

## FORESTRY NOTES

From: Mike Harris, Wescott Forester

**Firewood Movement** is the easiest way for an insect, pest or tree disease to be spread into an uninfected area. Oak Wilt, Emerald Ash Borer, Gypsy Moth, and many other tree problems can be amplified by the moving of untreated firewood.

**Green-Striped Maple Worms** (*Dryocampa Rubicunda*) were abundant again this year. The caterpillars feed on leaves of Red Maple (*Acer Rubrum*) and can defoliate young trees and create messy driveways and patios from their droppings. The caterpillar is a native late season defoliator and does not stress the trees, like Gypsy Moth caterpillars (an early season defoliator). The droppings have been a concern for many residents and control of the pests is possible, if started at the first signs of the caterpillars. Homeowners can control the caterpillars with Bt, which is effective on very young caterpillars. Most pyrethroids, carbaryl (Sevin), or general insecticides are effective on all life stages of the caterpillar. An arborist can treat trees under greater stress with a systemic insecticide to protect the trees the following year.

**Pink-Striped Oak Worms** are native and similar to the Green-Striped Maple Worm, but feed on oak leaves around the same time of year. Control methods are the same as the maple worm.

**Oak Wilt** is caused by a fungus (*Ceratocystis fagacearum*) and has killed more oaks this year. If you notice the leaves on oak trees turning brown and falling to the ground during the summer, the tree(s) most likely died from oak wilt. If the area of the infected tree is not managed property, the disease will spread to surrounding oaks. Disease management includes trenching, tree injections, and removal of diseased trees. Once diseased trees are cut down, the bark must be removed or the wood can be cut, split, stacked and covered (completely to the ground) with 4-mil clear plastic. Next year, at the first signs of infection, contact me (Mike Harris) as soon as possible, so a management plan can be started. For more information on Oak Wilt, please call me, Mike Harris, at (715) 526-9853 ext 5 or refer to the website [http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/forestry/Fh/oak Wilt/](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/forestry/Fh/oak%20Wilt/).

**Gypsy Moth** populations increased to levels of concern this past year. Gypsy moth caterpillars are non-native and can cause stress or mortality of trees, by feeding on leaves early in the growth season. Gypsy moth caterpillars are not only a tree pest but also a people pest. The caterpillars create messy droppings, decrease esthetic value and reduce outdoor enjoyment. Wescott will participate in the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Suppression Program this 2009 calendar year. While the spray program effectively reduces the gypsy moth numbers, property owners can reduce the caterpillars on their own. Burlap bands are a way residents can easily collect the larger caterpillars and then place the caterpillars in a bucket of soapy water. One Wescott resident used this practice and reduced the number of egg masses from critical levels to almost zero egg masses last year. For more information refer to the website <http://www.gypsymoth.wi.gov>.

**Brush Disposal** is available at the Town of Wescott Burnsite Wednesdays 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. from April through the second week in November. The site is open year round Saturdays, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Future Plans** possibly include a chainsaw safety program, tree sale and a oak wilt/gypsy moth presentation. If you are interested in attending any of these programs or have any questions, please contact me, Mike Harris, at (715) 526-9853 ext 5.

**Future Forestry Newsletters** will be sent out via email. However, paper copies will be available at the Town Office. I also will be adding tree information to the Wescott Website in the future. If you would like to be added to the email list for future newsletters, please send an email to [wescott\\_forester@frontiernet.net](mailto:wescott_forester@frontiernet.net). (i.e. wescott\_forester)