

First Unitarian Church of Des Moines

Operating Policies – Use of Products on Church Grounds

Members at First Unitarian have a great respect for the environment and also have a significant interest in improving and utilizing the woodlands that are on church property. This policy establishes guidelines for the use of selected products on church property – grounds and woods.

Unchecked, invasive species form monocultures, reducing natural stability and displacing viable wildlife habitats. They degrade the ecosystem by depleting the soil moisture, exacerbating erosion problems and disrupting nutrient cycles in the soil. Invasive plants limit the usability of the church woodland area because they inhibit movement through the space and some, such as poison ivy, are a health risk. They also make the space unattractive to members, visitors and neighbors and may spread to neighboring properties.

Invasive species have been and will be in the woods for several years. Past work has removed some of these temporarily but the effort to get these under control will be long-term. Invasive plants are highly resistant to mechanical control and, in some species, actually stimulates reproduction. A three-pronged approach will be used to control these identified plants: (1) an initial large-scale effort with researched, reliable chemicals applied appropriately; (2) re-planting appropriate species immediately; (3) on-going control with an organic product and/or mechanical removal, or when necessary, limited cut stump-only treatment.

Acceptable products and treatment methods to be used are:

Plant	Product	Acceptable Treatment method
Buckthorn	Pathfinder, Garlon	Foliar, cut stump, basil bark
Tree of Heaven	Pathfinder, Garlon, Tordon Burnout	Hack and squirt on larger trees, “burn” foliage on saplings Resprouts
Bush Honeysuckle	Roundup, Pathfinder, Garlon	Foliar spraying (only after first frost when other plants are dormant), cut stump
Black Locust	Pathfinder, Garlon Roundup, Pathfinder, Garlon	Basil bark Hack and squirt or cut stump
Garlic Mustard	Roundup, Pathfinder, Garlon or Burnout	Foliar, mechanical
Poison Ivy	Roundup, Garlon, Pathfinder Burnout	Foliar on small plants; Cut stump of large vines Foliar on small plants

Application

All users must follow the label directions, including the use of protective gear, in ALL cases. Protective gear includes but is not limited to rubber gloves, long sleeved shirts and pants, eye protection and closed toe boots. Empty chemical bottles must be disposed of properly, according to label directions.

Notifications at the site of chemical application must be posted, including the re-entry time period specified on the label.

The following zones have been identified for limited chemical use as specified below:

1. *Within 5 feet of children's play areas, ceremonial space, along trail corridors and heavy use areas such as the Memorial Garden and Patio.* Use of mechanical removal and organics (such as Burnout) only with the exception of spot treatment of noxious species (poison ivy).
2. *Creek valley corridor.* Use of organics, mechanical or Round-up with hack and squirt only. No Tordon/2-4D should be used.

The following chemicals have been researched and due to the nature of these products are unacceptable for use on the church grounds:

- ✓ Aminopyralid
- ✓ Clorpyralid
- ✓ Imazapyr
- ✓ Metasulfuron methyl (AKA Escort)

Emergency Procedures

- If a member applying the chemical comes in harmful contact with it, follow label directions to mitigate the effects of contact.
- If this is a life threatening situation, call 911 IMMEDIATELY and notify the workday leader(s).
- Call the Iowa Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222 for additional guidance.
- The State of Iowa requires any person storing, handling, transporting, or disposing of a hazardous substance to notify the Department of Natural Resources and local law enforcement of the occurrence of a hazardous condition, i.e. a chemical spill.
- The notification should be made as soon as possible but not later than six hours after the onset or discovery of the hazardous condition.
- Report the hazardous condition by calling the Iowa Department of Natural Resources at 515-281-8694 and the Des Moines Police Department at their non-emergency number of 515-283-4811.

See also Appendix A.

**Operating Policies – Use of Products on Church Grounds
Appendix A**

This is a summary of acceptable products, as discussed in the policy, and relevant information.

Product	Advantages	Drawbacks
Roundup (glyphosate)	Can be applied year round – best late summer to fall (prior to color change)	Non-selective
	Low soil mobility, low risk of groundwater contamination	
Garlon, Pathfinder (Triclopyr)	Broadleaf selective	Application time depends on plant target but not over 85 degrees
	Practically non-toxic to slightly toxic for mammals, birds and bees.	Can result in ground water contamination due to soil mobility
Tordon	Can be applied year round	Highly water soluble but volume used for targeted application may mitigate this issue
	Low toxicity to terrestrial organisms	Toxic to aquatic organisms
	Broadleaf selective	
Burnout	No lasting harmful effects	Requires full sun and hot weather
		Non-selective