

Lancaster County Weed Control – City of Lincoln Weed Abatement

Lancaster County Has A New No. 1 When It Comes to Noxious Weeds

INSIDE THIS REPORT:

Lancaster's New No. 1	1
Noxious Weed ID	2



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"It is exploding on us. We are finding more of it each year"



"It may look like a nice, ornamental grass but it is not"

*Reported by Nancy Hicks,
Lincoln Journal Star
November 18th 2017*

Last week, a Lincoln woman brought in a plant that seemed to be taking over an area behind her house in north Lincoln to the county's weed authority office for identification.

It was phragmites, one of the state's 12 noxious weeds, and a growing problem in Lancaster County.

Last year, phragmites became the county's No. 1 problem, based on the number of known infestations, bypassing leafy spurge, which has been at the top of the list for at least seven years, as long as Brent Meyer has been the county weed superintendent.

"It is exploding on us. We are finding more of it each year," said Meyer.

Phragmites is a threat to the wetland ecosystem — crowding out all other plants and eliminating the wildlife that depend on those plants.

Phragmites is also a threat to waterways, becoming so thick it stops the flow of water, and leads to increased flooding.

Educating people about

phragmites is important, Meyer said.

"It's going to take people learning how to recognize it and recognize that it is not a friendly plant out in their wetland areas."

Fall and winter are good times to spot phragmites, because it stands out — a stately 10- to 12-foot-tall grass with impressive seed heads.

It may look like a nice, ornamental grass but it is not, Meyer said.

Phragmites is hardy and rapacious, with stolons, roots that spread across the ground or even over the wetland water 30 to 40 feet or more a year; and rhizomes, vertical underground roots that can also spread dozens of feet a year; and seed pods that spread the plant to new areas.

And the only way to kill the weed is to treat it with herbicides.

You can't burn it (that invigorates it), or pull it (because of the extensive root system).

"Cattle will eat it, but cattle are not going to go into wetlands to eat.

"You can't just dig it up like a thistle and be done with it."

Treatment within an urban setting — where you have to make sure the herbicide doesn't damage neighboring lawns and ornamental plants — is difficult and costly, Meyer said.

Phragmites also is resilient, so it often takes years to manage older, established infestations.

The county has found phragmites along creek and stream beds and wetland areas throughout the county, including in Lincoln.

"That plant has got everyone's attention. It doesn't matter what meeting I go to, weed superintendents are talking about finding more phragmites."

Meyer would like someday to put phragmites into the success story category, like purple loosestrife.

The county once had 400 patches of purple loosestrife but is now down to about 30.

"That's a real success story. We got on it early, educated the public and pretty much eliminated it in the eastern part of the state."



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We're on the Web!
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Good Neighbors –
 Control Invasive Weeds !!!

Nebraska's Noxious Weeds

It is the duty of each person who owns or controls land to effectively control noxious weeds on such land.

Noxious weed is a legal term used to denote a destructive or harmful weed for the purpose of regulation.

The Director of Agriculture establishes which plants are noxious. These non-native plants compete aggressively with desirable plants and vegetation. Failure to control noxious weeds in this state is a serious problem which is detrimental to the production of crops and livestock, and to the welfare of residents of this state. Noxious weeds may also devalue land and reduce tax revenue.



<p style="text-align: center;">Musk Thistle Height 1.6–9.8 ft</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pink to purple flowers Mature seedhead</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Canada Thistle Height 1–3.9 ft</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pink to purple flowers</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Plumeless Thistle Height 1–4.9 ft</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Purple flowers</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Phragmites Height 3.2–20 ft</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Young seedhead Mature seedhead</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Leafy Spurge Height .3–2.6 ft</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Large yellow leaves (bracts) Stems/leaves have milky sap</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Sericea Lespedeza Height 1.5–6.5 ft</p> <p style="text-align: center;">White or cream to yellowish white flowers</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Japanese Knotweed Height 3–10 ft</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Creamy white to greenish white flowers</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Giant Knotweed Height 8–13 ft</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Creamy white to greenish white flowers</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Purple Loosestrife Height 1.3–8 ft</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Purple to magenta flowers</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Saltcedar Height 3.3–20 ft</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pink to white flowers</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Spotted Knapweed Height 1–3.9 ft</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Lavender to purple flowers</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Diffuse Knapweed Height 1–3.9 ft</p> <p style="text-align: center;">White/purplish flowers</p>
<p>Lancaster County's Noxious Weeds</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">Cutleaf Teasel Height 4–8 ft</p> <p style="text-align: center;">White flowers</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Common Teasel Height 3–6 ft</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Lavender to white flowers</p>	

Good neighbors control noxious weeds — If you have questions or concerns about noxious weeds, please contact your local county noxious weed control authority, Nebraska Weed Control Association (www.neweed.org) or Nebraska Department of Agriculture.