

New Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Regulations Regarding Jumping Worms

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Purpose of this document

This document can be used to share information about the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) new jumping worm regulation with those that may be affected, including businesses located outside of Minnesota that may be shipping products to Minnesota.

New regulation

On February 20, 2024 the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources announced that it had classified 13 high-risk invasive aquatic plants, fish and invertebrates as prohibited invasive species. Jumping worms (*Amyntas* and *Metaphire* species) become prohibited invasive species on July 1, 2024.

The DNR classifies invasive species as prohibited to prevent their introduction and spread in Minnesota and to protect the state's environment, economy, natural resources and outdoor recreation. It is unlawful to possess, import, purchase, transport or introduce prohibited invasive species, except under a DNR-issued permit for disposal, decontamination, control, research or education.

Jumping worms were regulated due to their negative impacts:

- Jumping worms can dramatically change soils, giving it a unique texture similar to coffee grounds which can increase erosion.
- Jumping worms eat mulch and leaf litter and strip vital nutrients from topsoil.
- Homeowners may see garden plants killed and may have difficulty growing plants.
- Jumping worms can cause environmental harm in forests. When the soil changes, the forest can't support the same plant and animal species it did before earthworms.

What does this mean for businesses?

Businesses should examine their practices and look for places where it is possible jumping worms could be spread. Businesses can work to prevent the spread of jumping worms. Jumping worms and their egg cases can be spread through media such as compost that has not been treated, soil, sod, and wood chips.

Prevention best management practices include:

- Insist that equipment arrive at your site clean of soil that may contain jumping worms.
- If your staff work at multiple sites, train to "arrive clean, leave clean." Clean off soil and debris from vehicles, equipment and gear before moving to and from a work area to another area, to reduce the chances of spreading jumping worms.
- Train staff about jumping worms and invasive species prevention.
- Inspect new materials for jumping worms before distributing them at your site. It is unlawful for any business to import jumping worms into Minnesota.
- If bringing in compost, make sure the supplier has followed the process for further reducing pathogens.

- Inspect products for jumping worms before sale.
- Sale of jumping worms for bait or vermicomposting purposes is illegal.

Management practices to avoid spreading jumping worms around your property include:

- Remove and dispose of jumping worms and contaminated materials.
- Avoid moving those materials around between plots/pots.
- Clean equipment between different areas of your property but especially after working with materials known to have jumping worms.

Resources

- Minnesota DNR jumping worm [webpage](#)
- Minnesota DNR [webpage on rulemaking](#) which links to a [webpage of frequently asked questions](#) about jumping worms and rulemaking
- Minnesota DNR [invasive species laws webpage](#)
- Minnesota DNR webpage with [information on cleaning equipment](#) (note the page is developed for DNR contactors, but the advice applies to anyone interested in not spreading invasive species during the course of their work)
- The Minnesota Nursery and Landscape Association's guidance document: [Nursery and Industry Best Management Practices to Reduce the Potential for Spreading Jumping Worms](#)