



2025 WEED AWARENESS

The Weed Control Authority is responsible for implementation of the Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act throughout Lancaster County. The Authority has also provided the inspection and administration of the City of Lincoln's Weed Abatement Program since entering into an interlocal agreement with the city in 1996.

444 Cherrycreek Road, Bldg. B, Lincoln, NE 68528 • 402-441-7817 • lancaster.ne.gov/320/Weed-Control-Authority

FAQs About the Lancaster County Weed Authority and Responsibilities

First and foremost, it is the Weed Authority's goal to work with landowners to assist with the management of noxious weeds and compliance with the City of Lincoln weed abatement code. Only when the landowner fails to comply with State Law and City code does the Weed Authority step in to act.

What is the difference between noxious and non-noxious (invasive) weeds?

- In Nebraska, all designated noxious weeds must be non-native to the United States.
- Native plants will not be considered as noxious. A few examples would be eastern red cedar, wild cucumber and burcucumber.



Eastern Red Cedar

Wild Cucumber

Photo by Mary Jane Frogge, Lancaster County

- The Director of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture establishes which non-native and harmful plants are noxious. A scientific review is completed on potential species and a hearing is held allowing testimony from the public.
- Noxious weed shall mean the plant, seed or seedlings of such plants.

Who is responsible for controlling noxious weeds?

It is the duty of each person who owns or controls land to effectively control noxious weeds on such land and be responsible for funding weed control work. If you fail to comply with written notice given by the control authority, you

will be subject to a fine of up to \$1,500 or you will be billed for the cost of control work done.

Are there additional noxious weeds in Lancaster County?

Yes, in addition to the State designated noxious weeds, Lancaster County added common and cutleaf teasel. Counties are allowed to add additional species to address local concerns.

Are noxious weeds found in the cities, towns and villages in Lancaster County?

Yes, noxious weeds exist in the city as easily as in rural areas. Drainages, new developments, vacant lots and outlots are all areas of concern. In some cases, purple loosestrife, knotweed and saltcedar, are found in landscape settings due to the fact they were originally sold as ornamental plantings.

What should I do if I see noxious weeds growing anywhere in the City or Lancaster County?

Contact the Weed Control Authority at 402-441-7817 or submit a complaint via the city's UPLNK website or app.

What are the control recommendations for the different noxious weeds and areas?

There are many acceptable control recommendations for the noxious weeds based upon where the weeds are growing and stage of growth of the weeds. You may obtain recommendations for your particular situation by contacting the

Lancaster County Weed Authority office at 402-441-7817. There are no known biological control agents for noxious weeds that provide complete control. Biocontrol is allowed as part of a long-range noxious weed control program. All biocontrol released in Nebraska must be approved by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

May employees of the Weed Authority enter upon private land without first getting permission from the landowner?

Yes, the Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act (2-961) authorizes entry onto private land for the purpose of inspecting or performing their duty, if reasonable care is exercised. Any person who prevents or threatens to prevent entry upon land or interferes with the carrying out of the Noxious Weed Control Act shall be guilty of a Class IV misdemeanor.

How does the Authority determine which properties they are going to inspect for noxious weeds?



Weed Abatement in Lincoln

Inspections are made of properties with infestations found in the past to assure control is accomplished. In addition, all complaint sites and newly

observed infestations are inspected. Over 3,500 sites are inspected each year for noxious weeds.

How can I tell if I have noxious weeds on my property and what can I do about it?

Your Weed Authority staff can identify each noxious weed and will assist you with any needed control measures that may be required. Information is available on the Lancaster County Weed Authority website at <https://lancaster.ne.gov/320/Weed-Control-Authority>. You are welcome to email photos to weeds@lancaster.ne.gov for help identifying the species.

Are pollinator habitats or native plantings allowed inside the City of Lincoln?

Yes, pollinator gardens and native plantings are allowed as long as they are maintained weed free and comply with city codes. Helpful hints on how to comply can be found on the Weed Authority website.



Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County Pollinator Garden

Photo by Mary Jane Frogge, Lancaster County

TAKE 2

Two minutes to **read about two** invasive plants which are working to establish themselves in Lancaster County



Sericea Lespedeza (*Lespedeza cuneata*)

For those unfamiliar with this noxious plant, the name itself can be difficult. This species is native to Asia and while the reason for introduction to Nebraska is unknown, it has been promoted for wildlife habitat and is being used as a hay crop in southern United States. The University of Nebraska herbarium record shows that sericea lespedeza was first collected in Richardson County in 1974 and has since spread across thousands of acres in Nebraska.

Introduced into the United States in the southern states for forage in the 1800s, it is still grown for hay in that region. In the northern states, sericea lespedeza contains relatively high levels of condensed tannins (*proanthocyanidins*) which reduce forage digestibility, quality and animal performance.

Description

As with many invasive species, learning to identify it is half the battle. The plant grows generally 3–4 feet tall but can be anywhere between 2–7 feet tall and can be identified by its alternate leaves. Lower leaf surfaces tend to have short hairs. Stems are straight, slender, grooved and can have short hairs. Flowers, which bloom in late summer, range in color from white to cream to light yellow. Easiest time of year to spot is in the fall when the

grasses turn brown and the sericea remains green.

Habitat

Sericea lespedeza is a perennial that grows well in grasslands, CRP, wildlife plantings and pastures as well as along roadsides and drainage areas. It is mainly found in southeast and south-central Nebraska,

though it has the potential to invade range and grasslands statewide.

Means of Spread and Distribution

Existing infestations spread rapidly through seed dispersal, which can be carried by wildlife, livestock, contaminated hay, vehicles and equipment. Dense monocultures are formed due to its ability to sprout from root crowns and the seed which can remain viable in the soil for more than 20 years.

Impact

Sericea lespedeza is an extremely aggressive invader of open areas. Established plants will reduce or eliminate competing native vegetation impacting native ecosystems and reducing carrying capacity for livestock.

Control

A combination of two or more control methods (mechanical, chemical, etc.) is the best approach when controlling sericea lespedeza. By utilizing several control options, your odds become greater that more plants will be controlled. Continued monitoring and follow-up are essential for maintaining and reducing infestations.

Our staff is always available to help confirm the presence or absence of any noxious plants.



Common Teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum* L.) Cutleaf Teasel (*Dipsacus laciniatus* L.)

Designated noxious in Lancaster, Pawnee and Saline counties in Nebraska, teasel was introduced in the United States by European colonists who used the spiny heads to raise the nap of wool fabrics. It had various uses in folk medicine including treatment of ulcers, jaundice and warts. Counties are allowed by the Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act to designate a plant noxious to address local concerns. Cutleaf and common teasel are being monitored statewide with each county annually reporting the number of acres infested.

Description

Although usually called a biennial, teasel is better described as a monocarpic perennial. The plant grows as a basal rosette for a minimum of one year until enough resources are acquired to send up tall flowering stalks and dies after flowering. The period of time in the rosette stage varies depending on the amount of time needed to acquire enough resources for flowering to occur. Common teasel may reach 6 feet tall, having lilac to lavender flowers and cutleaf teasel can reach a height up to 8 feet with white flowers. Flowering occurs July–September.

Habitat

Teasel grows in open, sunny habitats such as roadsides and pastures. It prefers

disturbed areas, but can invade high quality areas such as prairies, savannas, seeps and sedge meadows.

Means of Spread and Distribution

Common teasel sometimes is used as a horticultural plant, which has aided in expansion of its North American range. In particular, the use of teasel in flower arrangements has aided its dispersal, especially to cemeteries. A single teasel plant can produce more than 2,000 seeds that can remain viable for at least 2–5 years.

Impacts

If allowed to become established, teasel can quickly form large monocultures excluding all native vegetation. This can reduce forage, wildlife habitat and species diversity. Teasel is not eaten by livestock and has no forage value, so livestock will avoid infested areas.

Control

Infestation sites will need to be monitored and treated repeatedly until the seedbanks are depleted. With diligent control, eradication may be feasible.

- Hand-pulling and digging are management options for small infestations, but the large, fleshy taproots are difficult to remove. Flowers and seedheads will need to be bagged and disposed.
- This species also responds favorably to annual herbicide treatments. The *University of Nebraska Guide for Weed, Disease, and Insect Management in Nebraska* (EC-130) recommends treatment at the rosette stage in the fall or early spring.
 - 2,4-D 4# Amine at 32 ounces per acre
 - Garlon 3A at 3–4 pints per acre
 - Overdrive at 4–8 ounces per acre
 Always read and follow the label directions.
- Biological control is not a management option at this time.

The County Commissioners serve as the Lancaster County Weed Authority. Currently, Brent Meyer serves as the superintendent and supervises a seasonal staff of six weed inspectors with the assistance of Chief Inspector Pat Dugan and Account Clerk Danni McGown.

Lancaster County Weed Control 2024 Review

The Lancaster County Weed Authority serves the citizens of Lancaster County to effectively protect against designated noxious weeds which constitute a present threat to the continued economic and environmental value of lands in Lancaster County.

Our office implements the mandates of the State of Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act by setting forth management objectives and plans, methods or practices which utilize a variety of techniques for the integrated management of noxious weeds. In establishing a coordinated program for the integrated management of noxious weeds, it is the County's intent to encourage and require all appropriate and available management methods, while promoting those methods which are the most environmentally benign, practical and economically feasible.

Noxious Weed Program

The Weed Control Authority utilizes a three-phase program to assist landowners in reducing the number of noxious-weed-infested acres in the county.

Phase 1: Prevent the development of new noxious and invasive weed infestations.

Phase 2: Provide education and public outreach on noxious and invasive weed control.

Phase 3: Provide ongoing management of State of Nebraska and Lancaster County designated noxious weeds, as well as the City of Lincoln Weed Abatement program.

Nebraska's Noxious Weed Control Act states: It is the duty of each person who owns the land to effectively control noxious weeds on such land.

Noxious Weeds in County Roadsides

Landowners are encouraged to control noxious weeds along

property they own. If not controlled by the adjacent owner, Lancaster County Weed Control will control the perennial noxious weeds such as phragmites, sericea lespedeza and leafy spurge in the county roadsides.

Lancaster County works closely with landowners with specialty crops and offers free-of-charge "NO SPRAY ZONE" signs when an agreement is signed. The agreement requires the landowner to control all the noxious weeds in their adjacent right of way.

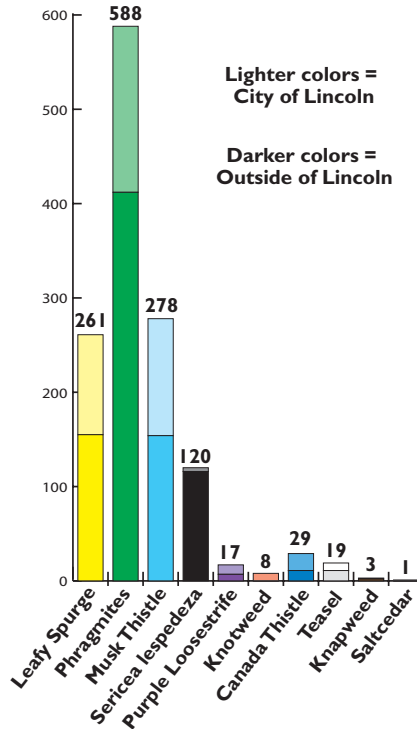
City of Lincoln Weed Abatement Program

Lancaster County Weed Control Authority is responsible to carry out the administration of the City of Lincoln's Weed Abatement program since entering an interlocal agreement with the city in 1996.

The City of Lincoln's Weed Abatement Ordinance requires landowners within city limits to maintain the height of weeds and worthless vegetation below six inches. This includes all areas to the center of the street and/or alley that adjoins their property. Our inspector's complete inspections based on pre-selected properties due to their history, request from the public and by observing severe yards while conducting other inspections. When a property is found to be in violation, the owner of record is notified with a legal notice. If the property remains uncontrolled at the expiration of the legal notice, the Weed Control Authority will hire a contractor to cut the weeds and worthless vegetation on the property. Landowners are responsible to pay the cost of control, plus an administrative fee. If the cost of control remains

NOXIOUS WEEDS

Number of Lancaster County Sites in Violation



unpaid, a lien is placed against the property until paid.

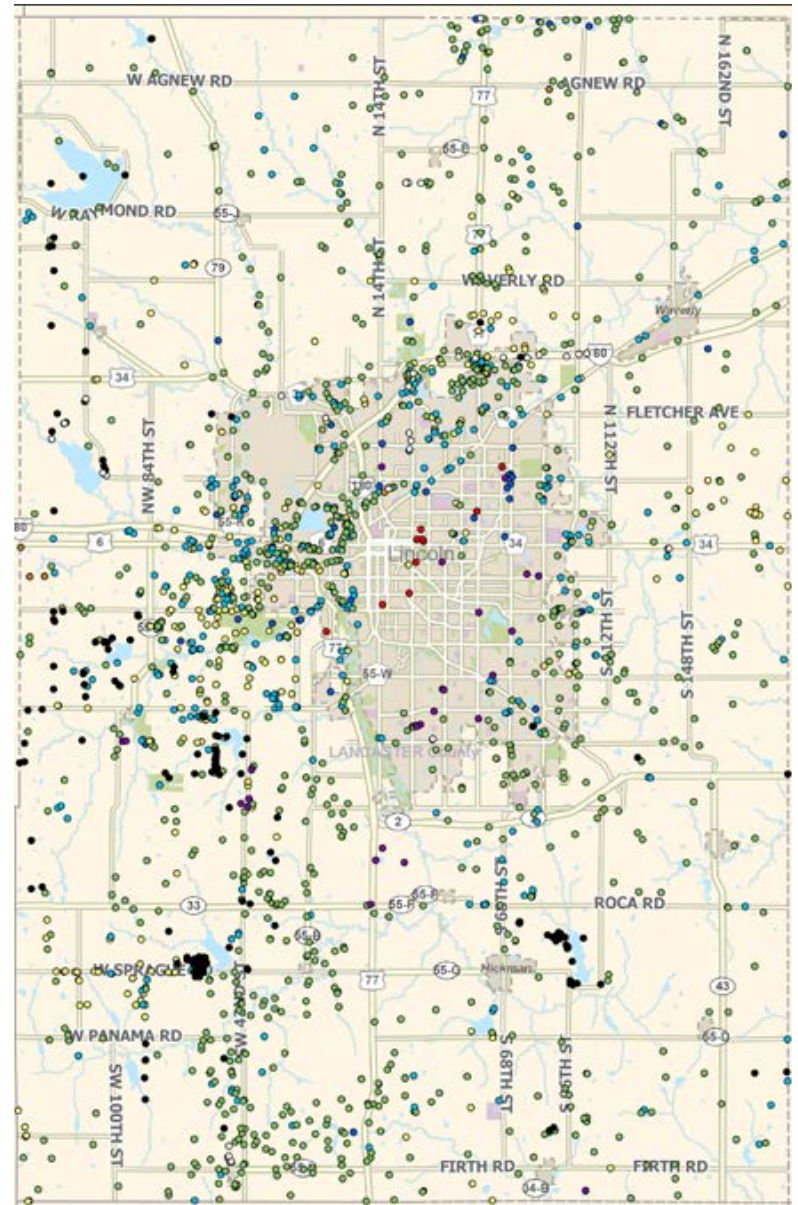
City of Lincoln Landfills

The Weed Control Authority is responsible for managing noxious weeds at the 48th Street and the Bluff Road landfills. To track the spread of noxious weeds and the effectiveness of the control, the landfills are inspected annually and GPS mapped prior to treatment.

Lancaster County Abandoned Cemeteries

Mowing and maintenance on seven abandoned cemeteries throughout the county falls under the supervision of the Weed Control Authority. Cemeteries included are: Asplund, the County Poor Farm, Dietz, Evangelical, Highland Precinct, Jordan and Uphoff.

Special recognition goes to



- Leafy Spurge
- Phragmites
- Musk Thistle
- Sericea lespedeza
- Purple Loosestrife
- Knotweed
- Canada Thistle
- Teasel
- Knapweed
- Saltcedar

the following volunteers:

- Lincoln Tree Service for tree trimming and removal
- Dave Miller for mowing Jordan
- Terry Briley for mowing Evangelical
- Clark Liesveld and Boy Scouts

of America Troop 64 for mowing Dietz

- Troy Henning for mowing Highland Precinct & Uphoff
- Larry England for mowing the Poor Farm
- David Almery for mowing Asplund

Nebraska's Noxious Weeds

It is the duty of each person who owns or controls land to effectively control noxious weeds on such land. Noxious weed is a legal term used to denote a destructive or harmful weed for the purpose of regulation.

The Director of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture establishes which plants are noxious. These non-native plants compete aggressively with desirable plants and vegetation. Failure to control noxious weeds in this state is a serious problem which is detrimental to the production of crops and livestock, and to the welfare of residents of this state. Noxious weeds may also devalue land and reduce tax revenue.



STOP INVASIVE SPECIES
IN YOUR TRACKS.

PlayCleanGo.org

Musk Thistle

Pink to purple flowers

Mature seedhead

Height 1.6–9.8 ft

Canada Thistle

Pink to purple flowers

Height 1–3.9 ft

Plumeless Thistle

Purple flowers

Height 1–4.9 ft

Phragmites

Young seedhead

Mature seedhead

Height 3.2–20 ft

Leafy Spurge

Large yellow leaves (bracts)

Stems/leaves have milky sap

Height .3–2.6 ft

Sericea Lespedeza

White or cream to yellowish-white flowers

Height 1.5–6.5 ft

Japanese & Giant Knotweed

Creamy-white to greenish-white flowers

Height 3–10 ft Height 8–13 ft

Purple Loosestrife

Purple to magenta flowers

Height 1.3–8 ft

Saltcedar

Pink to white flowers

Height 3.3–20 ft

Spotted & Diffuse Knapweed

Lavender to purple flowers

White/purplish flowers

Height 1–3.9 ft

Lancaster County's Noxious Weeds

White flowers

Height 4–8 ft

Lavender to white flowers

Height 3–6 ft

Good neighbors control noxious weeds — If you have questions or concerns about noxious weeds, please contact your local county noxious weed control authority, Nebraska Weed Control Association (<https://neweed.org>) or Nebraska Department of Agriculture.