From: Lamoureux, Denise
Subject: Release: Vermonters Cautioned to Look but Don't Touch "Poison Parsnip"
Date: Tuesday, June 19, 2018 11:16:29 AM
Attachments: image004.png

Greetings RISPNet,

- With summer arriving, the Department of Health and the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets are cautioning about seasonal hazards like poison parsnip. This is a good reminder to all of us but I am also sharing because many newcomers might not know what poison parsnip looks like. Photos are included in the press release below.

- In the same vein of thought around poisonous plants, here is a link to poison ivy information from the USDA Forest Service, with photo: https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/ipnf/learning/?cid=fsm9_019210

Thank you for sharing the information with the new American families you serve.

Enjoy the brief, but spectacular, Vermont Summer!

Denise Lamoureux
Director, Refugee Office | State Refugee Coordinator
Vermont Agency of Human Services | Office of the Secretary
280 State Drive | Waterbury, VT 05671-1000
(802) 241-0429 or (802) 652-4192
Denise.Lamoureux@Vermont.gov

From: Truman, Bennett
Sent: Tuesday, June 19, 2018 9:54 AM
To: VT Health Department <AHS.VDHPublicCommunication@vermont.gov>
Subject: News Release: Vermonters Cautioned to Look but Don't Touch "Poison Parsnip"

VERMONT AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE FOOD & MARKETS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

For Immediate Release: June 19, 2018

Media Contacts:

Ben Truman
Vermont Department of Health
802-951-5153 / 802-863-7281

Scott Waterman
Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets
802-828-2179

Vermonters Cautioned to Look but Don't Touch "Poison Parsnip"

Roadside plant can cause burns, rash

BURLINGTON – State Health and Agriculture officials want Vermonters to steer clear of a common weed often seen along Vermont roadsides. The so-called "poison parsnip" packs a punch that can leave you with the equivalent of a second-degree burn.

Formally known as wild parsnip, these plants grow along roadsides and unmaintained areas throughout Vermont, with flowers that look like a yellow version of Queen Anne's lace.

The plant produces a sap that contains chemicals called psoralens that react to sunlight. Skin that comes in contact with the sap becomes hyper-sensitive to ultraviolet light, and can result in redness, burns similar to a second-degree sunburn, painful rashes and raised blisters. Reactions to the sap and sunlight usually begin 24 to 48 hours after contact.

Wild parsnip is the same plant as the common garden parsnip we eat in soups and stews. The flower heads are the second-year growth from the carrot-like roots. The plant is a close relative of carrots, parsley, angelica and giant hogweed, all of which can cause similar skin reactions in sensitive individuals.

The good news is that in order for a reaction to occur, your skin has to come into direct contact with the sap. This is different than plants such as poison ivy or stinging nettles, which can spread their chemical defenses on you just by your brushing up against the plant itself.

If you get wild parsnip sap on your skin:

- Wash the skin thoroughly with soap and water as soon as possible.
- Protect the exposed skin from sunlight for at least 48 hours.
- If you experience a skin reaction, call your health care provider.

If you need to work with or among the plants:

- Wear clothing that covers your arms and legs.
- Be careful of exposure when mowing or weed whacking.
- Work with the plant on cloudy days.
- Wash your skin immediately if you come in contact with the sap.
- Wash clothes that may have been exposed to the sap.

For more information about wild/poison parsnip:
http://www.healthvermont.gov/health-environment/environmental-chemicals-pollutants/wild-poison-parsnip

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Image credit: Vermont Department of Health