



TOWN OF CAVE CREEK BUILDING AND FIRE SAFETY DEPARTMENT

APRIL 28, 2020, FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Last chance to slow the spread of Stinknet, eliminate fire hazards

CAVE CREEK - The warmer temperatures have arrived along with the regional fire season, and our desert spring foliage has dried out becoming a flammable fuel.

The National Weather Service is forecasting temperatures in the 100s for the Phoenix area with an excessive heat warning in effect through the end of the week. In conjunction, Stinknet (Globe Chamomile) has also started going to seed, and the window to eliminate and manage infestations on your property is quickly closing.

Stinknet is a prolific invasive weed that has become increasingly problematic for local ecosystems and is also a huge fire hazard. It is easily recognizable with round yellow balls for flowers and carrot-like leaves that have a pungent odor. The plants start to flower in February, and it begins seed ripening by mid-March through May. Each yellow ball contains approximately 400 or more seeds that are easily carried by wind.

“To best manage the spread of this weed, control must take place before plants go to seed. If infestations are allowed to propagate over the course of several seasons, they will form dense stands with prolific seed production,” according to Maricopa Parks.

Stinknet crowds out native plants and grows in dense mats that are highly flammable when dry. It produces high temperatures and flames, creating fire hazards across properties in Cave Creek and the regional Phoenix Metropolitan area.

“It is important to remove the plants before they develop mature seeds. But once Stinknet is established for a second year, chemical control becomes necessary,” Maricopa County says.

So, if your property has been invaded by these “pretty” yellow weeds it is best manually pull them before it flowers to prevent further infestations. Now that we are past that window there are still some efforts residents can take to help manage infestations and reduce fire risks.

Removal by hand or hula-hoe and disposing it in a trash bag is going to be the best method whether Stinknet has flowered or not. However, the herbicide Simazine at 16

ounces per acre, or Milestone at four ounces per acre is an effective pre-emergent. It can also be applied to emerged plants before they flower.



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Glyphosate with MSO or Hasten surfactant is effective for using on Stinknet as a post-emergent up to flowering. After flowering, half rate diquat should be added to the herbicide mixture. Ortho Weed and Grass Killer is another herbicide that performs well and is easy to find at local retail stores.

If applying herbicides, please adhere to the strict label compliance or use a licensed commercial applicator.

If the Stinknet infestation is large and/or manual removal is not practical or you don't want to use herbicides, using a string trimmer to knock down the dried-out weeds as much as possible will help reduce fire hazards. But this method will not effectively remove the infestations in the long-term. Make sure to rake and dispose of the trimmings to reduce the spread of seeds.

This plant is highly allergenic, both dermal and respiratory, so please take precautions.

Here are some additional resources:

- [Southwest Vegetation Management Association \(SWVMA\)](#) has an entire web page dedicated to Stinknet. Questions can be sent to SWVMA.stinknet@gmail.com.
- A [PowerPoint](#) with an overview about the plant and how to control it.
- A printable brochure from the Arizona Native Plant Society in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).
- A [Facebook Forum](#) for Stinknet.
- Arizona Interagency Wildfire Prevention and Information [Website](#).
- [A community driven map](#) that will help track the spread of Stinknet for wildlife managers.