



# The Idaho Association of **WEED CONTROL SUPERINTENDENTS**

May 8, 2017

Idaho Association of Weed Control Superintendents  
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Lloyd Knight  
Administrator-Plant Industries Division  
Idaho State Department of Agriculture  
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PLANT INDUSTRIES

Dear Administrator Knight:

The Idaho Association of Weed Control Superintendents (IAWCS) conducted a poll of the association on the possible listing of Japanese Yew (*Taxus cuspidate*) to the State Noxious Weed list. The consensus of the Association is to oppose the Japanese Yew listing at this time.

The IAWCS fully supports protecting the health and welfare of our citizens and wildlife. This year's record-breaking winter of abnormally large snow accumulations may have forced wildlife into new forage areas, including residential locations, where Yew poisoning occurred. Yew has been planted ornamentally for years, but typically, animals do not need to rely on residential areas to sustain them during the winter months.

Furthermore, the IAWCS is concerned about the financial burden this listing may put on County Noxious Weed Programs, potentially placing our personnel into the backyards of many residences and occupying a substantial amount of our time.

Many other landscaping plants are toxic, and if we start regulating on the basis of a plant's potential toxicity, we could easily become overwhelmed and over budget.

During the past week I have spoken with my constituents and have put together a list of ideas and concerns:

- If a policy is made, it should be achievable. An educational approach informing landowners of other landscaping options may do more good than creating policy.
- Counties could add Japanese Yew to their county noxious weed lists.
- The state could add Japanese Yew as a prohibited species, allowing the landowner to keep plants in place, while no longer permitting the sale of plants within Idaho.

Finally, the listing of Japanese Yew could add a financial burden to county noxious weed programs. The state needs to address how counties will fund the manpower and eradication costs associated with the removal process.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns. We appreciate the opportunity to participate in the rulemaking process. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you need additional information on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Terry S. Lee  
IAWCS Chairman