

Dear Barry County Property Owner:

This brochure offers a basic explanation of the Barry County Drain Commissioner's Office policy on Drain Right of Way Vegetation Management.

The reasons for managing unwanted brush and weeds along the banks of drainage ditches extend far beyond aesthetics. Good management helps a ditch function more effectively, more economically, more safely and in better harmony with land uses, people and desirable vegetation that surround it.

Excessive woody vegetation on a Drain Right of Way decreases water flow capacity by slowing down water movement. This can lead to flooding during periods of high precipitation. Unmanaged Drain Right of Ways are frequently colonized by noxious weeds, which can spread seed many miles to neighboring croplands and residential areas.

If after reading this brochure, you still have questions about our Drain Right of Way Vegetation Management program, please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff. We would be pleased to meet with you on a one by one basis. We also have a website at <http://www.BarryCounty.org> which may answer some of your questions. The Barry County Drain Commissioner's Office hours are 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday.

Respectfully,

Russ Yarger

Russ Yarger
Barry County Drain
Commissioner

WE ARE THE STEWARDS OF THE GREAT LAKES



Water Facts

- The great Lakes contain about 20 percent of the world's available fresh water. Michigan has over 3,200 miles of shoreline on four of the five Great Lakes; Erie, Huron, Michigan and Superior.
- Most surface water in Barry County drains to Lake Michigan through the Grand Basin.
- The Barry County Drain Commissioner maintains approximately 243 miles of open and tiled drain representing 192 Drainage Districts. The oldest recorded drains are Briggs and Spruce Swamp Drain, Big Marsh and Carlton-Irving all established in 1882.
- The Barry County Drain Commissioner oversees 10 dams with court ordered lake levels.

DRAIN RIGHT OF WAY VEGETATION MANAGEMENT



Russell D. Yarger
Barry County Drain Commissioner
Courthouse – 3rd Floor
220 W. State St.
Hastings, Michigan 49058

Office (269) 945-1385
Fax (269)948-4884
Email: RYarger@BarryCounty.org
Web: www.BarryCounty.org

Selective vegetation management

The Barry County Drain Commissioner's Office promotes the management of vegetation within and along the banks of designated county drains. This process involves mechanical and/or chemical removal of undesirable vegetation, and promotion of desirable vegetation.

The absence of thick tree growth within and along drainage courses promotes the growth of low-growing shrubs, native grasses, and wildflowers which are compatible with drainage ditches. In addition, this type of vegetation decreases erosion and improves wildlife habitat.



Drain prior to vegetation management

Landowner involvement is encouraged by the Barry County Drain Commissioner's office. Selective cutting can be done at the landowner's request. Filter/buffer strips along drainage ditches are a good practice that landowners can incorporate to reduce erosion, promote grass bank cover, increase

Mechanical control of undesirable vegetation

Excavator driven tree shears, chain saws and brush mowers are utilized to mechanically remove undesirable trees and brush. Tractor mounted boom mowers can also be utilized to mow regrowth.



Under general circumstances, the Drain Commissioner's staff piles brush and trees in intervals along the ditch, where the landowner is responsible for disposal.

Mechanical removal of undesirable vegetation is most often the first step in selective Drain Right of Way vegetation management; however it is not economically or environmentally feasible to control undesirable vegetation through this process alone. Chemical (herbicide) control measures are utilized by the Barry County Drain Commissioners Office to provide a cost and performance effective means of continued vegetation management along our drains.

Chemical control of undesirable vegetation

The Barry County Drain Commissioner's Office contractors utilize EPA and MDA registered herbicides to control re-growth of undesirable vegetation. The most common herbicides that are used in our program are Rodeo (active ingredient Glyphosate) by Dow AgriSciences, Garlon3A (active ingredient triclopyr) by Dow AgriSciences, and Escort XP (active ingredient Metasulfuron Methyl) by Dupont.

All pesticide applicators utilized by the Barry County Drain Commissioner's office are certified through the Michigan Department of Agriculture. All herbicides are applied strictly according to the Manufacture's Labeling.



Additional information regarding the specific herbicides that we may utilize is available here:

dowagro.com

dupont.com

*Material safety data sheets prepared by the manufacturer are also available upon request at the Barry County Drain Commissioner's Office.