



ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTING, INC.
Providing Environmental Solutions



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Poison Hemlock: Species Discovered in Sussex County

The Delaware Department of Agriculture is warning Sussex County residents that two species of poison hemlock have been discovered. The spotted water hemlock (*cicuta maculate*) and another form of hemlock, *conicum maculatum*, were discovered in area wetlands. Both hemlocks bloom from June through late August. Both plants have small white flowers in umbrella-like groupings. People mistake these plants for wild carrot, which is commonly called



Queen Anne's Lace. People who like to forage for natural foods or cut wildflowers are advised to avoid wild carrot-looking plants to prevent the possibility of being poisoned.

The plants not only grow in wetlands but also may be found in ditches, meadows, pastures and along cultivated fields. The stems are smooth with purple blotches. Leaves are a dark glossy green, appear fern-like, and are triangular. The Department of Agriculture stated that anyone who believes that they have found hemlock or spotted water hemlock should take a photo of the plant and send it to: DDA.marketing@delaware.gov. They warned that residents should not try to eradicate the plants themselves and to let the professionals take care of it.

The plant is also poisonous to animals which is why eradicating the plant in meadows or fields where livestock graze is critical. Ingestion of hemlock or spotted water hemlock by livestock can lead to death in just two to three hours. Most livestock do not find the leaves palatable, so they may not ingest them if other feed is available. Symptoms that livestock have ingested hemlock or spotted water hemlock usually occur within 30 to 60 minutes and there is no antidote. The toxins affect the nerve impulse transmission to the muscles and the animals die of respiratory failure, usually before the cause is determined.

We, Envirotech Environmental Consulting Inc. (EECI) have spotted hemlock in some buffer areas. These areas were treated immediately and we will continue to eradicate these species in the future. Please ensure that this important information is share with your contacts and community members.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call our Main Office at 302-684-5201 or email us at info@envirotechcinc.com



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