



# Washington State Department of Agriculture

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## State gypsy moth eradication treatments to begin in Clark County soon

**OLYMPIA** – The [Washington State Department of Agriculture](#) (WSDA) will conduct the first of three gypsy moth treatments next week over 220 acres to eradicate an infestation of [European gypsy moth](#) in Clark County. The area is less than two miles from the town of Yacolt and about 20 miles northeast of Vancouver.

The date of the first treatment by helicopter depends on larval development, leaf development and the weather—but planners are anticipating April 28 in the early morning. Application of the biological insecticide containing the bacterium *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki* (Btk) will take one hour or less, flying over forest land and a small number of homes outside of Yacolt.

The insecticide, used by WSDA for more than 25 years, kills newly hatched gypsy moth caterpillars when they feed on nearby leaves and other foliage. Btk is registered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and is found naturally in the environment.

Typically each flight is completed before 7 a.m. and will be applied three to 14 days apart to target gypsy moth caterpillars at differing stages of development.

Of the 27 gypsy moths caught in WSDA's annual trapping efforts last summer, 16 were found in the Yacolt area. Entomologists found further evidence of a reproducing population such as an older spent egg mass and a viable fresh egg mass capable of producing up to 1,000 gypsy moth caterpillars. Pupal cases and cast skins from caterpillars were also found.

Gypsy moth is a destructive pest that is not native to Washington. It affects urban landscapes when the caterpillars feed on host trees, plants and shrubs. And, large populations of gypsy moths have defoliated millions of acres of forest across states in the Northeast and Midwest.

Visit the agency's gypsy moth web page at [www.agr.wa.gov/PlantsInsects/InsectPests/GypsyMoth](http://www.agr.wa.gov/PlantsInsects/InsectPests/GypsyMoth) to review environmental documents and learn more about this invasive pest. For more information, call the WSDA toll-free hotline at 1-800-443-6684.

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