

# Beware Poisonous Plants!

**N**ot again! You are furiously scratching the growing rash at two o'clock in the morning! It's the burning itch of poison ivy! Don't let this happen to you this season.

Usually, a toxic encounter with a plant results in extreme discomfort but nothing more. Unfortunately, some workers have had more severe and even tragic encounters. Plants that poison upon contact, such as poison ivy, have killed people when the plants were burned and the smoke inhaled.

Learn to identify plants that are poisonous upon contact:

- Poison ivy
- Poison sumac
- Poison oak
- Stinging nettle

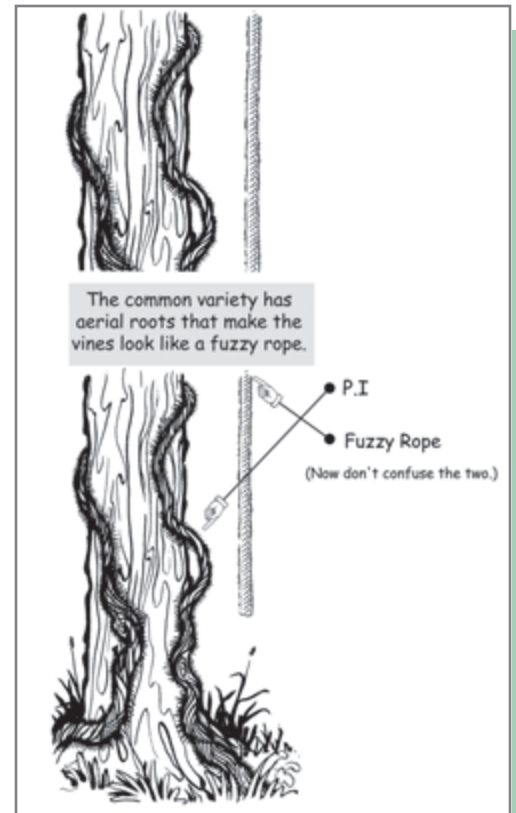
Poison ivy, oak, and sumac fact sheet:

- Urushiol is the oil that causes the rash.
- Urushiol is neutralized by water if

washed off within the first five minutes after contact.

- Urushiol is spread by soap. Do not use soap to wash the rash.
- Urushiol can adhere to your clothing if you walk through a patch, possibly spreading to you later.
- Cool water compresses are an effective, low-cost way to relieve itching.
- Soaking the rash in lukewarm water and baking soda can help dry it out.
- Scratching will not spread the rash, but it could infect the blisters with staph infection (a bacteria). The staph infection can then spread further by scratching.
- Urushiol remains active in dead or dormant plants.

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# Poison Plants . . .

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## To avoid getting a rash:

Wear long-sleeved shirts.

If your clothes contact a poisonous plant, wash them separately before wearing again.

Do not walk through patches of nettles, poison ivy, poison sumac or poison oak. If a patch of poisonous plants is growing under a tree that must be climbed, consider spraying herbicide and returning to the job later. Or, cover the patch with a tarp

if you can cover and flatten the plants. Wash the tarp with water after use.

Never burn brush of poisonous plants. You could inhale the poisonous smoke, causing a rash in your lungs. This could result in death. Burning of brush is either banned or highly restricted in most populated areas of North America anyway!

Use the following method to remove poison ivy vines growing up any tree you plan to climb. If possible, wear protective clothing, such as applicator clothing,

while removing the vine. Carefully cut the vine as close to the ground as possible. Return to the job after the vine has died and remove it. Or, if the vine must be removed immediately and can be removed safely without it falling on top of you, pull the vine out of the tree. Place the removed vine in quarantine and inform anyone who might contact the vine where it is. If the vine cannot be removed safely, consult with a crew leader or other supervisor.

**Leaflets three? Let them be!**



Common Poison Ivy

Eximium variety of *T. radicans*, have leaves like clubs in a deck of cards.



Deeply lobed verrucosum subvariety of *T. radicans*.



**Choose the best answer!**

Best answers: 1 A), 2 B), 3 B), 4 D).

1. You can contract a poison ivy rash from dead or dormant plants.
  - a) True
  - b) False
2. Poison ivy/oak rash can be spread by scratching.
  - a) True
  - b) False

3. A D-shaped exit hole is a sign of a round-headed borer.
  - a) True
  - b) False
4. Which of the following is a "root cause" of chipper fatalities?
  - a) reaching into the infeed
  - b) gloves getting caught on brush
  - c) equipment malfunction
  - d) operator ignorance or complacency