

BUDWORM FACT SHEET

CULPRIT: The Western Spruce Budworm, *Choristoneauro occidentalis Freeman*, is the most widely distributed and destructive defoliator in western North America. In the past, several outbreaks have occurred in Colorado, the largest exceeding two (2) million acres. These worms hatch from egg clusters on spruce and fir needles when the new buds open, and eat the new tender needles. Later they metamorphose into moths, which lay more eggs near the treetops. If budworms eat most of the new growth for a couple of years, the tree will die. Many of the dead spruce and fir trees in our area were killed by this process. You can easily see damaged trees all over our area. Just look at the ends of branches, especially high in the trees. If they look brown, moth-eaten, or stripped of needles, you are seeing budworm damage.

CURE: The only way to control the Spruce Budworm is by aerial spraying, because most of the eggs laid by the worms hatch at the tops of trees. The safest, most effective method is to use a bacterial spray (*bacillus thuringiensis*), commonly referred to as Bt. Bt is very specific to larval worms and will not harm other life, including insects. A chemical spray, carbaryl or sevin, would be most effective, but also can harm insects and possibly birds that eat them. Spraying must be over a broad area, not just isolated areas near homes. Spraying of a broad enough area will slow budworm infestation in the area for years.

BACKGROUND: The last time the HOA sprayed was 2005. We are overdue and it is the consensus of the Board that we MUST spray this year and that, henceforth, spraying should occur on a regular, five year basis. This schedule gives homeowners ample time to allow for budgeting the cost. For those with small lots of 2-3 acres, which is most of the homeowners, the cost is minimal, usually \$60-70/acre, which is trivial when spread over five years.

SOLUTION: BMHOA has contacted a helicopter service that will perform the aerial spraying of Bt. The greater the number of acres sprayed, the lower the cost per acre. It is important to remember that the cost of having even one dead tree of moderate size removed by a tree service is more than the cost of preventive spraying of a whole acre of trees. Given the shorter, warmer winters we have experienced lately, the projected spray date is the last week of May or the first week of June. Residents will be notified of the spray date.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO: If you have a population of spruce and fir trees you need to participate in this preventive spraying. Determine the number of acres you need to have sprayed (some larger lots have only some areas with spruce and fir while the rest of their acreage may have grassland or pines; some lots have no spruce or fir at all). Multiply by the cost per acre and mail your check before April 30th to:

BMHOA
P.O. BOX 2068
EVERGREEN, CO 80437-2068

Checks will be held (not deposited) until we have firm commitments from enough residents to make the program effective and justify the cost. DON'T DELAY! Residents with only grasslands and pine trees will be not be affected by the Spruce Budworm and do not need to spray. If you have any questions, call or e-mail one of the BMHOA officers.

BMHOA Board of Directors