** - eavestroughing or unused containers
- **Cover It!** - rain water collection containers
- **Fill It!** - low-lying areas
- **Treat It!** - biological larvicide

Cankerworm Control Program

The Insect Control Branch started the cankerworm control program on Monday, May 21, 2012 for City trees. However, due to the generally unfavourable over night weather conditions we have only completed portions of Insect Management Areas (IMA) 5, 10 and 50 including Kildonan Park and Elmwood Cemetery. The program will be treating very selective City boulevards and focussing on City cemeteries and parks, where cankerworms are starting to cause significant levels of defoliation. Current surveillance information indicates that the larvae are feeding on the leaves, causing many small holes known as “shot hole” damage.

The Insect Control Branch will continue the cankerworm control program tonight **Thursday, May 31st, 2012 at 9:30 p.m.** the tree spraying will be carried out in **Insect Management Area 11 (Glenwood, Norwood East, and Norwood West neighbourhoods)** and in **Insect Management Area 13 (Elm Park, Varennes, and St. George neighbourhoods)**

Due to the unfavourable weather the cankerworm treatment program is occurring seven nights per week, from 9:30 p.m. – 5:30 a.m. A Public Service Announcement will be issued daily providing information on what treed areas of the city will be sprayed the following day. This announcement will also be posted on the Insect Control [website](#).

Recent monitoring of the cankerworm population indicates that most areas of the city will have minimal damage except on some very localized streets where major defoliation may occur due to the cankerworm larvae feeding on the foliage of the large stands of American Elm, Manitoba Maple, Green Ash, and ornamental trees, the preferred host for spring and fall cankerworms.

Treatment will be conducted utilizing Btk, a biological, organic product, which is sprayed from high pressure tree sprayers directly onto the foliage of the trees. Once Btk is ingested by cankerworms, they stop feeding and die approximately two to three days later.

Homeowners are responsible for cankerworm control on their property

Citizens can spray their own trees with Btk, which is available at most home and garden centres, or they can contract a tree spraying company by referring to the Yellow Pages under tree service or exterminators.

Homeowners are reminded to remove tree bands

Please remember to remove any tree bands as the band will damage the bark of the tree if left on throughout the summer. To control fall cankerworms, please put new sticky bands up in early September.

Gypsy Moth Management Program

An established population of European Gypsy moth was discovered in the St. Vital area through an enhanced pheromone surveillance program conducted by the City of Winnipeg and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). Gypsy moth caterpillars have a voracious appetite and feed on the foliage of a wide variety of trees and shrubs and threaten the health of our urban forest. Defoliation and severe, acute damage to trees in St. Vital could be significant as the Gypsy moth population increases. This area has a large native oak population in St. Vital Park.

The Province of Manitoba requested a partnership with the City of Winnipeg to develop and administer the control program to eradicate the established Gypsy moth populations with aerial applications of organic, biological, *Bacillus thuringiensis var. kurstaki* (Btk). A small, low flying airplane disperses the organic, biological control product, in portions of Insect Management Area (IMA) 14, weather permitting. Treatment will be in portions of Minnetonka and Pulberry neighbourhoods including St. Vital Park. These flights will occur between 5:00 a.m. and 7:30 a.m., weather permitting through late June, 2012.

The first aerial application for the Gypsy Moth Control program was completed yesterday morning, Wednesday, May 30, 2012. The second of these aerial treatments will occur **between 5:00 a.m. and 7:30 a.m. on Friday, June 1, 2012, weather permitting.**

Public Service Announcements will be issued before the subsequent treatments, if a treatment is postponed and when the program is completed for 2012. Three separate treatments are required to effectively remove Gypsy moth from the affected area. **There are no buffer zones for the Gypsy Moth Control Program.**

General Information

Property owners not wanting insecticides applied on or adjacent to their principle residence may register as "Anti-Pesticide Registrants" for both cankerworm and/or adult nuisance mosquito control programs. Those who wish to register must provide identification that ties the registrant to the address being registered for a buffer zone. A photocopy or scanned document like a driver's licence or utility bill will suffice as acceptable identification proving primary residence. There are four options to register. In writing to Insect Control Branch at 3 Grey Street,

R2L 1V2, by faxing or e-mailing 311, or in person at 1539 Waverley Street.
Please remember a minimum 72-hour turnaround time is required for processing.

Citizens may register for email notification regarding Cankerworm and/or Adult Mosquito and/or Gypsy Moth control programs by visiting the [Insect Control website](#). They can also register for telephone notification by calling 311 and leaving their name, address and phone number. Once registered, residents will receive automated phone or email notification identifying the area(s) of the City in which the Insect Control crews are intending to work, weather permitting.

Interested individuals may acquire more information by contacting 311, or by visiting the City's [Insect Control website](#).

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Media inquiries may be directed to the City of Winnipeg Media Inquiry Line at (204) 986-6000 or via email at MediaInquiry@winnipeg.ca

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