

Notice of Spongey Moth Aerial Management –

Outreach Kits for Local Government Units – Aitkin, Carlton, Itasca, Pine, and St. Louis Counties

Social media post

Heads up! The Minnesota Department of Agriculture will be using low flying yellow airplanes for aerial management of spongy moth, a destructive invasive forest pest. These operations will take place at 24 areas throughout Aitkin, Carlton, Itasca, Pine, and St. Louis counties. Operations are scheduled to take place July 16-22 but are dependent on weather. You can find more information and exact operation locations by visiting www.mda.state.mn.us/smmanagement.

Web content

Spongey Moth Management is Happening in Aitkin, Carlton, Itasca, Pine, and St. Louis Counties

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA), in collaboration with federal partners, has identified areas in Aitkin, Carlton, Itasca, Pine, and St. Louis counties that will be aerially managed to slow the spread of spongy moth in Minnesota.

What is spongy moth?

Spongy moth (*Lymantria dispar*) is an invasive insect that is a significant threat to the economy, environment, and human health. Spongy moth has caused billions of dollars in property damage and defoliated millions of acres of forest. Spongy moth caterpillars can feed on over 300 tree species, including some of Minnesota's most common trees.

How is spongy moth being managed in these counties?

A mating disruption product, SPLAT GM-O (Specialized Pheromone and Lure Application Technology Gypsy Moth-Organic) will be used. This is a pheromone that stops male moths from finding females, preventing mating. It is applied via low flying aircraft to the tree canopies. Applications could happen early in the mornings, with planes often flying in the area for several hours.

SPLAT GM-O is harmless to humans and animals. All the ingredients in SPLAT GM-O are listed by the EPA as safe.

When is this management activity happening?

The aerial management activities are scheduled July 16-22. However, these dates are weather dependent.

What areas of the counties are being aerially managed for spongy moth?

An interactive map of spongy moth management activities is available on the [MDA website](http://www.mda.state.mn.us).

How do I stay informed or get more information:

More information on spongy moth management is available at www.mda.state.mn.us/smmanagement. You can also sign up for text or email alerts to stay up to date on the management proposal by visiting the [MDA website](http://www.mda.state.mn.us).

Newsletter article

MDA to Conduct Spongy Moth Aerial Management in Aitkin, Carlton, Itasca, Pine, and St. Louis Counties

Exact management dates will depend on weather conditions

St. Paul, MN: The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) is preparing to aerially manage 24 sites in Aitkin, Carlton, Itasca, Pine, and St. Louis counties to slow the spread of spongy moth. Officials will likely conduct the aerial management activities July 16-22, beginning as early as 6:30 a.m. and continuing throughout the day. These dates are dependent on weather conditions in the area.

The 24 sites total approximately 83,760 acres. Maps of the sites are available on the [MDA website](#). Residents can also look up their address on [an interactive map](#) to determine if they are within any of these blocks.

The MDA will use a method of mating disruption which is the aerial application of a non-toxic waxy, food-grade substance containing pheromones specific to spongy moths that confuse the male moths. This makes it difficult for the male spongy moths to find females, reducing mating success.

The mating disruption product will be applied by low-flying yellow planes. The product is not harmful to humans, animals, birds, or other insects, and will help protect forest health, property values, and the state's tourism industry.

To help area citizens stay informed, the MDA has set up a Report a Pest Info Line at 1-888-545-6684 with the latest details about management dates and times. On the morning of the application, residents can call the phone number with any questions they may have. Simply press 0 (zero) to speak to someone. The [MDA's website](#) also has information about spongy moths and control efforts.

Residents can also sign up for text or email updates about management progress. On the [Spongy Moth Management Map](#) you can click each area (outlined in blue) you would like to receive updates for, follow the "sign up for text or email notification" link.

Spongy moths are among America's most destructive tree pests, having caused millions of dollars in damage to eastern forests. The moths are now threatening Minnesota. If present in large numbers, spongy moth caterpillars can defoliate large sections of forest.

Contact the Minnesota Department of Agriculture at 1-888-545-6684 or reportapest@state.mn.us with questions regarding spongy moth and the planned management.