

# Spring is in the Air and so is a Plethora of Pollen

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Springtime is in the air in Citrus County with its glorious weather and plethora of green spaces. It is hard to imagine a better place to enjoy blossoming trees. This season is also characterized by copious amounts of yellow dust like pollen generated by these wonderful blossoming trees. What you may not know is that many of the trees generating the most

pollen are some of our favorites such as oaks, pines, wax myrtles, sweet gum and winged elm. The fine coat of yellow dust that seems to be everywhere can be problematic for people with allergies. Knowing the particulars on pollen can help residents cope with one of spring's challenges.

Pollen Particulars: Did you know that all flowering plants produce tiny, dust-like grains called pollen? These grains are produced by anthers, the male reproductive structure of the plant. Plant species that are insect pollinated do not need to produce large amounts of pollen because of the efficiency of insects in distributing pollen as they move among flowers. However, species that depend on wind for pollen dispersal must produce massive amounts of pollen since only a very small amount will actually reach female flowers in that species. Although pollen can be carried by the wind for long distances,



steps can be taken to minimize the effects of pollen around your home. The following practices can help:

- Plant female-bearing plants to reduce the amount of available pollen.
- Dry clothes in an automatic dryer rather than hanging them outside to avoid pollen collecting on clothing and being carried indoors.
- Restrict outdoor activities during days with high winds and low humidity.
- Shower after spending time outdoors to remove pollen from hair and skin.
- Use air filters and clean regularly, or run an air conditioner and change the air filter frequently.
- For those who are pollen sensitive, wear a dust mask when mowing the lawn, gardening, or raking leaves.

For more information, contact the Citrus County Extension at (352) 527-5700.

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