

## WHAT ARE NOXIOUS WEEDS?

Noxious weeds are non-native plants that are highly destructive, competitive and difficult to control or eliminate. They can increase soil erosion, destroy native plants and animal habitats, damage recreational opportunities, clog waterways, lower land values and pose a serious threat to endangered species.

## WHERE DO THEY COME FROM?

Noxious weeds are found everywhere in Great Falls, from yards to gardens, from along the Missouri River to undeveloped properties. Over the years, people have introduced non-native species to our region either intentionally in gardens and landscapes or unintentionally through contaminated hay and seeds. A small but dangerous number of these species have turned out to be highly invasive and damaging.

## WHAT ARE THE COSTS OF NOXIOUS WEEDS?

Each year noxious weeds cost Great Falls tens of thousands of dollars in environmental degradation and management costs. Once invasive plants become established, it is very expensive to manage and eradicate them. In some areas, it may not be feasible to completely remove them once they take hold.

## WHAT IS THE STATE NOXIOUS WEED LAW?

Montana's noxious weed law, MCA 7-22-21 states: "It is unlawful for any person to permit any noxious weed to propagate or go to seed on the person's land." Information on identification, control methods and management plans is available through the Cascade County Weed District. MCA 7-22-2153 states: "A person who does not provide alternative weed control within the time specified is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be sentenced pursuant to

46-18-212 and assessed the costs of weed control provided by the board. A second or subsequent conviction is punishable by a fine of not less than \$500 or more than \$2,000, plus the costs of weed control provided by the board.

## WHAT IS DONE WHEN NOXIOUS WEEDS ARE FOUND ON PRIVATE PROPERTY?

The City and the Weed District personnel will work with all landowners within the City to prevent new infestations from becoming established. They can also provide the landowner with information on how to identify and manage the noxious weeds on their property.

## WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF THE NOXIOUS WEEDS ARE NOT MANAGED?

State law allows for the appropriate agencies to require a landowner to manage noxious weeds on their property. Proper management includes the use of chemical, mechanical, biological and cultural control measures where possible and appropriate within current land uses and environmental concerns. Chemical applications are not always an appropriate management tool.

## WHAT CAN I DO?

### Prevent weed infestations:

- Choose non-invasive species for your gardens and landscapes.
- Check vehicles, clothing, boats, boat trailers and camping equipment for weeds and seeds.
- Never dump aquarium plants into a pond, river or other bodies of water.
- Drive only on established trails away from weed infected areas.
- Use weed-free seed and forage.
- Obey noxious weed laws and quarantines.

## Manage weed infestations:

- Prevent weed seed productions through mowing, pulling (be sure ground is wet to remove the root) or appropriate chemical control.
- Replant with appropriate species to prevent weeds from returning.
- Properly dispose of noxious weeds and noxious weed seeds into plastic bags and dispose of in the landfill.

## NOXIOUS WEEDS BY CATEGORY

**Category 1** noxious weeds are currently established and generally widespread. Management criteria include containment and suppression of existing infestations and prevention of new infestations. These are the main noxious weeds in the City of Great Falls:

### CATEGORY 1 WEEDS

Spotted Knapweed    Leafy Spurge  
Bindweed            Canada Thistle  
Whitetop

**Spotted Knapweed**



**Leafy Spurge**



**Bindweed**



**Canada Thistle**



**Whitetop**



**WEED MANAGEMENT METHODS:**

**HERBICIDES:**

Herbicides are important tools for controlling noxious weeds. It is important to understand the effects and limitations of those used for control of noxious weeds. Note: Proper herbicide choice, timing of application, technique and site conditions. Contact the County Weed Department at 406-454-6920 for information.

**BIOLOGICAL:**

Biological control involves the use of living organisms, such as insects, to control a weed infestation. This attempts to recreate a balance of plant species with predators.

**MANUAL:**

**HAND PULLING:**

If there is not a large infestation, hand pulling may be a viable option. Spotted Knapweed has a tap root and can be effectively controlled with hand pulling. Be sure ground is wet so the root is removed. Wear gloves, put in plastic bags and dispose of in the landfill.

**MOWING:**

Mowing reduces seed production in some plants. It is most effective before they flower and seed. Mowing can also increase seed production in some plants. It is important to bag while cutting and dispose of in the landfill. At the landfill bagged weeds will be buried and will not be able to spread.

**CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

Cascade County Weed & Mosquito Management District (406) 454-6920

City of Great Falls Public Works  
(406) 771-1401 Public Works  
(406) 727-8637 Partner Line

**WEBSITE INFORMATION:**

Montana Weed Control Association  
[www.mtweed.org](http://www.mtweed.org)

Montana Weed Awareness & Education Program  
[www.weedawareness.org](http://www.weedawareness.org)



Listed below are some local mowers/sprayers that supply lawn care services. The City accepts **NO** responsibility as to the character or quality of work performed by the listed companies.

- A1 Handyman Service & Lawn Care..... 268-8019
- AJ’s Tree & Landscaping Service..... 899-7219
- All the Trimmings..... 781-0253
- Consultee Turf Pros..... 761-6586
- Dale’s Lawn Service..... 452-0766
- Dr. Lawn..... 453-2733
- 4 Seasons Lot Service..... 453-4442
- Grass Whacker’s..... 590-6537
- Greenup Lawn & Sprinklers..... 452-6146
- Jonas Sprinkler & Fertilizer..... 216-2218
- Lawn & Order..... 564-2613
- Leisure Lawn Sprinkler & Fertilizer..... 727-3135
- Maintenance By The Yard..... 590-0686
- Miller’s Lawn Care ..... 564-6247
- Mr. Green Lawn Care..... 452-4733
- Nitro-Green Prof. Lawn (spray only)..... 761-3967
- Ron Hall-Scotts Lawn Service..... 454-2963
- Roustabout..... 727-8904
- Selstad Lawnrangers (spray only)..... 452-5158
- Terrascapes..... 453-1445
- TruGreen ChemLawn (spray only)..... 453-8708

**Noxious Weed Management in the City of Great Falls**



**Cascade County Weed & Mosquito Management**