

Pond weed herbicide treatment starts Monday at St. Paul's Como Lake

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The invasive curly-leaf pond weed that has come to dominate 90 percent of the plant life in Como Lake may be in for some rough treatment.

Working hand-in-hand with neighborhood volunteers and Ramsey County, the Capitol Region Watershed District has organized a full-court press against the pond weed, which was first discovered in Como Lake in the 1990s.

On Monday, a licensed contractor will begin applying the herbicide fluridone, which is intended to prevent the weed from photosynthesizing, or using light to produce chemical energy. The hope is that enough fluridone applied early in the growing season will kill the weed before native plants bloom.

Another benefit of killing the weed is that it will produce less phosphorous, [which is feeding Como Lake's ugly green algae blooms](#).

Subsequent applications of fluridone may be necessary later this spring to maintain a 60-day concentration of four parts per billion, according to a statement from the Capitol Region Watershed District.

Die-off of the pond weed is likely within two months. The watershed district said additional treatment may be needed, however, in years to come.

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Frederick Melo was once sued by a reader for \$2 million but kept on writing. He came to the Pioneer Press in 2005 and brings a testy East Coast attitude to St. Paul beat reporting. He spent nearly six years covering crime in the Dakota County courts before switching focus to the St. Paul mayor's office, city council, and all things neighborhood-related, from the city's churches to its parks and light rail. A resident of Hamline-Midway, he is married to a Frogtown woman. He Tweets with manic intensity at @FrederickMelo.

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