

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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CONTACT:

Michael Schommer, Communications Director
651.201.6629, Michael.schommer@state.mn.us

MDA planning gypsy moth eradication treatments for three metro locations in 2011

Public information meetings set for February 8 in Andover and February 9 in Stillwater

ST. PAUL, Minn. – With the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) and partner organizations planning to tackle three gypsy moth infestations in the Twin Cities area this spring, the agency is inviting people to learn about the effort at open house events on February 8 in Andover and February 9 in Stillwater.

Ranked among America's most destructive tree pests, gypsy moth has caused millions of dollars in damage to forests as it has spread from New England to Wisconsin in recent decades. Gypsy moth caterpillars can defoliate large sections of forest, with oak, poplar, birch and willow among their preferred hosts. The pests are common in Wisconsin and are now threatening eastern Minnesota. More information about gypsy moths and MDA's battle against these forest pests can be found on the department's website at www.mda.state.mn.us/gypsymoth.

MDA maintains a statewide monitoring program to watch for start-up infestations, and when an infestation is found, the department moves in to eradicate the pests before they can spread. In 2010, the program detected a localized infestation of the destructive tree pest in an 844-acre section of the city of Grant along Keats Avenue just west of Stillwater and north of Highway 36. Another infestation totaling 539 acres was detected in Coon Rapids near the intersection of Highway 10 and Main St. Finally, a 136-acre infestation was found in Minnetonka near the intersection of Highway 169 and Highway 62.

Over the years, MDA has successfully treated dozens of gypsy moth infestations across eastern Minnesota from Grand Marais to Winona County. In the Twin Cities, MDA successfully eliminated infestations in Minneapolis and Golden Valley in 2002, Edina in 2004, Brooklyn Park in 2006, and Minnetonka and Richfield in 2009. These successful treatments help postpone the full-scale invasion of gypsy moth, saving local communities and homeowners money and protecting the health of the state's forests.

MDA and local officials are working together to develop plans for eliminating the three metro-area infestations before they can spread. The department will host two open houses in early February to share information with citizens about the threat gypsy moths pose to the environment, and how officials plan to protect the neighborhood trees.

OPEN HOUSE SCHEDULE

Date	Location	Time
February 8	Bunker Hills Activity Center, 550 Bunker Lake Blvd NW, Andover	6-8 p.m.
February 9	Indian Hills Golf Course Clubhouse, 6667 Keats Avenue N., Stillwater	6-8 p.m.

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