



## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS

---

CITY OF MIDDLETON  
7426 HUBBARD AVENUE  
MIDDLETON, WI 53562-3118

PH 608.831.7479 FAX 608.827.1080  
WEB: [www.ci.middleton.wi.us](http://www.ci.middleton.wi.us)

February 2010

Dear Middleton Resident,

Between mid-May and early June, planes hired by the Wisconsin Gypsy Moth Suppression Program will be spraying your property and near your property as part of a treatment program to reduce the population of this pest. The planes fly very low, about 50 to 100 feet above the tree tops. Spraying may begin at dawn, and the spray may give off an odor for 15 to 30 minutes until it dries.

The approximate boundaries of the treatment area which your property is in or near are: From Donna Drive and Century Ave south to Hubbard Ave and from Allen Blvd west to Bristol St. The insecticide used will be 'Foray'. More information on this insecticide is given below. If you wish to object to the treatment of the property owned or rented by you, follow the instructions below.

For your convenience we've included a list of frequently asked questions and their answers. If you have additional questions or would like further information, please contact your local Gypsy Moth Suppression Coordinator, Harry Libby at 608-831-7479.

### **Frequently Asked Questions:**

#### **Q: Why is the spraying done?**

**A:** Gypsy moths feed on the leaves of many trees in residential and forested settings. Their populations can grow to the point that they eat all the leaves off of trees, which can kill trees in some cases. Surveys have shown that populations of the pest in your area are large enough to cause extensive damage this summer if no action is taken. The upcoming treatment was prompted by the requests of your community or residents within your community.

#### **Q: What insecticides will be used?**

**A:** The aerial spray program will use a bacterial insecticide called 'Foray', a brand name for *Bacillus thuringiensis kurstaki* (commonly called Btk). 'Foray' contains a naturally occurring soil bacterium that interacts with bacteria in the caterpillar's digestive tract to kill gypsy moth caterpillars when they eat it.

#### **Q: Does the spray hurt people?**

**A:** Btk has been used for more than 30 years for gypsy moth control, and has undergone thousands of lab and field tests that demonstrate its safety. It is possible, but very unlikely, that people with severe food allergies or asthma may react to the spray. If you suffer from such conditions, you should take the simple precaution of closing your windows and staying indoors while the planes are spraying. The spray may give off an odor until it dries, which typically takes 15 – 30 minutes. You may also wish to consult your medical advisor if you have a serious condition such as these.

#### **Q: Does the spray hurt other animals?**

**A:** Btk is harmless to all animals except caterpillars that feed in May. However, the planes may frighten pets, horses, or livestock, so you may want to keep them inside during spraying if possible.

**Q: Will the spray damage the paint on vehicles?**

**A:** No. However, if you let the spray dry on your vehicle for several days, you may need to soak it with wet cloths for 15 minutes before washing it, or run it through the car wash once or twice (avoiding any wax application until the spray residue is removed).

**Q: When will spraying occur?**

**A:** Each treatment area will be sprayed once between mid-May and early June. The exact timing depends on the weather and growth of the caterpillars. State or regional press releases are sent out prior to the spray season starting. The public can also call a toll-free telephone number (1-800-642-MOTH) in May and June to find out where spraying is scheduled to occur the following day. Automatic email notification of spray activities is also an option. The emails have the same message as the 1-800 number and will arrive daily during May and June until the spraying is complete. Subscribe or unsubscribe anytime online: <http://gypsymoth.wi.gov>  
**Spraying may begin as early as 5:15 a.m., and may continue into early afternoon if weather conditions allow.**

**Q: Why do you have to spray so early and fly so low?**

**A:** The high humidity and low wind conditions typical of early morning are needed in order to assure the insecticide droplets do not evaporate and/or blow away before they land on the trees. Program managers also want to minimize the number of people active during spraying and avoid distracting commuters with low-flying planes.

**Q: What do I do if I don't want my property sprayed?**

**A:** Contact your municipal or county Gypsy Moth Suppression Coordinator (see previous page) **before the objection deadline of February 19, 2010.** In writing, explain the reason for your objection, and provide your name, phone number and mailing address along with the address of the property you want excluded from the spray (if different from your mailing address). Please be aware that if your property is small, other property owners in the immediate area will also have to be removed from the treatment area in order to avoid spraying your property. Spray planes will still fly over this area, but with nozzles turned off.

We hope this letter addresses your concerns. Again, please feel free to contact me for more information.

Sincerely,

Harry Libby, City Forester