

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS



Department of Agricultural Resources

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NOTICE

Pursuant to the provisions of the Rights-of-Way Management Regulation, 333 CMR 11.00, in order to apply herbicides to control vegetation along railroad rights-of-way, a five-year Vegetation Management Plan (VMP) and a Yearly Operational Plan (YOP) must be approved by the Department of Agricultural Resources. Therefore, notice of receipt of a YOP and procedures for public review are hereby given as required by Section 11.06 (3).

A Yearly Operational Plan has been submitted for: Massachusetts Bay Commuter Railroad Company (MBCR).

This plan has been prepared and submitted to the Department of Agricultural Resources by: TEC Associates of South Portland, Maine.

Municipalities identified in the MBCR YOP as locations where the rights-of-way will be treated with herbicides during the 2012 calendar year are:

Abington, Acton, Andover, Attleboro, Avon, Ayer, Bellingham, Belmont, Beverly, Billerica, Boston, Boxborough, Braintree, Bridgewater, Brockton, Cambridge, Canton, Chelsea, Cohasset, Concord, Dedham, East Bridgewater, Easton, Everett, Fitchburg, Franklin, Gloucester, Halifax, Hamilton, Hanson, Haverhill, Hingham, Holbrook, Hopedale, Ipswich, Kingston, Lakeville, Lawrence, Leominster, Lincoln, Littleton, Lowell, Lunenburg, Lynn, Malden, Manchester, Medford, Melrose, Middleborough, Milford, Milton, Needham, Newbury, Newburyport, Norfolk, North Andover, Norwood, Plymouth, Plympton, Quincy, Randolph, Raynham, Reading, Revere, Rockport, Rowley, Salem, Salisbury, Saugus, Scituate, Shirley, Somerville, Stoughton, Swampscott, Taunton, Tewksbury, Wakefield, Walpole, Waltham, Wenham, West Bridgewater, Weston, Westwood, Weymouth, Whitman, Wilmington, Winchester, Woburn, and Worcester.

MBCR's vegetation control program for 2012 will be consistent with the VMP as approved by the DAR and involves an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach. In the 2012 program, brush control will be limited to manual or mechanical cutting in sensitive areas and sensitive area buffer zones. In non-sensitive areas, one foliar application will be conducted to selectively treat brush adjacent to the shoulder using a DAR approved herbicide mixture.

One selective herbicide application will take place in the non-sensitive and sensitive area buffer zones along the roadbed portion of the right-of-way using a DAR approved herbicide mixture. This post-emergent program is targeted toward the eradication of woody and herbaceous plant species germinating within the roadbed and around other fixtures including but not limited to: switches, signals, signs, and highway grade crossings. This application will be followed by a late summer touch-up application in areas of heavy vegetation growth.

Hi-rail vehicles equipped with herbicide application equipment will be used to treat the rights-of-way. Public notification (by registered mail) will be provided to the chief elected official, Board of Health, and Conservation Commission in each affected municipality at least twenty-one days prior to any herbicide application.

"Sensitive" areas as defined by the Rights-of-way Management Regulations will receive the full protection afforded by those Regulations. All herbicide applications will be done by an applicator properly licensed by the Department of Agricultural Resources Pesticide Bureau and fully trained in herbicide mixing, handling, and application methods.

The applicant has described the following rights-of-way as sites that have been scheduled for herbicide treatment in 2012.

EASTERN ROUTE MAIN LINE

Newburyport to Boston

Newburyport	Beverly	Revere
Newbury	Salem	Chelsea
Rowley	Swampscott	Everett
Ipswich	Lynn	Somerville
Hamilton	Saugus	Boston
	Wenham	

GLOUCESTER BRANCH

Gloucester to Beverly

Rockport	Manchester
Gloucester	Beverly

WESTERN ROUTE MAIN LINE

Haverhill to Boston

Haverhill	Tewksbury	Melrose
North Andover	Wilmington	Malden
Lawrence	Reading	Medford
Andover	Wakefield	Somerville

NEW HAMPSHIRE ROUTE MAIN LINE

Lowell to Boston

Lowell	Wilmington	Medford
Tewksbury	Woburn	Somerville
Billerica	Winchester	

WILDCAT BRANCH

Wilmington to Wilmington Junction

Wilmington

FITCHBURG MAIN LINE

Fitchburg to Boston

Fitchburg	Boxborough	Waltham
Leominster	Acton	Belmont
Lunenburg	Concord	Cambridge
Shirley	Lincoln	Somerville
Ayer	Weston	Boston
	Littleton	

STOUGHTON BRANCH

Stoughton to Canton

Stoughton	Canton
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DORCHESTER BRANCH

Readville to Boston

Boston Milton

FRANKLIN BRANCH

Milford to Boston

Milford	Norfolk	Westwood
Hopedale	Walpole	Dedham
Bellingham	Norwood	Boston
	Franklin	

NEEDHAM BRANCH

Needham to Boston

Needham Dedham Boston

RANDOLPH INDUSTRIAL TRACK

Braintree to Randolph

Braintree Randolph

GREENBUSH BRANCH

Braintree to Scituate

Braintree	Cohasset	Hingham
Scituate	Weymouth	

MIDDLEBOROUGH MAIN LINE

Boston to Middleborough

Boston	Holbrook	East Bridgewater
Quincy	Avon	Bridgewater
Braintree	Brockton	Middleborough
Randolph	West Bridgewater	Lakeville

PLYMOUTH BRANCH

Braintree to Plymouth

Braintree	Whitman	Plympton
Weymouth	Hanson	Kingston
Abington	Halifax	Plymouth

PUBLIC REVIEW

The Department of Agricultural Resources (DAR) in particular seeks the verification of sensitive area locations reported in the Yearly Operational Plan (YOP). The Department itself has a limited ability to survey the geography, land use, and the water supplies, in all the communities through which the rights-of-way are located. Municipalities, however, have most of this information readily available, and the particular knowledge with which to better certify the sensitive areas in their communities. Therefore, the Department requests, and urges, the assistance of the affected municipalities, in reviewing the completeness and accuracy of the maps contained in the submitted document. The DAR has established the following procedures for this review.

The YOP may be viewed online at <http://www.mass.gov/agr/pesticides/rightofway/plans.htm>.

Yearly Operational Plans (YOP) and a copy of this notice will be sent by the applicant to the Conservation Commission, Board of Health (or designated health agent), and to the Head of Government (Mayor, City Manager, Chair of the Board of Selectman) of each municipality where herbicides are to be applied along the Rights-of-Way during the calendar year and where applicable the Massachusetts Water Resource Authority and the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation will receive a YOP or an internet address where the YOP could be viewed. Municipal agencies and officials will have (45) forty-five days, following receipt of the Yearly Operational Plan to review the maps contained in the document that indicate the location of "sensitive areas not readily identifiable in the filed" for inaccuracies and omissions. "Sensitive Areas" will be defined as in Section 11.01 a-f.

Municipal agencies and officials are requested to forward the YOP to the appropriate official(s) in their municipality qualified to certify the accuracy of sensitive area locations as indicated on the maps. The maps should be "corrected" and returned to the applicant, also a copy of the maps with these corrections indicated should be sent to the Department of Agricultural Resources at the address listed below within the forty-five day review period. If a city or town needs more time to carry out this review, it should send a written request for an extension to the DAR and cite why there is a "good cause" for requesting additional time.

All corrections will be required to be made by the applicant, and corrected maps sent back to the city/town before the YOP can be considered "approved" by the Department for vegetation maintenance in that municipality. Any dispute on the part of the applicant regarding corrections made by the municipal authorities, should be indicated in writing to the Department and to the city/town which requested the disputed changes within (15) fifteen days of receipt of the request. The Department will decide whether or not the YOP should be approved without the requested changes. The DAR will consider the "final approval" of a YOP individually for each municipality.

The final (21) twenty one days of the public review period may serve concurrently to provide public notification as required by section 11.07 of the Rights-of-Way Management regulation, if the applicant has an approved VMP and if all the requisite city/town offices which have received copies of the YOP have completed their review and corrections have been duly made by the applicant and approved by the Department.

A failure by the city/town to respond to the applicants submission of the YOP within the forty five (45) day public review period, will automatically be considered by the DAR to indicate agreement by municipal officials with the sensitive area demarcations as provided by the applicant in their YOP.

Any questions or comments on the information provided in this Notice and the procedures established for the municipal review as outlined above, should be addressed to:

Rights-of-Way Program
Massachusetts Pesticide Bureau
251 Causeway Street, Suite 500
Boston, Massachusetts 02114-2151

Any additional questions or comments on any information provided as part of the proposed YOP should be addressed in writing to:

Kyle Fair
TEC Associates
46 Sawyer Street
South Portland, Maine 04106

A copy should also be sent to the ROW program at the above address.

COMMENT PERIOD ENDS AT THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS, FRIDAY MAY 25, 2012.