

# FACT SHEET

## VTRANS PESTICIDE PROGRAM SUMMARY & CHEMICAL USAGE OVER TIME

Prepared for 2023 Legislative Session on behalf of Vermont Agency of Transportation  
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More information at VTrans Vegetation Management Homepage [[here](#)]

This Fact Sheet is specific to VTrans' Pesticide Program initiatives including highway guardrail spraying, airport weed management, and spraying supporting projects and construction. VTrans pesticides spraying operations are regulated by the Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets which requires annual permitting, certifying new applicators, and quality assurance testing chemical mixes.

### Why spray highway guardrail and at State airports?

- Left uncontrolled, weeds can obstruct motorists' views, make pedestrian movement unsafe, slow other maintenance operations, damage pavement and other road structures, and cause drainage and erosion problems
- Ensure ability to visually inspect for structural issues and ease of access to maintain guardrail
- Maintain visibility of reflectors for public safety and prevent the loss of sight distance, concealment of intersections and impaired vision at curves, hills, driveways, and other critical areas
- Control the growth of woody vegetation along roads as their root systems compromise pavement integrity
- Promote worker safety by controlling noxious weeds (poisonous plants) in areas workers are expected to access
- Economically more sustainable than mechanical methods of vegetation management



### What does our chemical usage look like over the years?

- From 2010 – 2018:** VTrans utilized contractors for all guardrail spraying and airport weed management
- From 2019 – 2020:** VTrans utilized a retrofitted liquid salt/plow truck for highway guardrail, and a smaller spray unit for airport fence-line spraying
- 2021 – Present:** Beginning in 2021, VTrans District Maintenance and Fleet Division has implemented three custom spray units to optimize guardrail spraying efficiency and save money in the long run by cutting out contracted spraying and keeping the operation in house

### What's new for this year?

- VTrans now has three custom spray units made by Chemical Containers, Inc. out of Lake Wales, FL for use during the 2023 spray season
- Each year, we learn from using these units statewide and have communicated our results with the Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets to keep our relationship with our sister-Agency strong
- These units have electronics that allow VTrans to better and more efficiently track chemical usage, map spray areas, and detect leaks or failures in the system
- Units will be assessed for the 2023 spray season and in the long-term, but overall, we will recoup the cost of them (**approx. \$40,000/unit=\$120,000 for three units**) in less than one year as compared to contracting out yearly spray services (**approx. \$150,000/year**)
- Successfully implementing these units will support our VTrans Pesticide Mission Statement of reducing chemical usage by seeking efficiencies in application, trainings, and technology

