

Resources for landowners with myrtle rust

Care for and manage infected plants

You are not required to remove infected plants. You may leave the plant in place and monitor the progress of myrtle rust on the infected plant.

If you leave your plants, what happens to them will vary depending on the species, size, and their general health. Monitoring the progression of the disease on different myrtle species will be useful in determining resistant plants or individuals in the long-term.

Some myrtle plants, particularly larger, established trees, may be able to survive an initial infection. It's possible they will remain productive and continue to grow, flower, produce seed, and provide a home for other plants, birds, and insects.

We recommend you avoid heavy pruning during warm weather, if possible. Otherwise, it could encourage susceptible new growth.

Disposing of infected material securely

If you wish to remove infected myrtle plant material from your property, there are rules you must follow for its disposal:

- bury the infected material on site (at 50cm depth), or
- take the Myrtle rust infected material to a landfill or transfer station provided that it is securely enclosed in a sealed bag or other container during transport and is disposed as general waste (and **not** green waste).

Because myrtle rust is an unwanted organism in New Zealand, you are obliged to take care not to deliberately spread it. Under the Biosecurity Act, it is an offense to propagate myrtle rust.

If you decide to transport and dispose of myrtle rust infected plant material at landfills or transfer stations, you must comply with the conditions set out in the general permission granted by MPI's chief technical officer.

Read the permission conditions here: [Download MPI's permission document](#)

Advice on fungicide usage

No fungicide that specifically targets myrtle rust is available. MPI does not recommend the use of fungicide sprays to treat myrtle rust because:

- they require continuous applications
- in New Zealand conditions, they appear to only temporarily suppress the disease and its symptoms, rather than kill the disease
- they present potential environmental and health risks. They cannot be used near water or fruit and vegetable plants and can kill bees and other beneficial insects
- fungal rusts are well known for quickly developing resistance to fungicides. If this occurs, this may limit long-term abilities to suppress the disease in important places.