

# PARKS & CONSERVATION SERVICE (PCS)

## SAFETY ALERT 01/2024

Issued 01/02/2024

FOR ACTION BY: PCS Managers and Supervisors  
FOR ADVICE TO: All PCS/RL/ONC Workers

### New incursion: Inkweed



#### ISSUE:

A large infestation of Inkweed (*Phytolacca octandra*) has recently been found in the ACT. The toxic nature of this plant presents a risk to PCS staff, contractors, members of the public as well as livestock and domestic pets. All parts of this plant are considered poisonous with symptoms ranging from nausea and vomiting to breathing difficulty and convulsions.

#### SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS:

- Alert your supervisor if you find inkweed.
- The area should be isolated and warning signs erected immediately if controls are not achievable.
- Gloves, disposable overalls and P2 masks should be worn if treating the plant with herbicide or hand pulling.
- If any part of the plant contacts skin, wash the area immediately with soap and water. Seek medical attention if any part of the plant is inhaled, ingested or enters the eyes.
- NEVER attempt to slash or brush cut infestations of inkweed.
- Map all locations found on the 2023-24 Field maps treated or untreated weeds map if no control is carried out.
- Contact [actbiosecurity@act.gov.au](mailto:actbiosecurity@act.gov.au) for assistance or advice on inkweed.

#### ACTIONS REQUIRED:

- This Alert should be prominently posted on PCS Safety Notice Boards for 3 months and be discussed at the next staff meeting/toolbox talk.
- Persons in control of a workplace are required to maintain a register, recording name and signatures of staff reading and acknowledging the content and directions.
- On completion, please scan and e-mail a copy of the register to [EPSDDWHS@act.gov.au](mailto:EPSDDWHS@act.gov.au) for record purposes.

#### SAFETY ALERT RELEASE INFORMATION:

Released with the authority of Stephen Alegria, Executive Branch Manager, Parks & Conservation Service

1/2/24

This Alert will remain current unless it is withdrawn by the Executive Branch Manager or superseded by a PCS Safety Policy.