

JB PRITZKER, GOVERNOR · JERRY COSTELLO II, DIRECTOR

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **OPEN HOUSES SCHEDULED TO EXPLAIN 2023 SPONGY MOTH TREATMENT PROGRAM**

### *Open House presentations to cover spray treatments in northern Illinois*

**SPRINGFIELD, IL** – The Illinois Department of Agriculture will hold eleven open house events to explain its most recent plan to treat parts of northern Illinois for the destructive Spongy Moth (historically gypsy moth).

Spongy Moth is a non-native tree pest. Large populations of the pest are capable of stripping plants bare, leaving them susceptible to disease and environmental stressors. Severe or repeated defoliation can cause tree death. Unlike the Emerald Ash Borer, another non-native pest which feeds exclusively on ash trees, the Spongy Moth is not a picky eater. Though its caterpillars will devour almost anything leafy and green as they feed on over 250 species of plants, they especially prefer many of our trees including oak and willow and even pines.

Male Spongy Moths are brown with black chevron-like markings on their wings and have a wingspan of an inch-and-a-half. Female Spongy Moths are slightly larger and typically white or cream-colored with similar markings. The females cannot fly because of the weight of their eggs.

Infested sites will be treated with applications of either BtK or mating disruption (MD) based upon the determined level of the infestation.

The BtK product is Valent Foray 48B – Organic and it will be applied by helicopter in mid-May, with a second application within the following two weeks. BtK (*Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *Kurstaki*) is a naturally occurring bacteria used by gardeners as an environmentally friendly alternative to chemical pesticides. It is important to note that BtK has an excellent safety record and is not harmful to people or animals.



In late June, airplanes will apply the mating disruption product Splat GM-Organic, which is a Spongy Moth-specific pheromone that acts as a sexual attractant and prevents male Spongy Moths from finding females and breeding.

Anyone interested in learning more about either treatment method is encouraged to attend an open house where IDOA staff will be available to answer questions. Those events are scheduled, as follows, to discuss and answer any questions about treatments in the surrounding areas.

OPEN HOUSE DATE	TIME	LOCATION	NAME OF THE SPRAY AREA & MAP	COUNTY	ACRES	PRODUCT TO BE USED	MONTH
Monday, April 3, 2023	3-5 pm	Geneva Public Library 227 S 7th Street Geneva	IL_GENEVA_MD	Kane	1,482	SPLAT mating disruption	Late June
Tuesday, April 4, 2023	3-5 pm	St Charles Public Library 1 S 6th Ave, St. Charles	IL_STCHARLES_MD	Kane	1,441	SPLAT mating disruption	Late June
Wednesday, April 5, 2023	3-5 pm	Oregon Public Library 300 Jefferson St, Oregon	IL_OREGON_MD	Ogle	2,200	SPLAT mating disruption	Late June
Thursday, April 6, 2023	3-5 pm	Byron Public Library 100 S Washington St, Byron	IL_BYRON_MD	Ogle	1,365	SPLAT mating disruption	Late June
Monday, April 10, 2023	4-6 pm	Lemont Public Library 50 East Wend St, Lemont	IL_LEMONT_Btk	Cook	653	Btk Valent 48B	Mid May
Tuesday, April 11, 2023	4-6 pm	Lena Public Library 300 W Mason Street, Lena	IL_LENA_MD	Stephenson	2,069	SPLAT mating disruption	Late June
Wednesday, April 12, 2023	4-6 pm	Oswego Public Library 32 Jefferson St, Oswego	IL_YORKVILLE_OSWEGO_MD	Kendall	2,038	SPLAT mating disruption	Late June
Thursday, April 13, 2023	4-6 pm	Fountaindale Public Library 300 W Briarcliff Rd, Bolingbrook	IL_NAPERVILLE_BOLINGBOOK_1_MD IL_NAPERVILLE_BOLINGBOOK_2_MD	Cook & Will	13,992	SPLAT mating disruption	Late June
Monday, April 17, 2023	4-6 pm	West Chicago Public Library 118 W Washington Street West Chicago	IL_WAYNE_WCHICAGO_1_MD IL_WAYNE_WCHICAGO_2_Btk IL_WCHICAGO_MD	DuPage	1,580	SPLAT mating disruption	Late June
Tuesday, April 18, 2023	4-6 pm	Aurora Public Library 101 S River St, Aurora	IL_AURORA_Btk IL_AURORANORTH_MD	Kane	457	Btk Valent 48B	Mid May
Wednesday, April 19, 2023	4-6 pm	Acorn Public Library 15624 Central Avenue Oak Forest	IL_COOK_MD	Cook	3,228	SPLAT mating disruption	Late June
rural area IDOA staff will be canvassing the residents			IL_GALENA_Btk	JoDaviess	1,742	Btk Valent 48B	Mid May

Our DeKalb Office can be contacted at 815.787.5476. Or email [Nancy.Johnson@Illinois.gov](mailto:Nancy.Johnson@Illinois.gov) with questions. Keep in mind that our Spongy Moth specialists will be in the field for the spray program as it occurs. You can view treatment blocks (areas) online at the Slow the Spread website. <https://www.slowthespread.org/pages/outreach>

Live updates will be available on our [Facebook](#) page.

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