

## Outreach

The outreach component of the program serves to raise awareness of Pierce's disease and the glassy-winged sharpshooter. Citizens informed through outreach activities have already contributed to the program's efforts to detect new infestations of the pest. The CDFA hopes to build on this success by targeting outreach to those Californians who are best positioned to help find the pest.

Compared to native vectors, the biology of the glassy-winged sharpshooter -- its flying strength, general fortitude, reproductive rate, and voracious appetite -- makes it a particular threat. Consequently, outreach seeks to enlist the public, stakeholders and other state agency employees to help detect the pest's movement into new territories as quickly as possible. Finding a new infestation before it has a chance to settle in allows the opportunity to contain and reduce the spread while minimizing impacts to the environment.

Outreach also works to help community members understand the significance of the sharpshooter threat and the measures can be taken to combat it. Upon the discovery of a new infestation, outreach staff will assist local authorities with the planning and presentation of public meetings; inform the media; provide information and instructive materials for community organizations; and work with local officials to respond to the unique social, environmental, and public health needs of each community.

### Help from Backyard Gardeners

Public awareness of the disease and the sharpshooter has steadily increased since program inception. Outreach efforts have experienced success, as illustrated by the informed citizen who reported the initial detection of the sharpshooter's presence in Contra Costa County after viewing an outreach poster at a local nursery. Hundreds of insect samples have been submitted for analysis by homeowners and others who learned about the insect through fliers, posters, meetings and other program activities.

Outreach plays an important role in the cooperative arrangement with the California Department of Transportation by putting information in the hands of hundreds of workers. The miles of oleander and other plants lining the medians and shoulders of California's highways are ready hosts for the sharpshooter, so outreach to these key cooperators is essential in finding and quickly responding to new infestations.

Outreach helps foster the relationships with strategic alliances that are critical for program success.

## Accomplishments

### ***Published Articles***

Over 500 articles about Pierce's disease and the sharpshooter have appeared in national and international publications.

### ***Television***

Dozens of TV news reports have followed initial reports of infestations in each new area, contributing to public awareness during the critical survey and delimitation period.

### ***Outreach Meetings***

CDFA has participated in over 200 outreach meetings statewide.

### ***Informational Materials***

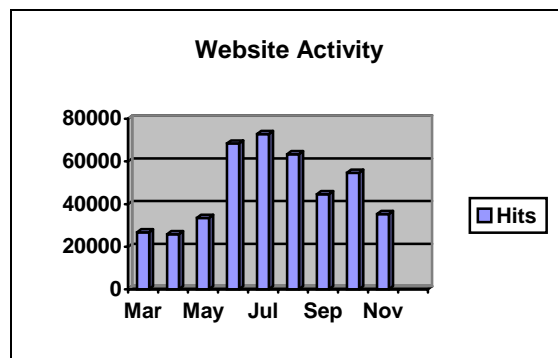
Over 100,000 bilingual brochures, handouts, posters and other informational materials have been distributed statewide.

### ***Website***

The CDFA developed and activated a website dedicated to Pierce's disease and the glassy-winged sharpshooter. Since its unveiling in March, the site has received over 500,000 hits. The site offers frequent updates on program activities, survey and regulation guidelines, treatment information, upcoming meetings and events, a host list, and other information.



In addition, the website provides an interactive interface that allows direct activity reporting by local entities.



## The Future

The program's outreach efforts will be expanded in 2001 to be more proactive in heightening awareness and will include the following elements:

### ***Local Training***

County outreach committees will be trained to effectively communicate messages in print and broadcast media.

### ***Updated Materials***

New materials, such as brochures, videos, posters, and presentations, will be developed and distributed to the public and stakeholders. Materials will be developed in various languages to address California's changing demographics.

### ***Media Guide***

A printed and online media guide will be developed containing key government, university and industry contacts to encourage factual reporting of developments in the Pierce's Disease Control Program.