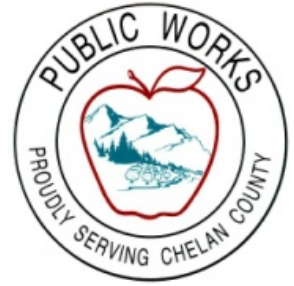


Chelan County Vegetation Management-FAQs



Why does the County use herbicides?

Chelan County's primary objectives for roadside vegetation management are:

- Provide for safe travel on County roads,
- Preservation of roadway infrastructure with desirable vegetation and stable roadsides,
- Compliance with legal regulations concerning control of noxious weeds,

Herbicides are a cost effective method of maintaining vegetation and selective use over time will require less product to manage vegetation as native grasses and low growing plants fill in along roadsides.

Why does the County use herbicide to thin brush?

Safe travel requires maintaining sight distance at corners, curves and intersections, insuring water flows off of pavement and providing areas for vehicles to safely pull off the road. This is accomplished with pruning, vegetation removal or herbicide thinning of deciduous vegetation.

Herbicide thinning is only used on brush and trees (apart from landscape vegetation or commercial farms after September 1st). Only the limbs of the plant sprayed are affected and those limbs will not leaf out the following year. It does not kill the plant. This is a cost effective and low impact technique to keep brush back from the right-of-way.

What herbicides are used in the residual program?

When the spray zone is near sensitive areas such as orchards, vineyards, residences and rivers, lakes and irrigation canals, the chemicals used in these areas are soft residual products that are safe to use up to the water's edge and near orchards, vineyards or landscaping. In non-sensitive areas, different herbicides with selective properties can be used to address vegetation control issues.

Why control noxious weeds?

The County is required by state law to control all listed noxious weeds that occur on the right-of-way (RCW 17.10). The County is also sensitive to the needs and concerns of adjacent landowners both for controlling the spread of noxious weeds and the need for use of herbicides to control vegetation. All herbicides used by the County are on the State of Washington Vegetation Management Contract. The Washington State Department of Transportation has completed toxicological and risk analysis for all herbicides on the contract and summaries can be accessed on their website (www.wsdot.wa.gov/Maintenance/Roadside/herbicide_use.htm). These herbicides have been determined to be the least toxic to mammals, fish and invertebrates.

When does the County spray for noxious weeds?

Control of noxious weeds is performed from mid-May to Mid-September. Selective herbicides are used in non-sensitive areas to promote the establishment of perennial grasses. Non-selective herbicide (Roundup®) is used in sensitive areas as it is one of just a few herbicides that are relatively safe to use near landscaping, orchards and vineyards.

Does the County spray herbicide on all of the right-of-way for noxious weed control?

No. The County spot sprays noxious weeds selectively throughout the spring and summer in an effort to promote the establishment of perennial grasses.

Is it safe for me to walk my pets after an application has been made?

Yes. It is safe to come into contact with areas after the herbicide has dried. If pets lick their feet after walking through a treated area it is advisable to rinse their feet with water, although at the rates of application there is very little risk to pets or people.

What if I do not want the County to spray herbicide on the right-of-way adjoining my property?

The County has a program in place for landowners to maintain the County right-of-way in lieu of the County applying herbicides. The County will place 'Owner Will Maintain' signs (at no expense to the landowner) at the start and stop of your property, to indicate where to stop and to resume spraying. Under this agreement, the landowner is responsible to control all noxious weeds, keep vegetation from encroaching onto the asphalt and to keep brush/trees back from the right-of-way line of sight and around utilities and signs. Failure to comply with the terms of the agreement will result in the County removing the 'Owner Will Maintain' signs and resuming use of herbicides to control vegetation.

Chelan County Public Works

Keeping Chelan County a Great Place to Live, Work & Play