



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
City of Duluth Communications Office

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DATE: 06/15/2011

SUBJECT: MDA set to conduct Duluth gypsy moth eradication this Friday

BY: Amy Norris, Public Information Coordinator

Minnesota Department of Agriculture set to conduct Duluth gypsy moth eradication this Friday

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) is preparing to treat approximately 342 acres of land in the Central Hillside of Duluth to slow the spread of a gypsy moth infestation identified last summer. Officials will conduct this second treatment on Friday, June 17, depending on weather conditions. The treatment should begin at approximately 5:30 AM and conclude at 7:00 AM (times are approximate and are dependent on weather conditions)

This is the last application officials will conduct of *Bacillus thuringiensis var.kurstaki* (Btk) over the area. Btk is a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency-approved bacterium with very low risk for humans or animals other than caterpillars. Btk is widely used within the organic gardening community.

Gypsy moths are among America's most destructive tree pests, having caused millions of dollars in damage to Eastern forests. The moths are common in Wisconsin and are now threatening Minnesota. If present in large numbers, gypsy moth caterpillars can defoliate large sections of forest. Oak, poplar, birch and willow are among their preferred hosts.

To help area citizens stay informed, the MDA has set up an Arrest the Pest Hotline at 888-545-MOTH. The hotline will offer the latest details about treatment dates and times. Updates before, during and after treatments will also be given on the MDA's Facebook page (www.facebook.com/mnagriculture) and MDA's Twitter account (www.twitter.com/mnagriculture). MDA's website (www.mda.state.mn.us/gypsymoth) also has information about gypsy moths and control efforts.

The MDA offers the following tips to residents in and around the treatment area:

For the moth treatment to work, it must begin early in the morning. Residents may be awakened on that day by the noise of the low-flying airplane. MDA apologizes for any inconvenience;

The airplane noise may spook pets, so residents may wish to keep them indoors during the treatment;

The treatment product has no known health effects for humans, but to avoid it residents may wish to stay indoors during the treatment and keep windows closed for a half hour after application; and

The residue will not damage a vehicles's finish, but residents may wish to park vehicles indoors to avoid having to wash them after the application. Soapy water will remove any residue on outdoor items.

For media inquiries on the day of the event, please call 651-274-5162.

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