

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS



Department of Agricultural Resources

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Public Hearing Notice: Vegetation Management Plan

Pursuant to the Rights-of-Way Management Regulations (333 CMR 11.00), in order to apply pesticides to control vegetation to maintain Rights-of Ways, the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture ("Department") must approve a Vegetation Management Plan ("VMP") and a Yearly Operational Plan ("YOP"). The VMP is intended to justify the need to control vegetation, identify target vegetation, describe the intended methods of control, describe methods for identifying sensitive areas, describe operational guidelines for applicators, outline a program of Integrated Pest Management ("IPM") designed to reduce the use of herbicides, and describe alternative land use activities.

The following community is advised that the Town of Athol proposes to utilize herbicides to treat its Rights-of-Way. In accordance with 333 CMR 11.05, the Department will conduct a regional hearing to receive public comment on the proposed Vegetation Management Plan for the Town of Athol as submitted by: Andrew S. Powers, of Vegetation Control Services with Douglas Walsh, Superintendent of the Department of Public Works, Town of Athol. To provide all interested parties an opportunity to comment on the proposed VMP, **a public hearing will be held via ZOOM Phone Conference:**

Friday, May 29, 2020 from 12:00pm until 12:30pm

Join URL: <https://zoom.us/j/94877327592?pwd=RmFPWHVmU01oU0ZKejVIS1E0REhoZz09>

Zoom ID: 448-7732-7592

Password: 874-664

Plans Available for Public Review Prior to Hearings:

333 CMR 11.05 (3)(d) provide: Wherever a chief elected official, Board of Health or Conservation Commission in a municipality covered by the proposed VMP requests a copy of the proposed plan, the applicant shall, at least 21 days prior to the end of the public comment period, respond to this request. The response must either include a copy of the proposed VMP, or an Internet address where the VMP may be viewed and a note that a hard copy will be provided promptly upon further request" Such request should be made to:

Douglas Walsh
Superintendent
Department of Public Works
584 Main Street
Athol, MA 01331
(978) 249-4542

Copies of the proposed VMP can be viewed at the Department's website at <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/rights-of-way-vegetation-management-vmps-yops-and-notices>. The VMP is also available for review at the Reference Desk of the following public library:

Athol Public Library: 568 Main Street, Athol, Massachusetts 01331

Written Comments Requested

The public hearings listed above will give interested parties the opportunity to present data, views or arguments, orally or in writing, concerning the proposed VMP. Persons giving testimony are also requested to provide written comments. Written comments in advance of the hearing dates are welcome. The Department will accept written testimony concerning the Town of Athol's VMP until the close of business (5:00pm): Friday, June 5, 2020.

Written comments should be sent to:

Clayton Edwards
Director of Rights-of-Way Programs
Massachusetts State Pesticide Bureau
251 Causeway Street, Suite 500
Boston, MA 02114-2151