

## **Notice: Herbicide Application in Montpelier Railroad Right-of-Way Scheduled Between July 20-22nd**

*Contact:*

*Cary Giguere*

*Agrichemical Program Manager*

*Cary.Giguere@Vermont.gov*

*802-828-6531*

The Washington County Railroad Right-of-Way (ROW) between Main Street and Granite Street is scheduled for herbicide treatment. The treatment will take place prior to 6 AM between July 20-22nd. The actual date will be determined by other rail traffic and weather conditions.

This planned treatment is a result of a multi-year effort between the state, the City of Montpelier, and the railroad owners. This section of rail was last chemically-treated in 2013; since then Secretary of Agriculture, Food & Markets, Chuck Ross, looked to the state's scientific advisory panel, Vermont Pesticide Advisory Council (VPAC), to review and identify if there were additional effective, sustainable, non-chemical, management options for this particular stretch of railroad.

Since 2015, multiple public meetings were held and, in May of 2016, the Vermont Pesticide Advisory Council unanimously recommended to the Secretary that this stretch be treated in 2016 as a result of increasing safety concerns, and the lack of a viable long-term alternative management option.

Because of its high pedestrian use, and limited rail traffic, this stretch of track has presented a unique opportunity for vegetation management strategies. Last year, the railroad, in conjunction with the City of Montpelier, was able to control vegetation by mechanical methods. However, mechanical removal does not address the persistent root structures below the ballast, which pose a serious safety risk by undermining the rails. According to the Agency of Transportation, these roots can lead to the deterioration of the rail infrastructure over time and present a significant threat to public safety. Therefore, additional weed removal methods are now required to ensure safe conditions. The city, the state, and the railroad operators look forward to continuing the dialogue, with the engaged community, and moving forward using all possible options.

Residents along the rail will receive notifications in the mail from the railroad. Others wishing to receive notifications of right-of-way treatments in their area, can sign up for VT-Alert, an electronic notification system, and also review documents related to this herbicide treatment at:[http://agriculture.vermont.gov/pesticide\\_regulation/vpac](http://agriculture.vermont.gov/pesticide_regulation/vpac)