PROHIBITED & INVASIVE PLANTS

Why You Received This Fact Sheet

A prohibited or invasive plant has been found on your property. These plants can spread fast and can harm other plants, wildlife and the environment.

This fact sheet explains how to identify the plant, safely remove it, dispose of it properly, and what you can do to stop it from coming back. Following these steps will also help protect your property and nearby areas and comply with the Order to Comply (OTC) from the City of Toronto.

What You Need To Do

You are responsible for dealing with prohibited plant on your property. You need to:

- Confirm what plant it is (see list below)
- Remove or control the plant as soon as possible
- Dispose of it properly
- Keep checking the area and remove any regrowth

Details for each step are explained below.

Identifying Prohibited Plants

These prohibited plants are often found during inspections. Compare them to the plants growing on your property:

- Canada Thistle – Spreads through roots; spiky leaves
- Buckthorn – Thick shrubs that push out native plants
- Dog-strangling Vine – Twining vine that forms dense patches
- Garlic Mustard – Spreads quickly in shaded areas
- Giant Hogweed – Dangerous; can burn skin
- Japanese Knotweed – Very hard to remove with deep roots
- Phragmites – Tall grass forming dense wetland patches
- Poison Ivy – Causes skin irritation
- Purple Loosestrife – Spreads in wet areas
- Ragweed – Causes seasonal allergies

Removing and Controlling Prohibited Plants

Invasive plants are very strong and can grow back easily. Removing them often needs repeated treatment. Using the wrong method can cause the plant to spread to new areas.

Here are recommended methods to control prohibited plants and reduce regrowth:

- Pull or dig plants when they are young (remove roots if possible)
- Cut or mow repeatedly to weaken the plant growth
- Cover the area with mulch or landscape fabric

- Use professional treatment when needed
- Avoid tilling or chipping roots/ or stems (especially for Japanese knotweed)
- Some treatments require licensed professionals

Certain high-risk prohibited plants, including Japanese Knotweed and Dog-strangling Vine spread very easily from small fragments and are difficult to control. Professional treatment is highly recommended if you are unsure how to remove a plant safely and if the plant keeps on growing back.

Disposing of Prohibited Plants Safely

Prohibited plants can spread from roots, stems, seeds and soil. Improper handling or disposal can cause new plants to grow in other areas.

Before and during removal:

- Work over a tarp or on a hard surface
- Remove all plant parts, including roots and soil
- Keep piles contained
- Avoid working on windy days
- Do not move soil off your property
- Shake soil off roots onto the tarp
- Do not move contaminated soil

After removal:

- Clean and disinfect tools away from drains and water sources
- Dispose of prohibited plants properly:
    - Do not compost
    - Do not put in yard waste
    - Place in strong plastic bags
        - Double-bag if needed
        - Remove air and seal tightly
    - Put bags in regular garbage (landfill)
    - Keep all soil on your property
    - Do not dump prohibited plants or soil in parks or natural areas
- Clean tools, gloves, boots and other equipment thoroughly