

Giant hogweed is currently an issue that the Corporation of the Township of Tay is addressing. In the last few years, the foreign plants have been observed within the community. For that reason, it is important that Tay residents be educated in order to prevent any health risks that may arise.

Under the *Pesticides Act and Ontario Regulation 63/09*, passed by the Ministry of Environment in 2009, more than ninety pesticides have been banned for cosmetic purposes. With this in mind, the Township is no longer permitted to spray infected areas. Pesticides are to be used only for public health and safety reasons, and are legalized to be sprayed only by licensed exterminators. The Township of Tay is currently doing their best to maintain all accounts of hogweed found on our trails and in our parks through the bagging, cutting and removal of seed pods.

Please report locations of hogweed to the attention of the Public Works Department:
705-534-7248 x230.

For more information on giant hogweed, please refer to the following websites:

**Ontario Ministry of Agriculture,
Food and Rural Affairs**

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca>

**Agriculture and Agri-Food
Canada**

<http://www.agr.gc.ca/>

Ontario Weeds

<http://www.ontarioweeds.com>



GIANT HOGWEED: **EDUCATION AND AWARENESS**



THE CORPORATION OF
THE TOWNSHIP OF TAY



DESCRIPTION

Giant hogweed is generally biennial or perennial. The plants flower once in a lifetime and only reproduce by seed. They have the ability to grow from 1 to 5.5 meters tall, with leaves up to 1 meter in width.

The stems and petioles contain noticeable reddish-purple spots near the base. The lower stem displays rough, sharply pointed sporadic bumps.

The plant often flowers in large clusters from June to August. The flower petals are normally white, and rarely portray a pinkish colour. Be aware, as this plant is often confused with cow parsnip, which does not pose the same health hazards.

HABITAT

Hogweed originates from Europe and Asia and was first observed in Ontario a couple of years ago. Since then, the number of sightings have increased annually. The toxic plant is often found along roadsides, stream banks and other disturbed open areas.



HEALTH RISKS

The foreign plant is poisonous. Hogweed's hollow stem and leaves produce a sap when broken that can cause a serious inflammation. When exposed to sunlight, the contaminated skin will blister, suffer discolouration and may even produce scars over the infected sites.

Contact with the eyes can cause loss of vision and blindness.

TREATMENT

After contact, avoid sunlight and wash the area immediately.

If a skin reaction appears, seek medical attention.

PREVENTION

When in close proximity of giant hogweed, wear long shirts, pants and boots. If possible, dress in synthetic materials as regular fabrics will absorb the harmful sap. Wear goggles and waterproof gloves when interacting with the plant. Afterwards, be sure to wash all clothing and tools that may have come in contact with the plant to provide the best protection against giant hogweed.