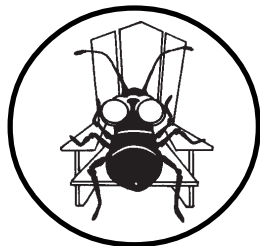


Weed Management in Winter



Pest Watch

The goal is to optimize turfgrass quality, since your best defense against weed encroachment is a dense, healthy turf.

Weed management does not take a vacation in the winter. Now is the time to reassess last year's weed management program, to plan this year's program, and to repair and calibrate your equipment. The following are some of the questions you must ask yourself.

Are there areas which are weedy each year? If so, why? Many turf areas are prone to weed invasion. Evaluate these sites to determine if anything can be done to improve turfgrass density and quality. Correct compacted soil conditions. Reroute traffic. Improve drainage in wet areas. Improve wetting and irrigation in dry areas. Are these areas frequently damaged by other turfgrass pests? Check soil pH and fertility. If site conditions cannot be improved you might consider overseeding (or re-seeding) with a more well adapted turfgrass species or variety. The goal is to optimize turfgrass quality, since your best defense against weed encroachment is a dense, healthy turf.

Are there areas which are not weedy? If there are areas with a history of very good turf density and quality and no weed problems, then you may skip the scheduled preemergent treatments and go to a postemergent program on an as needed basis.

What weeds escaped your current weed control program, and why? Escapes can result from incorrect herbicide selection, incorrect weed identification, improper rate or timing, misapplication, new germination following treatment, or from poor site conditions which favor weeds over

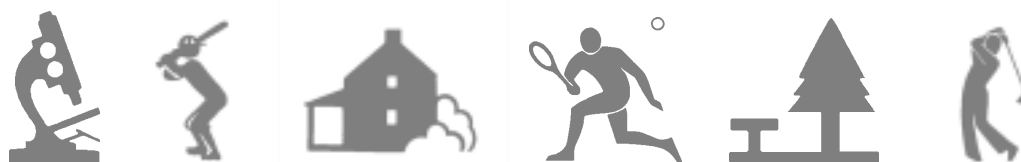
turf. Environmental conditions can affect herbicide performance. Unusually hot and dry, or cool and moist weather can shorten the length of residual control from preemergent herbicides and decrease the effectiveness of postemergent prod-



Now is the time to plan your weed control program.

ucts. If you had escapes, try to determine why. Then you will be able to plan for more effective measures this year. Can areas under your management be prioritized? Prioritize high visibility areas for more intensive and timely treatments. Lower priority areas may receive only spot treatments for tough-to-control weeds or may not require treatment this year. To make these decisions, the turf must be scouted and hot spots mapped. This is best done in the fall.

By asking and answering these questions, repairing and calibrating your equipment, and planning for the coming year, you should be able to improve upon your weed management program.



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