

Badger Bay Weed Management Guidelines

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There are several noxious weeds that can be found within the Badger Bay subdivision. The most prevalent are thistles (3 kinds) and knapweed.

Canada Thistle and Knapweed are perennials. Musk Thistle and Bull Thistle are biennials that produce a rosette of leaves the first year and a flower stalk the second year.

Other noxious weeds of concern include hounds tongue (with its sticky burs that are spread by deer and dogs) and Dalmatian toadflax (a yellow snapdragon lookalike).

****It is against state law to allow noxious weeds to go to seed on your property.****

If you don't have time to do anything else, try to cut off the flowers or seed heads each year before the wind carries the seeds to un-infested areas or your neighbors' properties. Right now - mid August - is a good time to do this.

In the early summer, or any time the ground is damp, many weeds can be hand pulled. Try to get the tap root, so they don't come back next year. (A pliers is helpful when they break off.) Canada thistle spreads by underground rhizomes and cannot be eliminated by pulling.

Beginning around July 4, you can spray herbicides to knock back most weeds before they can set seed. You may have to repeat the process later in the summer as more weeds become visible. Or delay your one spraying till late July.

Chaparral and Milestone are two good broadleaf herbicides that share the same active ingredient, aminopyralid. (Milestone has been approved for use near water, if you have a lakefront lot.) They don't harm the grasses, but will affect any broadleaved wildflowers you may have, so it is far better to spot-spray weeds rather than hiring someone with an ATV and a boom spray arm to broadcast spray your entire property. Save the wildflowers!

With a backpack sprayer or handheld sprayer, and chemicals purchased at Cenex, owners can spot-spray their own weeds. Each year the number of weeds you'll have to spray, and the amount of time it takes to do it, will be less and less. (Eventually a plant mister spray bottle full of herbicide will become your tool of choice.)

In addition to the herbicide, you may want to add a surfactant to keep it from running off the foliage (dish soap also works) and maybe a dye, so you know which weeds you've already sprayed. Both are sold where you buy chemicals.

Heads up! Leafy spurge is an extremely noxious weed that has been spotted - and treated - in our subdivision, and for now seems to be absent. But it spreads vigorously and takes over if it gets a foothold, so try to knock it down as soon as you see it. It has greenish yellow "flowers" and milky sap.

Another plant to try to eradicate is cheat grass, a low annual grass that becomes a fire hazard. It's easy to hand pull in small patches if you do it in early summer before the seed heads mature. As a fall germinator, areas of cheat grass are chemically treated in late summer or fall with Plateau, which inhibits germination without harming other grasses.

Some of these herbicides are quite expensive but they go a long way. Maybe join with a couple neighbors to purchase chemicals and sprayers.