

What are noxious weeds and why do they need to be controlled?

Noxious weeds are not your common pain in the grass weeds, they are plants that are highly aggressive and often toxic to humans and animals. These plants are ones that often cannot be controlled just through cutting digging or pulling. These plants pose an ecological threat to our lands and often impact wildlife and our waters. These plants are like a cancer on our lands and need to be managed. Many of these plants spread by root fragments, shoot fragments, and by seeds. RCW 17.10 sets the rules for requirement to control the spread of these plants to preserve our ecological integrity and reduce the negative economic impacts of selected plant species that have been deemed “Noxious”. The plants deemed noxious by the state weed board are listed in 3 categories for control and management. A list of the plants identified for control can be found at the state weed board or by following this link, <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=16-750>. This document provides the leading information for why we control specific plants. Our local weed board is required to do our due diligence to ensure that known populations of designated noxious weeds do not spread within our county. Our County uses a matrix to determine what noxious weeds are our highest priority for management.

Our full list can be downloaded [Kitsap county noxious weed list](#) . Our [control matrix](#) can also be downloaded providing more information on our priority levels for noxious weed management.

Where are noxious weeds found?

Many noxious weeds are found along our roadways, open areas and yes our own backyards. Like us, the weeds often travel the roadsides and use the roads to continue to move. The seeds of noxious weeds can be picked up by cars, people, and often mowing equipment and spread rapidly. One noxious weed plant can produce over 10,000 seeds and most plants have evolved to produce multiple seed sets in one season. Often these plants move from our roadsides to adjacent lands causing problems for private landowners. Many open fields and parks are vulnerable lands and prime locations for many of our most aggressive plants to take root. Once these aggressive plants have taken root, control becomes more difficult and often if not done properly the infestation can become more aggressive.

How does the noxious weed program control noxious weeds? Why are chemicals used to control noxious weeds?

Like and infection, if noxious weed populations are not managed properly they can then spread more rapidly and become more aggressive and harder to manage. Our program works to ensure that known populations of noxious weeds are managed and maintained in the most effective manner to protect the lands within our County. Our program works to identify the noxious weed infestations, and prevent seed set Through cutting flower heads and any plants that are already going to seed. We then search the area for any seedling or small plants to manage the plants before they have had a chance to set deep large roots. For many of our noxious weeds the best management is a small amount of herbicide to fully work through the plant to get to the root of the problem. We have found that cutting and digging can leave roots behind and can create a more aggressive plant. With a small amount of product (normally Less than 10 oz of a 1% solution of [Vastlan](#) on a normal roadside site) we are able to manage the noxious weeds while allowing the grasses and other desirables to thrive so they can fill in the area previously inhabited by the invasive weeds. ([see how our program runs and view what some of our roadside treatments look like](#))

What if i don't want chemical used?

If you do not want product used in your immediate area you are welcome to adopt a spot and maintain the area on your own. This will take an agreement from you that you will be on site 1 time a week to ensure that the plants are not blooming and that when you see them bloom you will be responsible for removing the plants (flowers and roots). You can fill out our [Landowner will maintain form](#) to take responsibility for your area. Please make sure that when you manage the plants you wear gloves as many of them are toxic and can cause skin irritations and if compounds from the plants are ingested can cause digestive issues.

For more information contact the [County Noxious Weed Control Program](#) at:
Dcoggon@co.kitsap.wa.us