WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
NOTICE OF FINAL GUIDANCE & CERTIFICATION

Pursuant to ch. 227, Wis. Stats., the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has finalized and hereby certifies the following guidance document.

DOCUMENT ID

FA-20-0011

DOCUMENT TITLE

Jumping Worms – Watch for this invader

PROGRAM/BUREAU

Forest Health, Applied Forestry Bureau

STATUTORY AUTHORITY OR LEGAL CITATION

S. 23.22, Wis. Stats. & Ch. NR40, Wis. Admin. Code

DATE SENT TO LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU (FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS)

2/10/2020

DATE FINALIZED

4/6/2020

DNR CERTIFICATION

I have reviewed this guidance document or proposed guidance document and I certify that it complies with sections 227.10 and 227.11 of the Wisconsin Statutes. I further certify that the guidance document or proposed guidance document contains no standard, requirement, or threshold that is not explicitly required or explicitly permitted by a statute or a rule that has been lawfully promulgated. I further certify that the guidance document or proposed guidance document contains no standard, requirement, or threshold that is more restrictive than a standard, requirement, or threshold contained in the Wisconsin Statutes.

Carmen Hardin

March 27, 2020

Signature

Date

Impacts of Jumping Worms

- Change soil structure, producing unique, crumbly soil that impacts plants
- May threaten:
  - forest health by altering soil structure and chemistry
  - biodiversity in affected areas
- Some forest and garden plants may have trouble growing in soil changed by jumping worms

What can I do to slow the spread?

Learn to recognize them and teach others to do so.

Plant, sell, purchase and trade only those landscape and gardening plants that you are reasonably sure are free of jumping worms. Buy bare root stock whenever possible. Be cautious when sharing and moving plants.

Look for jumping worms in your yard, garden and forest, mulch, compost, potted plants and other suitable places.

Sell, purchase and trade only compost that you know was heated to appropriate temperatures for the correct amount of time following protocols that reduce pathogens.

Arrive clean, leave clean. Remove soil and debris from vehicles, equipment, footwear and personal gear before going to and from work and recreational areas.

It is illegal to buy, sell, bring into the state, or release jumping worms to water or land in Wisconsin under the Invasive Species Rule (ch. NR 40, Wis. Adm. Code). dnr.wi.gov, keyword "NR 40"

Lifecycle in Wisconsin

April - May:
Tiny jumping worms hatch from cocoon-encased eggs.

Summer months:
Jumping worms feed and grow.

August - September:
Mature worms reproduce, depositing egg-filled cocoons in surroundings.

First freeze:
Adult worms die.

Winter months:
Eggs spend cold months protected in cocoons.

- A single worm can reproduce on its own without a mate.
- Jumping worms live only one season; mature and reproduce throughout the summer, then die.
- Cocoons overwinter in the soil; hatch the following spring.

Tiny, tough cocoons have no problem withstanding Wisconsin winters. They are only about 2-3 mm wide.

Actual size

What if they're already on my property?

Don't panic. By taking precautions, you can continue enjoying your yard, trees and garden!

- ✔ Don't spread the worms to uninfested places on your property.
- ✔ Remove and destroy adult worms by sealing them in a bag and throwing it in the trash.
- ✔ Experiment with a variety of plants or try alternative landscaping in heavily infested parts of your property.

For more information, visit the **Wisconsin Jumping Worm website**, a collaborative effort between Wisconsin DNR, University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum, University of Wisconsin-Extension and Olbrich Botanical Gardens, at:

dnr.wi.gov, keyword "*jumping worm*"

For a video of jumping worms in action:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jrGnUFDXuyQ

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Jumping Worms

Watch For This Invader

What do jumping worms look like?

- Dark brown/gray bodies are smooth, firm and shiny.
- The clitellum (the cloudy white to gray colored fleshy band circling the worm's body) is not raised like on other earthworms.
- Adults can be up to 6 inches long.

Behavior

- Jumping worms move like snakes.
- They violently thrash and squirm when disturbed.
- They live at soil surface and feed on leaf litter and organic matter.