

WHERE DO I FIND A TREE CONTRACTOR TO CONTROL TREE OF HEAVEN?

Contact your local Cooperative Extension, Forestry or Department of Agriculture office and ask for information on how to locate tree removal experts and commercial pesticide applicators in your area. Look in the yellow pages under tree removal services or arborist, chemical lawn care, or landscaping services. Make sure the contractor is familiar with invasive species control and specific control measures recommended for tree of heaven.



HOW DO I TREAT TREES MYSELF?

It is best to treat the tree with herbicide first, then wait until the tree is dead before cutting it down. For best results, treat in the summer months.

Step 1: Using a hatchet, make several downward angled cuts into the trunk keeping approximately 3 inches between each cut.

*Ready-to-use **glyphosate** products are not concentrated enough for stem treatments. Regardless of which herbicide is chosen, use a product designed for stem treatments, and follow the label instructions for that product.*

Step 2: Apply the herbicide solution immediately to the hatchet cuts using a squirt bottle.



Step 3: Apply herbicide solution to resprouts as needed and according to label instructions until the tree is dead.

Step 4: Cut or pull out treated tree and roots.

HOW TO CONTROL TREE OF HEAVEN ON YOUR PROPERTY



For More Information or Brochure Ordering
The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Plant Industry
Botany/Weed Science Office
2301 North Cameron Street
Harrisburg, PA 17110
717-787-7204

WHAT IS TREE OF HEAVEN?

Tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), a native of China, was first planted in North America in 1784 as a landscape ornamental in Philadelphia. It was also planted as a shade and street tree into the early 1900's. Today, tree of heaven is widely distributed throughout the United States in land-scapes but has also spread into non-landscaped areas where it is considered an invasive weed.



WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

Tree of heaven has light gray bark, and large 'palm-like' leaves up to 3 feet long. It grows in clumps, with larger, older stems in the center. There may be hundreds of stems in a clump (called a clone), but they are all part of one plant with a common root system. All trees in a clone are either male or female. Individual stems are short-lived, but may grow to 60 feet tall and have trunk diameters approaching 3 feet. Female trees produce twisted, papery seeds in large, conspicuous clusters which change from green in summer to brown before blowing off in fall and winter.



CAN I CONFUSE IT WITH ANYTHING ELSE?

Smooth and staghorn sumac are the tree species that look like tree of heaven. If the red, fuzzy flower clusters of sumac are not present, the sumacs and tree of heaven are very similar in appearance and form.

Tree of heaven is much bigger than sumacs which rarely exceed 20 feet in height. Sumac leaflets also have teeth along the leaf edge, whereas tree of heaven leaflets are smooth except for two blunt teeth at the leaf base. When tree of heaven leaves are crushed, they give off a very offensive odor.



WHY IS IT A PROBLEM?

Female trees are prolific seed producers - as many as 30,000 seeds can be borne on a single female tree. In addition, both male and female trees spread vegetatively by root suckers or resprouting. If you cut or disturb the stems, new sprouts emerge from the roots and can easily grow 6 to 10 feet in one growing season. Like many invasive species, this tree is a rapid colonizer that quickly establishes itself on disturbed soil. Its roots often damage building foundations. When a tree of heaven is injured, cut or treated improperly with herbicide, it often responds by producing masses of root suckers.



HOW DO I CONTROL IT?

Destroying female trees (and thus stopping seed production) is one of the best ways to limit its spread. Injuring the root system is critical to killing the tree completely. Certain herbicides can provide control if applied correctly. Commercial pesticide applicators can choose among several herbicide products on the market to control tree of heaven. If you choose to treat the trees yourself, a foliar application of an herbicide product that contains 18-41% **glyphosate** can effectively kill tree of heaven.