



Office of the Commissioner
Environmental Services Department

MEMORANDUM

To: Regional Chair Emmerson and Members of Regional Council

From: Erin Mahoney, M. Eng.
Commissioner of Environmental Services

Date: March 19, 2021

Re: Area Weed Inspector Appointments

***Weed Control Act* protects public and livestock health, agriculture and horticulture industries from impacts associated with noxious weeds**

The *Weed Control Act* is a provincial act administered by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, which facilitates control of noxious weeds in areas located in close proximity to lands used for agricultural or horticultural purposes.

The intent of the *Weed Control Act* is to reduce:

- The infestation of noxious weeds that negatively impact agriculture and horticulture lands
- Plant diseases by eliminating plant disease hosts such as common barberry and European buckthorn
- Health hazards to livestock and agricultural workers caused by poisonous plants

Area weed inspectors assist local municipalities and collaborate with the Chief Weed Inspector

The Councils of upper-tier and single-tier municipalities are required under the Act to appoint one or more persons as Area Weed Inspectors to enforce the *Weed Control Act*. Local municipal governments may also appoint Municipal Weed Inspectors under the Act.

The duties of an area weed inspector include co-ordinating action on weed complaints, assisting, and supporting Local Municipal Weed Inspectors, and meeting with the Province's Chief Weed Inspector. To comply with the *Weed Control Act*, it is recommended that Mr. James

Lane and Ms. Dayna Laxton of the Environmental Services Department be appointed as Area Weed Inspectors for the Regional Municipality of York. Both staff representatives have completed the required online training provided by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

Municipalities have a responsibility to control noxious weeds on publicly owned lands

A noxious weed includes a plant listed in the Schedule of Noxious Weeds found in Regulation 1096 under the *Weed Control Act*. This list is commonly referred to as the “Noxious Weed List” (Attachment 1). A council of a municipality may, subject to the approval of the Minister, designate additional plants as local weeds through a bylaw made in accordance with Section 10 of the *Weed Control Act*. These local weeds are deemed to be noxious weeds in the area where the bylaw applies.

Noxious weeds can significantly limit crop yields, cause illness to livestock and cost money to control resulting in lost profits. Under Ontario’s *Weed Control Act* farmers and landowners have a legal obligation to manage noxious weed species on their properties, irrespective of origin. Likewise, municipalities have responsibility for controlling noxious weeds on publicly owned land.

Area weed inspectors must be appointed through a bylaw as prescribed in the *Weed Control Act*

A bylaw will be introduced for consideration at the April 22, 2021 Council Meeting for the appointments of Area Weed Inspectors. The Clerk’s Office may then submit a written notice to the Provincial Chief Weed Inspector to notify the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Ministry of the appointments.

Per: 

Erin Mahoney, M. Eng.
Commissioner of Environmental Services



Bruce Macgregor
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment (1)
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