

# Phragmites Treatment Frequently Asked Questions

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- **Do I have Phragmites?**

Proper Identification is key! If you are unsure if you have Phragmites, there are a number of plant ID keys available online and in text.

Phragmites is capable of growing to heights of 15 ft; it creates dense stands and is long lived. It has woody, hollow stems and leaves that taper from the base to a pointed tip. The leaves are often 8-16" long and .5-1.5" wide. Flowers develop by mid summer and are arranged in orangish/brown spikelets with many tufts of silky hair.

For your reference a line drawing of Phragmites is located on the backside of this page. The Michigan DEQ has assembled a helpful guide entitled "*A Landowners's Guide to Phragmites Control*", it is available for free on the DEQ website at:

[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/deq/deq-ogl-Guide-Phragmites\\_204659\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/deq/deq-ogl-Guide-Phragmites_204659_7.pdf)

A 46 page guide for resource and land managers is also available on the Michigan DEQ website. The guide is entitled "*A Guide to the Control and Management of Invasive Phragmites*" and is available at the web address:

[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/deq/deq-ogl-ais-guide-PhragBook-Email\\_212418\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/deq/deq-ogl-ais-guide-PhragBook-Email_212418_7.pdf)

- **Why is Phragmites undesirable?**

Phragmites is an aggressively reproducing, invasive species that has a tendency to create a mono-culture in areas that it takes root. Mono-cultures can be undesirable because they displace the beneficial native species, and at times, the animals that utilize the resources these plants provide. They re-organize the ecosystem and can forever alter habitat. Phragmites are also undesirable because they can reach 6-15 ft in height blocking views, access, and creating fire hazards.

- **What Products can I use to treat my Phragmites problem?**

There are a number of products labeled for use on Phragmites, we always recommend the services of a commercial applicator. If state, local, and federal laws allow and a homeowner chooses to do it themselves a Glyphosate product approved for use in aquatic environments such as AquaPro<sup>®</sup>, Avocet, AquaNeat<sup>®</sup> or Shore Klear<sup>™</sup> mixed with a non-ionic surfactant/activator such as Cygnet Plus<sup>™</sup> are some of the options. Another treatment option available to the commercial applicator is a Glyphosate/Habitat<sup>®</sup>/Cygnet Plus<sup>™</sup> mixture. Studies have shown you can achieve greater control using this mixture, however label restrictions only allow it to be applied by a professional.

- **What are the costs involved in treating my Phragmites problem?**

The cost/acre to treat can vary. The product cost involved is approximately \$100-\$900/acre. This depends on the management goal, plant density, and products chosen. It does not include any labor or permit fees that may be required.

- **When should I treat my Phragmites?**

When using Glyphosate, treatment should occur when the plants have fully bloomed but before the first killing frost. (i.e. Late summer before the first killing Frost.) Treatment with Habitat<sup>®</sup> should be done to actively growing, green, foliage after full leaf elongation. Ensure 100% coverage with Habitat<sup>®</sup>. Always read/follow the label instructions.

- **What are the label restrictions on products used in a Phragmites treatment?**

A re-entry period of 4 hours may be applicable when used according to the label. Glyphosate has no limit on the use of treated water for irrigation, recreation, or domestic purposes. Irrigation restrictions of 120 days or an assay of 1 ppb or less apply to Habitat<sup>®</sup> treated waters. Local laws may vary, please check with your local governing body.

- **What are the rates I should be using for the treatment of Phragmites?**

Glyphosate or Habitat<sup>®</sup> should be applied at 4-6 pints per acre (1 acre = an area approx. 208ft X 208ft or 43,560ft<sup>2</sup>). An activator/surfactant is also required to be mixed with the herbicide, we recommend Cygnet Plus<sup>™</sup>. The surfactant is applied at no more than 4 pints per acre. When using the combination of the two products, the rate is 3 pints of each product per acre. Always read label mixing instructions for recommended preparation.

- **How is Phragmites treated?**

The method used generally will be chosen based on the sensitivity of the surrounding environment and the size of the stand to be treated. When using spray methods please be conscious of your spray and drift, do not apply product using spray technique within 100 ft of desirable vegetation or crops. If you must apply when there is a wind greater than 5mph leave a buffer zone of greater than 500 ft.

There are multiple methods you can use to apply the Habitat<sup>®</sup>/Glyphosate/Surfactant mix to Phragmites.

These include:

1. Backpack sprayer or handheld sprayer
2. Hand swiping
3. Wick/Dauber
4. Aerial Spraying

- **How long until I see initial results?**

Due to the systemic action of Glyphosate and Habitat<sup>®</sup>, results are often slower than with other herbicides. The herbicide needs time to move throughout the plant to kill the root system. Results are usually seen in 1-2 weeks, but visual control symptoms may be delayed. Visual symptoms can include but are not limited to; discoloration, yellowing, and/or wilting.



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