



## COUNTY OF ST. CLAIR

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR/CONTROLLER



### PRESS RELEASE For Immediate Release

**Contact Person:** Lydia Nicholas, 810.294.4965

**Date:** May 17, 2022

### **St. Clair County Spongy Moth Suppression Program: Treatment start date has been scheduled for Thursday, May 19, 2022**

This is the date we have been waiting for --- conditions are right for aerial treatment of the Spongy Moth caterpillars. In the early morning hours of **Thursday, May 19, 2022**, Al's Aerial Spraying LLC will be spraying approximately 5,300 acres throughout St. Clair County.

The St. Clair County Spongy Moth Suppression Program monitors for and works to suppress Spongy Moth caterpillars (formerly known as Gypsy Moth), an invasive pest, that affects trees, quality of life, and outdoor recreation activities in St. Clair County. St. Clair County has contracted with Al's Aerial Spraying LLC, a licensed certified pesticide applicator, to provide residents with aerial treatment for qualifying areas where spongy moth populations have reached outbreak levels.

Weather parameters for spraying are average wind speed is less than 10 miles per hour and the relative humidity is more than 50%. Spray operations begin early morning and continue until completed. *If weather conditions are outside these parameters, spraying will be postponed until conditions improve, most likely within a day or two.*

The biological control, Btk (*Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki*) will be used for this treatment. Btk is a water-based insecticide formulation that is used in certified organic food production and has low impact on non-target organisms such as humans, pets, birds, fish, and other insects. Btk will only affect caterpillars that will be feeding in the tree canopies at the time of application.

Approximately 5,300 acres will be treated by an airplane flying low over the treetops. Maps showing the locations of the areas to be treated, along with the opt-out zones, can be viewed at "[Spongy Moth Spray Blocks](#)". For the 2022 aerial spray, the county is fully funding this effort and there will be no cost for citizens or municipalities.

For more information contact [gypsymoth@stclaircounty.org](mailto:gypsymoth@stclaircounty.org) or 810-294-4965 or visit [www.stclaircounty.org/caterpillars](http://www.stclaircounty.org/caterpillars).

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