



Myrtle Spurge, Euphorbia myrsinites, is on Colorado's A List. Species on the A List are considered a top priority for eradication.

Open Space and Natural Resources Division

We are Stewards of Natural Resources Essential to Aurora's Quality of Life

Natural Resource Bulletin

Required Noxious Weed Removal

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What is Myrtle Spurge?

Myrtle Spurge, *Euphorbia myrsinites*, is colorful and drought resistant. Introduced to the state from Eurasia, many Colorado nurseries encouraged gardeners to plant Myrtle Spurge in the 70's and 80's because it would provide instant, easy color and interest for the Colorado gardener. Other common names for Myrtle Spurge include Donkey Tail Spurge and Creeping Spurge.

Why am I required to remove it?

Myrtle Spurge may seem beautiful and well behaved in your garden, but it is very poorly behaved in natural areas. It has the tendency to outcompete native plants for sun and water, creating a monoculture of nothing but Myrtle Spurge. Myrtle Spurge also produces a toxic, milky sap that can cause blistering and severe irritation to skin and eyes in humans, livestock and pets. For these reasons, the Colorado Noxious Weed Act requires property owners to completely remove or eradicate the plant from their land.

How do I remove Myrtle Spurge?

The most effective way to remove myrtle spurge is by digging up mature plants and pulling new seedlings.

- To protect yourself from the toxic sap, wear gloves, long sleeves, pants, and eye protection when handling this plant.
- If the plants are in flower, bag them carefully and put in the trash or take to a solid waste landfill. Because of its toxicity and ability to reproduce from cut stems, do not attempt to compost Myrtle Spurge.

Myrtle Spurge is difficult to control with herbicides because of the thick, waxy coating on the leaves and stem. If you have tried herbicide and it is not working, try spraying the plants with soapy water first, let dry and then spray the herbicide again.

Because Myrtle Spurge is incredibly tough and tenacious, you will want to check for seedlings and remove them annually for multiple years.

How quickly do I need to remove it?

Property owners have two weeks after the receipt of this letter to remove all Myrtle Spurge from their property. If the plants are not removed within the 2-week period, Aurora Neighborhood Services will issue a Notice of Violation to remove it. If the plants are not removed within 10 days of a Notice of Violation, city contractors will abate the plants and the property owner will be charged for the abatement.

Frequently Asked Questions:

What is a weed?

A weed is simply a plant out of place. "Weediness" is subjective. Even desirable plants, such as turf grass, can be considered weedy if it is growing in the wrong place.

What is a noxious weed?

Noxious weed is an official, legal definition. Noxious weeds are non-native invasive plants that displace desirable vegetation and degrade natural and agricultural lands. They threaten our drinking water supply, agricultural crops, pasture lands and native habitats.

Why I am required to remove noxious weeds from my property?

The Colorado Noxious Weed Act (35-5.5 CRS) requires that state-listed noxious weeds be managed or removed. The Colorado Weed Act designates Myrtle Spurge as an A List, or top priority species, for control and removal.

Where can I learn more about noxious weeds?

The Colorado Weed Management Association (CWMA) is a great source for up-to-date information on state-listed noxious weeds and how to manage them. www.cwma.org.

The Colorado Department of Agriculture is another great Resource.

[Noxious Weed Species | Department of Agriculture – Conservation Services](#)



Sources: Colorado Weed Management Association (CWMA) Myrtle Spurge Page, www.cwma.org/myrtlespurge.html; Myrtle Spurge—What You Need to Know! Boulder OSMP, www.bouldercolorado.gov/files/openspace/pdf_brochures/myrtle_spurge.pdf.