

**Mississippi Mills
Recreation and Culture
Department**

MEMORANDUM

To: Council
From: Calvin Murphy, Recreation Manager
Date: December 7, 2021
Re: LDD Moth Infestations

Members of Council,

As you are aware this past spring/summer Lanark County experienced an extreme infestation of the LDD (*Lymantria dispar dispar*), which is the Latin name for the European Gypsy Moth. LDD moth caterpillars defoliate host trees, mostly hardwood species such as: oak, birch, willow, maple and others. During outbreak years, nearly all broadleaf trees maybe completely defoliated, and caterpillars appear everywhere.

One of the area's that was most visibly affected in our local area were the trees in the Veterans walkway. These trees were planted by the Almonte Legion to help commemorate past veterans. The majority of trees in this park were completely defoliated which raised much concern from members of the community and especially members of the Almonte Legion.

Site meetings did take place in the summer with Legion members and local arborist (Allan Goddard) to review the situation and to try and identify possibly solutions moving forward. At the time of the first site meeting in July caterpillars had taken over the majority of the trees and Mr. Goddard's advice at the time was to pressure wash the trees and attempt to remove as many of the caterpillars as possible assuring me to rest at ease as there was full evidence of the trees rebounding come the fall. Pressure washing was coordinated and executed by legion members and Municipal staff in July 2021.

Michelle Vala (Climate Environmental Coordinator) from the County of Lanark was approached to discuss their position on the LDD moth infestations. She informed me that the County would be putting together education and awareness information to share with landowners on best practices for dealing with the LDD Moth and how to monitor the infestation levels. However, the County would not be taking the approach of spraying pesticides to eliminate the problem. The County information came out in the fall and was shared on our Mississippi Mills facebook page for residents to view. (A copy of the County's approach to the LDD Moth Infestation is attached to this memo for your reference).

Ms. Vala also put me in touch with Jim McCready (Chair Forest Health Network Eastern Ontario). In conversation with Mr. McCready, he reemphasized what Mr. Goddard had suggested which was that the trees would rebound and did not advise on the application of pesticides.

As late summer/early fall arrived the trees did rebound with a secondary growth. A second site meeting occurred in early November with Legion representation, Mr. Goddard and I in attendance. At this meeting it was confirmed that the Almonte Legion would be taking on the task of recruiting volunteers to scrape the remaining egg masses from the trees at the Veteran's Walkway to reduce any reoccurrence of an Infestation. At this meeting Mr. Goddard also suggested that this practice along with any significant cold spell this winter would reduce the reoccurrence of a serious infestation in a year or two.

Spraying the trees with registered pesticides such as BTK (*Bacillus Thuringiensis*) would present some obstacles as identified by Mr. Goddard. The first obstacle being that the Municipality would be spraying pesticides which goes against the current Municipal By-Law which does not allow municipal staff to spray in our parks. Secondly, the spraying would have to be conducted by a licensed professional which could result in significant costs to the Municipality.

Upon the conclusion of our last site visit meeting at the beginning of November, Mr. Goddard summarized his thoughts on the overall LDD Moth Infestation in which he explains that letting nature take its course is the best approach moving forward and in the event that a second wave occurs pressure washing the trees with water could be completed once again in the spring/summer. I have attached Mr. Goddard's letter for your reference.

However, if Council feels that the spraying of pesticides is what is required to address the LDD Moth on Municipal Lands then it needs to provide direction to staff to issue a tender to establish a contract for spraying.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by,

Calvin Murphy, Recreation Manager

Ken Kelly, CAO