

Hunterdon County In State's Spotted Lantern Fly Quarantine Zone

Hunterdon County's Shade Tree Commission is working in conjunction with the state Department of Agriculture to prevent the spread of the spotted lantern fly, by making businesses and the public aware of the state established quarantine area and required checklist for moving items outside the area.

Freeholder Shaun Van Doren, the Board's liaison for the Shade Tree Commission, reported at the Board's October 16 meeting, "Hunterdon, along with Warren and Mercer counties, have been designated spotted lanternfly quarantine areas, by the state Agriculture Department."

The state Department has announced that businesses and the general public in the quarantine area are required to obtain and fill out a New Jersey checklist before moving any items listed on the checklist outside the quarantine area which is available at <https://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/divisions/pi/pdf/NJResidenceSLFChecklist.pdf>.

Van Doren added, "The checklist also serves to inform the public about the spotted lantern fly, including how to identify all life stages of the insect and minimize or eliminate its movement."

The Hunterdon County Shade Tree Commission also advises that as the holiday season approaches, residents are encouraged to inspect Christmas trees for spotted lantern fly egg masses, before bringing trees into their home.

However, the Star Ledger reports that New Jersey's Agriculture Secretary Douglas H. Fisher says, "The Department has a comprehensive management plan to limit its (spotted lantern fly) spread in New Jersey," and that residents should not be concerned about the quality of state grown Christmas trees.

In the Star Ledger news account, Agriculture Secretary Fisher adds, "Our Christmas tree growers are aware of the threat posed by the spotted lantern fly and are vigilant in scouting their fields and inspecting their trees regularly."

Native to eastern Asia, the spotted lantern fly first appeared in the U.S. in Pennsylvania in 2014. So far it has only been detected in Hunterdon, Mercer and Warren counties in New Jersey.

Residents who spot a live lantern fly or any egg masses in New Jersey should call the Agriculture Department's hotline, 833-BADBUG-0 (833 223-2840).