Hazardous Plants – Landscaping Stats and Facts

FACTS

Primary hazards and types of injuries associated with hazardous plants.

1. **Dermatitis and Skin Irritations**
    - **Giant Hogweed:** This plant's sap contains photosensitizing compounds that cause severe skin burns and blisters when exposed to sunlight.
    - **Wild Parsnip:** Similar to giant hogweed, wild parsnip can cause phytophotodermatitis.
1. **Respiratory Issues**
    - **Pollen Allergies:** Landscapers suffer from respiratory problems due to exposure to pollen from various plants.
    - **Toxic Plant Dust:** Handling or cutting certain plants can release dust or fine particles that irritate the respiratory tract.
1. **Eye Injuries**
    - **Sap Exposure:** Sap from certain plants like giant hogweed can cause severe irritation and even temporary or permanent blindness.
1. **Gastrointestinal Issues**
    - **Accidental Ingestion:** Accidental ingestion of toxic plant material can lead to nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and other gastrointestinal symptoms.
1. **Neurological Effects**
    - **Toxic Alkaloids:** Some plants contain alkaloids that

can affect the nervous system

STATS

- Poison Ivy, Oak, and Sumac contain an oily resin called urushiol, which can affect 85% of the population.
- Poisonous plants like poison ivy, poison oak, and poison sumac are common causes of dermatitis, affecting thousands of workers annually. These plants can cause severe allergic reactions and skin rashes.
- The American Academy of Dermatology estimates that 10-50 million Americans are affected by poison ivy annually, a significant portion of whom are landscapers.
- The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) highlights the risks associated with exposure to toxic plants, including skin irritation and respiratory issues.
- Poison ivy, giant hogweed, and wild parsnip are common hazardous plants in Canada, posing risks to landscapers who come into contact with them.