



Memorandum

TO: Kevin J. Jackson, Village Manager

FROM: John P. Wielebnicki, Public Works Director

FOR: Village President and Board of Trustees

DATE: May 3, 2022

SUBJECT: **Spongy Moth Mangement**

The purpose of this memo is to provide an update on the impacts of the Spongy Moth to the Village's urban forest.

Background

Forestry staff has advised that there is a significant Spongy Moth population in Oak Park. The Spongy Moth is an invasive insect pest that, when found in high numbers, can defoliate a tree. Trees can decline or die with several years of repeated defoliation. In scouting the affected areas and looking at the Illinois Department of Agriculture's 2021 trap data, populations are highest on Linden Ave, N East Ave, and Fair Oaks Ave one block north and south of Chicago Ave. However, numerous parkway trees within ½ mile of this area that are infested with egg masses. See attached map of the affected area.

Staff identified 17 parkway oak trees that would be best served if treated via trunk injection this spring. There are also 39 non-oak trees that will have egg masses manually removed by scrapping the egg masses into soapy water. This treatment plan aligns with the Village's Integrated Pest Management Plan. Contract pricing was acquired for this work. The Fiscal Year 2022 budget includes \$25,000.00 for this program.

While this approach will treat the public parkway trees this is mainly a private tree issue on large, older oak trees. Managing the Spongy Moth population on private trees will reduce the risk that parkway trees become re-infested and will help protect private, heritage oak trees that benefit the community and would be difficult to replace. Forestry staff requested that contractors extend their bid pricing for trunk injection to residents with private oak trees.

Next Steps

Forestry staff plans to distribute the attached letter to residents on Linden Ave., N East Ave., and Fair Oaks Ave that are one block north or south of Chicago Ave in addition to two outlier sites with high Spongy Moth populations on Superior and Elizabeth Ct. The letter outlines what Spongy Moth is, the threat it poses, and the treatment program the Village is offering should they be interested. Only residents with oak trees will receive the letter. In order to

participate, residents will need to contact the contractor by the stated deadline. This will allow the contractor to work efficiently and avoid incurring additional expense. If participating, a resident would schedule the work through the contractor and the Village would not be involved in any billing.

Please let me know if you have any questions or you may contact Grant Jones, Forestry Superintendent, at 708-358-5740 gjones@oak-park.us with any questions you may have regarding this issue.

Thank you.

Attachments

cc: Lisa Shelly, Deputy Village Manager
Ahmad Zayyad, Deputy Village Manager
Rob Sproule, Assistant Public Works Director
Grant Jones, Forestry Superintendent
All Department Heads
Christina M. Waters, Village Clerk