

**Web Worm Infestation:** The web worms are creating an unsightly mess in our trees. Research shows that doing nothing may be as good an option as any, according to a local entomologist and the County Extension Agent. Although the webs look ugly, the trees are basically going to be OK. The caterpillars can eat a lot of foliage, but in a mature tree, it will grow back. In the past we have had the trees along the entrance sprayed, but as long as the trees in the neighborhood are infested, the caterpillars will return and re-infest a sprayed tree. For your trees, the following information is provided:

- If you spot the webs early, they'll be at the outer tips of branches. You can prune those tips away.
- If branches are too high to safely reach with loppers or shears, use a pole pruner – a saw blade on the end of a long handle.
- Watch out for power lines. Pole pruners with plastic shafts may be safer than aluminum ones.
- Don't stand on your tiptoes on the top step of a ladder just to reach a web. Remember, they're largely harmless.
- If webs are too big to prune away, poke holes in them using a long pole or a jet of water. This will expose the caterpillars to natural predators.
- If webs are located where you can spray them, try a "low-impact" pesticide, such as insecticidal soap, horticultural oil or a "Bt" product, made from the natural toxins produced by the bacteria *Bacillus thuringiensis*. These are available at garden centers.
- Pay attention to wind direction whenever spraying pesticides.
- Don't stand directly under a tree and spray straight up.

Due to the high number of trees which are infested in resident's yards, there are no plans to spray the trees along the entrance as they will continue to be infested from other trees. The right of way actually belongs to the City of Centerville and they will not spray for this infestation.