

Invasive Plant Fact Sheet #1

Best Management Practices for MOWING

It is the goal of the NH Department of Transportation to avoid spreading invasive plants to new sites during its maintenance and construction activities. Mowing can spread invasive plants by spreading seeds and other plant material. This fact sheet describes Best Management Practices that can prevent the spread of invasive plants during mowing operations. The Department's *Best Management Practices for Roadside Invasive Plants* contains additional information on invasive plants. Please contact the NHDOT Bureau of Environment for more information (271-3226) or visit www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/environment/units/technicalservices/invasivespecies.

To avoid spreading invasive plants when mowing, invasive plant seeds and other plant material must be removed from mowing equipment.

- **Equipment must be cleaned at least daily, as well as prior to transport.** This can be done with a brush or broom at the mowing site. Water should not be used unless a portable wash station is utilized.

Some invasive plants can sprout from small fragments of stem. Japanese knotweed is one of these plants. In fact, this is one of the primary ways that knotweed spreads along our roadways. Mowing knotweed should be avoided whenever possible. Each fragment of stem created by mowing knotweed has the potential to sprout, and these fragments are often transported to new sites by mowing equipment.

- **If knotweed is not causing safety concerns, it should not be mowed.** Mow around knotweed when mowing the right-of-way. Mowing alone will typically not eradicate knotweed.

If knotweed is causing safety concerns (blocking signs or sight distance, or encroaching on the roadway or shoulders), it should be removed using one of these methods:

- **Whenever possible, knotweed should be cut with loppers, scythe, or line trimmer ("weed whacker").**
 - Whole, intact stems can be left at the site of infestation, or
 - Stems can be:
 - bagged in heavy-duty trash bags and allowed to rot in the bags prior to disposal;
 - burned off-site;
 - buried at least 5 feet below grade.
- **If knotweed patches are too large to manage by hand, knotweed can be mowed but equipment MUST BE CLEANED THOROUGHLY before leaving the site of infestation.** Mowing should be limited to only the portion of the patch that is impacting safety.



Leaves



Stem



Typical patch