



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
TRANSPORTATION CABINET
transportation.ky.gov

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State Transportation Crews Treating Roadsides for Harmful Vegetation

Controlling invasive plants maintains safe visibility and prevents road damage

FRANKFORT, Ky. (March 4, 2025) – As Kentucky’s warmer weather begins to take root, so too will noxious weeds that can damage transportation infrastructure and potentially reduce roadway visibility. Motorists should watch for Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) highway crews in spray trucks and using other equipment to control weeds along state-maintained roadways.

“There’s a lot more than paving when it comes to road work,” said KYTC Secretary Jim Gray. “Controlling noxious plants is a key part of maintaining safe roads as they can damage drainage systems; some can reduce visibility, while others attract wildlife closer to our roads and create additional dangers for Kentucky drivers.”

KYTC is directed to control the following invasive plants and noxious weeds in accordance with [KRS 176.051](#) and [603 KAR 3:100](#):

- Amur Honeysuckle (*Lonicera maackii*)
- Canada Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*)
- Common Teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum*)
- Cutleaf Teasel (*Dipsacus laciniatus*)
- Japanese Knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*)
- Johnson Grass (*Sorghum halepense*)
- Kudzu (*Pueraria montana*)
- Marestalk (*Conyza canadensis*)
- Multiflora Rose (*Rosa multiflora*)
- Nodding Thistle (*Carduus nutans*)
- Poison Hemlock (*Conium maculatum*)
- Spotted Knapweed (*Centaurea stoebe*)

Noxious weeds like Spotted Knapweed and Canada Thistle often invade and destroy the roadside turf grass, leaving these areas vulnerable to erosion. Aggressive invasive species like Kudzu can smother native plants through rapid reproduction and long-term persistence. Others like Amur Honeysuckle (a favorite of white-tail deer), if left to mature, can grow over 20 feet tall and wide, reducing roadway visibility and attracting wildlife closer to roadways.

Kentuckians who are treating noxious weeds on private property adjacent to state-owned rights of way may request highway crews to treat listed vegetation. Application forms are available upon request from the appropriate KYTC highway district office. Contact information may be found on the district web pages listed [here](#).

Motorists are reminded to use extra caution when crews spraying for weeds are out on the roadways.

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Editors: Click on these images of the most common noxious and nuisance weeds targeted by KYTC spraying operations: [Amur Honeysuckle](#), [Canada Thistle](#), [Common Teasel](#), [Cutleaf Teasel](#), [Japanese Knotweed](#), [Johnson Grass](#), [Kudzu](#), [Marestail](#), [Multiflora Rose](#), [Nodding Thistle](#), [Poison Hemlock](#), [Spotted Knapweed](#)

