
WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT

TO: All Media
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WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT TO CONTROL GYPSY MOTH POPULATION

Summer is almost here, but those leafy oak trees that for years have provided shady beauty may be the next targets of a small army of predators that have been on the move for the past several years.

In 2003 the Waukegan Park District identified an infestation of Gypsy Moth caterpillars in oak trees in Bowen Park. In addition, further investigation has shown evidence of infestation in trees at Hinkston Park, Bonnie Brook Golf Course, Brookside and Evergreen Park sites. The Gypsy Moth is a caterpillar pest of deciduous trees. If left untreated, Gypsy Moth infestation can lead to significant defoliation of hundreds of trees within a summer season.

The Waukegan Park District has contracted with Hendrickson Flying Service, Inc. to conduct helicopter aerial spraying of BTK (*Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki*) over these four sites beginning in late May and early June. Many other northern Illinois communities have successfully controlled Gypsy Moth infestation by spraying BTK. It is extremely important to control Gypsy Moth caterpillars in the spring when they begin to feed upon deciduous trees.

There are environmentally effective methods to deal with gypsy moths at all life stages, but since the infestation is usually not noticeable until the caterpillar stage, the most efficient management strategies are geared toward the caterpillar stage.

If you have any further questions, please contact the Waukegan Park District Parks Department at (847) 360-4725.