

## For the Week of May 9, 2022

### Manager's Message

Aaron Frank, Town Manager



### Amtrak Route Stop in Burlington, VT coming Summer 2022

VTrans' goal will be met this summer when a passenger rail service is reintroduced to Burlington. The train from Burlington to NYC and beyond will be an extension from the Ethan Allen Express Amtrak route that currently runs from NYC to Rutland. The new scheduled stops will be from Burlington, to Middlebury and Vergennes, and finally in NYC. Test runs are currently being conducted until the

official opening this summer, so it is a good time to remind yourself and others about safety around trains.

**Amtrak Schedule:** [https://bit.ly/Amtrak\\_Tickets\\_Schedule\\_Routes](https://bit.ly/Amtrak_Tickets_Schedule_Routes)

### Local Media Stories:

WCAX: [https://bit.ly/Burlington\\_prepares\\_to\\_welcome\\_Amtrak](https://bit.ly/Burlington_prepares_to_welcome_Amtrak)

VT Digger: [https://bit.ly/VTDigger\\_AmtrakisBurlington-bound](https://bit.ly/VTDigger_AmtrakisBurlington-bound)

### Train Safety and Operation Lifesaver (<https://oli.org/>)

As trains become more active in our area this summer, it is important to consider your safety around them. Operation Lifesaver is an organization that provides rail safety education and is committed to preventing collisions, injuries and fatalities on and around railroad tracks and highway-rail grade crossings. Below are important reminders to protect yourself and others around trains:

- ✚ As you approach a railroad crossing, in a car or by foot, always expect a train—trains always have the right-of-way.
- ✚ When approaching railroad tracks in your vehicle, keep full attention on the road and your surroundings. Listening to music near railroad tracks may prevent you from hearing the train horn.
- ✚ When in your vehicle, don't pass, shift gears, or stop while crossing or on the tracks.
- ✚ Trains don't have steering wheels, so they can't turn right or left, and trains can't stop quickly either—the stopping distance of the average freight is a mile or more.

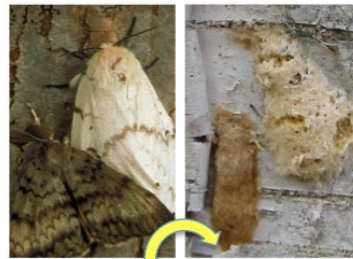


- ✚ Do not walk or ride your bike along or on tracks; cross tracks only at designated crossings; and be alert to and obey all warnings, signals, lights, and signs.
- ✚ Railroad property is private property. Recreational activities do not mix with railroad tracks—you are trespassing.
- ✚ In case of emergency, look for the blue sign located on the crossbuck or signal post that shows an emergency phone number, or call your local police.

### An Update on Spongy Moth (formerly Gypsy Moth) Management

During 2021, the Town of Colchester, and many other regions of Vermont, experienced an increased population of *Lymantria dispar* (Spongy Moth, formerly known as the Gypsy Moth) resulting in significant defoliation of trees throughout the spring and summer. Before 2021, a major increase in Spongy Moth population and large spread defoliation hadn't occurred since the early 1990s. Although this invasive insect is not native to the region, it has been here since the late 1800s.

ADULT



EGG



PUPA

LARVA  
(Caterpillar)

### What is the impact of Spongy Moth outbreaks?



Spongy Moth outbreaks occur cyclically and are often naturally controlled by insect parasites and predators, virus and fungal disease, and adverse weather conditions. An outbreak of Spongy Moths occurs when their population exceeds natural enemies, such as when a drought occurs and reduces the activity of the fungus *Entomophaga maimaiga* that can regularly keep populations controlled if sufficient moisture is present. During outbreaks, Spongy Moths can cause large spread defoliation. In 2021, more than 50,000 acres in Vermont were defoliated. The larvae typically feed on oak and maple trees, but they will also feed on other deciduous hardwoods such as birch and

apple trees. However, Spongy Moths are early season defoliators. If it isn't too dry, heavily defoliated trees can produce new leaves over the summer.

### **What is the State doing to control the Spongy Moth population?**

The State has not conducted aerial treatment for Spongy Moths in over 30 years, which is expected to continue for the foreseeable future. Instead, the State is providing [information](#) to landowners and municipalities and letting them make the decisions about treatment themselves. Between 2016 to 2018, the State’s method of education and outreach for treatment strategies was used for the Forest Tent Caterpillar outbreak, which had a positive outcome.

### **What is the Town doing to control the Spongy Moth population?**

The Town is currently following the expert advice of the State of Vermont and the University of Vermont who both employ tree specialists with specific expertise in controlling Spongy Moths. While there is a process for Town’s to apply for permits for aerial spraying, it is an extensive process making these types of permits difficult to obtain as there are also disadvantages to spraying. At this time, we believe the best approach continues to be education and outreach which has been effective for the State. Below are several management strategies for homeowners, along with a number of useful links for your use.

#### **Management Strategies for Homeowners**

- **Destroy Egg Masses:** Egg masses can be removed from trees between August and May to reduce the population in the coming year. The egg masses can be removed using a scraper to carefully remove the masses and submerge them into a container of soapy water or alcohol for 2 days before discarding them in the trash. This will destroy the eggs. Do not scrape them onto the ground or try to crush them as they can survive and hatch in the spring. Egg masses can also be sprayed with horticultural oil labeled for Spongy Moth (formerly Gypsy Moth) egg masses. These horticultural oils can be available at lawn and garden centers or online. Be sure to read the label and use the product appropriately.





- **Trapping:** Trapping Spongy Moths during two stages of their life cycle can reduce the population. Late April, just after the larvae has hatched, barrier bands will prevent larvae from climbing back into the trees after ballooning (this is when they drop down on thin silken threads to find a host tree or shrub after hatching). These barrier bands can be constructed from duct tape or other type of material that can be wrapped around a tree trunk and coated with a sticky material, such as TangleFoot or Vaseline. Do not put the sticky material directly on the tree trunk. Butcher paper or paper bags can be placed around the trunk before using the duct tape. Reapply the sticky material as necessary and replace the band when it becomes covered with caterpillars.



During early June, the barrier bands can be replaced with collection bands. A 12 to 18-inch-wide medium-weight, neutral-colored cloth or burlap can be placed around the tree. The material can be fastened to the tree with cord or twine at chest height. Fold the top half of the cloth down to cover the bottom half. The older caterpillars will use these as a place to hide during the day. The caterpillars will need to be removed and destroyed every day, by scraping them into a bucket of soapy water.

- **Pesticides:** Pesticides must be applied between May and June. Two types of pesticides can be used: biological and chemical pesticides.
  - **Biological Pesticides:** *Bacillus thuringiensis kurstaki* (Btk) is the most common treatment used to control Spongy Moths. This bacterial insecticide kills caterpillars that eat it within a week of its application. The insecticide causes the cells of the caterpillar's stomach lining to rupture. This bacterium is found naturally in soil. The timing of this application is necessary as the bacterial insecticide can be less effective on the older caterpillars. The bacterial insecticide has no effect of animals, birds, people or other types of insects; however, it can kill other caterpillars of moths and butterflies.
  - **Chemical Pesticides:** Many products are available at local garden centers or nurseries. Be sure to check the label to make sure Spongy Moths (formerly Gypsy Moths) are listed. If you choose to use a chemical insecticide, it is important to always read and precisely follow the label directions, as many of these chemical insecticides can have potential impacts on beneficial insects and natural enemies of Spongy Moths.

Common active ingredients of chemical pesticides are bifenthrin, carbaryl, seta-cypermethrin, and permethrin.

- **Crush and Brush:** Once in the pupal stage, you can crush and brush the cocoons into a container of soapy water to prevent them from making it to the adult stage. The cocoons of Spongy Moths are typically in protected spots, so you will need to be thorough when you are inspecting. The pupae are brown in color and approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches long. The adult Spongy Moths will appear within two weeks. The female moths, which are white in color, cannot fly making them easier to crush and brush into a container of soapy water. It is important to focus on the female moths as they can lay upwards of 1,000 eggs, so crushing them reduces the number of eggs to hatch during the Spring of the following year.



**Useful Websites to Review:**

<https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/Extension-Community-Horticulture/GypsyMothJune2021.pdf>

[https://fpr.vermont.gov/sites/fpr/files/doc\\_library/VT%20FPR\\_LDD%20Leaflet\\_Dec%202021\\_final.pdf](https://fpr.vermont.gov/sites/fpr/files/doc_library/VT%20FPR_LDD%20Leaflet_Dec%202021_final.pdf)

<https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/gypsymothinwisconsin/pest-management-2/management-guide-for-homeowners/>

<https://www.massaudubon.org/learn/nature-wildlife/insects-arachnids/spongy-moths>

[https://www.canr.msu.edu/ipm/invasive\\_species/Gypsy-Moth/gypsy-moth-life-cycle](https://www.canr.msu.edu/ipm/invasive_species/Gypsy-Moth/gypsy-moth-life-cycle)

<https://extension.psu.edu/preparing-for-high-gypsy-moth-densities-in-2021>

<https://vtinvasives.org/invasive/spongy-moth>

Images from: <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/spongyMothinWisconsin/pest-management-2/management-guide-for-homeowners/>



**Fill the Truck for the Food Shelf 2022**

Please help The Colchester-Milton Rotary fight hunger in our communities by supporting the “Fill the Truck for the Food Shelf” initiative.

A study by the Vermont Foodbank and Feeding

America shows that 1 in 4 people, or an estimated 153,000 people, in Vermont turn to food shelves and meal service programs to feed themselves and their families. This includes 33,900 children and 26,010 seniors.

The Colchester-Milton Rotary will be collecting non-perishable food and monetary donations for the entire month of May. 100% of all food & funds donated will go to the Colchester Community Food Shelf, The Milton Family Community Center, and the Champlain Islands Food Shelf. Donate online or a find collection site via this link: <https://bit.ly/FillTheTruck2022>

Thank you for your support!

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## Department Updates

### Parks & Recreation:

#### 13TH ANNUAL TOUCH-A-TRUCK

**Location:** Colchester High School, Parking Lot

**Date:** May 14th, 2022

**Times:**

- 9:00-10:30 AM: "Quiet Time" (no sirens used)
- 10:30-11:00 AM: Sirens & Air horns may be used

Come out and see what it's like to be in the big trucks! Children (and parents) can climb, sit and play on tractors, police cars, dump trucks, fire trucks, and a variety of other vehicles. Don't forget your cameras to capture the smile on your child's face as they sit on the large trucks!

For more information, visit <http://colchestervt.gov/touch-a-truck> or call at 802-264-5640.



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## Upcoming Town Meetings

**Selectboard:** Tuesday, May 10th, 6:30 pm at the Colchester Town Offices, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Outer Bay Conference Room, 781 Blakely Road. Residents are welcome to attend the meeting or alternatively send a note, up to 1,000 words, to [TownManager@colchestervt.gov](mailto:TownManager@colchestervt.gov) with "Citizens to be Heard" in the Subject and their name and address in the body of the email. The email will be shared with the entire Selectboard prior to the meeting and included in the information packet at the next meeting (as the information packet for the current meeting is sent out along with the agenda).



- Watch the Meeting Online via Live Stream: <http://lcatv.org/live-stream-2>
- Agenda: [www.bit.ly/Colchester-SB-Agendas](http://www.bit.ly/Colchester-SB-Agendas)

**Development Review Board:** Wednesday, May 11th, 7:00 pm at the Colchester Town Offices, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Outer Bay Conference Room, 781 Blakely Road. The Development Review Board will likely be participating remotely. Members of the public will have the option to choose either remote or in-person attendance. Masks are required for in-person attendance. Public comments can be submitted prior to the hearing by email to [zmaia@colchestervt.gov](mailto:zmaia@colchestervt.gov) or by mail to Town of Colchester, c/o Development Review Board, 781 Blakely Road, Colchester, VT 05446. Alternatively, participate in the public comment periods during the hybrid meeting.

- Participate by Phone: 1-929-205-6099
- Meeting ID: 871 3561 5437 (US – New York)
- Link to meeting: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87135615437>
- Watch Meeting Online via Live Stream: <http://lcatv.org/live-stream-2>
- Agenda: [https://clerkshq.com/Colchester-vt?docId=DRBAgenda&path=DRB%2CDRB\\_Agendas%2CDRBAgenda%2C](https://clerkshq.com/Colchester-vt?docId=DRBAgenda&path=DRB%2CDRB_Agendas%2CDRBAgenda%2C)

**Recreation Advisory Board:** Wednesday, May 11th, 7:00 am at the Town Offices.

**Planning Commission:** Tuesday, May 17th, 7:00 pm, at the Colchester Town Offices, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Outer Bay Conference Room, 781 Blakely Road

**Library Board of Trustees:** Thursday, May 19th, 4:30 pm in the Burnham Room of the Burnham Memorial Library.

**Subscribe to the Town Newsletter:** <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/jkMAO2v>

For more information or to comment, call 802-264-5509 or email [townmanager@colchestervt.gov](mailto:townmanager@colchestervt.gov)