

Did You Know?

Well, it's that time of year again! We finally had a little sun, a lot of moisture, and are finally seeing that Spring has "sprung" into action.

With an inch of rain over Memorial Day weekend, and rain again last weekend, we are all experiencing thick, lush lawns, dandelions galore, and new branches on our bushes and trees. We understand most of you are at work during the week and the weekend is the time you have available to mow/trim things back. When it is raining on your only days off it may be difficult to keep up with the growth (I personally needed a swather last week to get through my backyard). However, please keep in mind you are responsible for keeping ground vegetation under six inches tall, branches clear of the sidewalks with at least seven-foot clearance, and roadways clear of branches at least fourteen-feet.

Three Forks Ordinance #5-5-1 through 5-5-2 state that everyone is required to remove all weeds from the premises under their control, and to the center of the street and/or alley along, in front of, or abutting the property.

We do ask that you make every reasonable attempt to maintain your yard to ensure pedestrians along the sidewalks do not lose an eye by a branch poking out of lilac bushes for instance, or that you are not spreading weeds (all varieties) to your neighbor.

Let's talk about Noxious Weeds



5-5-1: DEFINITIONS:

WEEDS: Any unchecked or overgrown vegetation that is unsightly, troublesome, useless or noxious as defined by the state of Montana department of agriculture and the United States department of agriculture - national resource conservation service's category 1 weeds for Montana, and includes a plant of little value, especially one growing plentifully and detrimentally in a garden or lawn, or vegetation growth that has been declared noxious, destructive and detrimental to an agricultural interest, or any similar unwanted vegetation or grass over six inches (6") in height. Noxious weeds must be completely removed as per the USDA-NRCS requirements. (Ord. 347-13, 11-26-2013)

5-5-2: CUTTING OR REMOVING REQUIRED:

All persons are hereby required to remove all weeds from said premises under their control and to the center of the street or alley along, in front of, or abutting on said premises and to keep the same free from weeds. (Ord. 347-13, 11-26-2013)

5-5-3: NONCOMPLIANCE:

- A. Notice Of Violation: Upon discovery, the property owner shall receive notice in writing that weeds and/or noxious vegetation is growing upon any lot or real estate owned by that property owner within the city limits.
- B. Time Limit For Removal: The property owner or his authorized representative has a period of seventy two (72) hours to remove the weeds and otherwise comply with this chapter.
- C. Issuance Of Citation; Fine Imposed: A failure of a property owner to remove weeds or other vegetation from real estate owned by the property owner within the city or otherwise a failure to abide by the city's weed ordinances shall be cause for issuance of a citation for the property owner to appear in city court for violation of this chapter. Upon conviction, a fine shall be imposed of twenty five dollars (\$25.00) together with an additional fine of five dollars (\$5.00) per day for each day that the weeds or other noxious vegetation is not removed from the subject's real property. (Ord. 347-13, 11-26-2013)

Noxious weeds are those which invade and take over your land. According to the Montana Department of Agriculture, “...they have a destructive impact on Montana’s landscape by displacing native plant species, increasing soil erosion, and decreasing wildlife habitat...”

Plants like knapweed, yellow toadflax, leafy spurge, Canada thistle and even oxeye daisies are prevalent around Three Forks. These weeds need special attention in our yards. Mowing them does not remove the weed – it just cut the blooms and leaves them on the ground to reseed if you do not bag the clippings and burn them. We really need to pull the weed and entirely remove its root from the ground. Pictured below are the various stages of knapweed, which is the most prevalent noxious weed seen in Three Forks.



Rosetta



Young



Stem



Leaf



Bloom



Mature

Think you have a “pretty flower” in your yard? Learn more on the Montana Weed Control Association’s “Weed ID” website [here](#).

Specific to Three Forks, we ask that when you find noxious weeds on your property, you remove them completely per the USDA-NRCS requirements.

Code Compliance Officer

The Gallatin County Sheriff’s Office provides a Code Compliance Officer (CCO) as part of our Law Enforcement contract, who inspects the whole town. Their job is to ensure our ordinances are followed, and to point out our faults when we violate those ordinances with a warning letter or possibly even a ticket. You may have received such a warning in the past for a parking violation or a weed violation. Please follow their instructions if you receive one and remedy as soon as possible.

You are always welcome to call City Hall to find out the specific law they note on a warning letter, or you can look it up on our website (linked below), and then go to “Online Documents” then “Ordinances”.

To learn more visit our website at www.threeforksmontana.us or give us a call at 406-285-3431.