

Spongy (Gypsy) Moth Update

The Village of East Dundee has two known infestations of the spongy moth, formerly referred to as the gypsy moth. The infestations are located in the Lakewood Estates (Bonnie Dundee Road) and Terrace (Linden Avenue) neighborhoods. Infested oak trees in East Dundee are being defoliated by spongy moth (*Lymantria dispar*) caterpillars that are feeding on their foliage. Although the spongy moth feeds on hundreds of different types of trees and plant species, it prefers oak trees. While healthy trees can usually overcome one or two years of mild defoliation, trees that have been weakened by previous defoliation and other stressors are at a much higher risk of mortality.

The following are images of the spongy moth caterpillar, female moth (flightless), male moth, and female moth laying eggs (shown from left to right):



The Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) is providing traps to the Village that will be placed in infested areas to help delineate the extent of the infestations. This information will then be used to determine how to best eradicate these infestations. The Village is also asking that anyone who observes the spongy moth, in any of the above forms, to notify the Village's Public Works Department.

What Can Be Done in the Interim:

- The Village advises residents to capture and kill as many of the caterpillars as possible on private property by placing them in a bucket of soapy water overnight. In the fall season, after adult moths complete laying their egg masses, it is recommended that egg masses be carefully picked off the trees and placed in soapy water. Gloves should be used during caterpillar and egg mass removals.
- A process that has also shown to be effective in capturing caterpillars is wrapping the trunk of the tree, chest height above ground, with folded burlap. This disrupts the caterpillar's daily migration to/from the canopy of the tree. Caterpillars can then be placed in soapy water overnight.

For more detailed information, please visit the following websites:

National Slow the Spread Foundation - www.slowthespread.org/

Illinois Department of Agriculture - <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/agr/Insects/Pests/Pages/LymantriaDispar.aspx>

Please do not hesitate to contact Public Works with any questions, or if you would like additional information on the spongy moth.