

News from Avon Township

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Let's start with a quick quiz. Which of the following is a noxious weed? (a) Spotted knapweed; (b) Canada thistle; (c) Leafy spurge; (d) European buckthorn; (e) Wild carrot.

Trick question. According to the Minnesota Noxious Weed Law (Statutes 18.76 to 18.91), they are all noxious weeds!

A noxious weed is a plant that is "injurious to public health, the environment, public roads, crops, livestock, or other property." In fact, there are 41 plants that the State of Minnesota officially considers "noxious."

Some noxious weeds must be exterminated on sight (Eradicate List), while others like Canada thistle and leafy spurge need to be controlled to prevent their spread (Control List). Wild carrot, as well as crown vetch and 12 others, don't need to be killed or controlled, but are illegal to sell, transport or intentionally plant (Restricted List). Poison ivy, knotweed, Japanese barberry and Amur maple are somewhat unique and have special rules for their handling or control (Specially Regulated List).

The Minnesota Noxious Weed law legally requires everyone, including the Township, to control or eradicate the noxious weeds on his/her property (MN Statute 18.78).

A Township representative, along with the County weed inspector, recently surveyed the entire Township to look for and take action against these nasty plants. The State takes the threat so seriously that it even gives the inspectors the right to "enter upon land without consent of the owner and without being subject to an action for trespass or any damages (MN Statute 18.79)."

The Township will spray or mow the noxious weeds in the road right-of-way. However, if any noxious weeds were observed on private land, then it is the responsibility of the resident to control the plants. As a result, some residents in the Town may have been recently surprised to receive a letter from me requesting that they deal with their noxious weeds, especially thistles.

There's no question that we all need to do our part to keep our community free from these green pests.

On a different note, the Avon Township website is finally back online. We hope you find it useful and welcome any feedback.