

Insect MANAGEMENT

TECHNICAL BULLETIN #7

Just what is Integrated Pest Management?



Some insects are relatively easy to control like the grub above. Others, however, can be very difficult or impossible to control until the following season, like the leaf miners inside the holly leaf below.



Although the term and the practice have been around for over 25 years, **Integrated Pest Management (IPM)** is often misunderstood. IPM is an efficient and economical approach to controlling pest problems that uses a full range of pest control tactics.

There are many forms of IPM in practice. It basically means that pest control is treated as a science rather than employing broadcast chemical treatments. True IPM includes the careful and targeted use of pesticides either in combination with other control methods, or when other methods don't work.

It doesn't make sense to try to be completely pest-free. That's because, besides being almost

impossible to achieve, the "eradication" approach requires a lot of pesticides. It also almost always destroys insects and bacteria that are not just beneficial but essential for good, long-term plant health.

Instead, we strive for pest control which is intelligent, efficient, economical and balanced. The following five IPM practices are the basis for achieving this goal.

1. Inspection: The lawn and landscape should be checked regularly for brown patches, wilted leaves, and other signs of insect activity. To do this right, we need to know what the pests look like and be able to recognize the type of damage they cause.

Points to remember about controlling insects

- Total "eradication" of insects is not practical or environmentally responsible.
- All landscapes have many insects present. Many are beneficial and even necessary for healthy growth.
- Treatment is only suggested when you have or are likely to have a "damaging population" of insects: one that is likely to cause significant plant damage or loss.
- Good watering and fertility of your plants help them resist attacks by damaging insects.





Inspection and evaluation are both valuable and important parts of a complete IPM program approach.

present, control treatments will also be recommended and should be applied in a timely fashion.

4. Prevention: This includes selecting plants or turf that normally are less likely to be attacked by insects in our area and also that will thrive and do well in your particular conditions of sun, shade, soil type and so on. Those good watering and mowing practices make a great deal of difference in prevention as well as in treatment, too.

5. Evaluation: With your help, we check how effective our program has been and decide if additional, or possibly different, efforts might be needed.

2. Identification: Once a pest is found, we have to be sure we know what kind it is. There are thousands of insect varieties, and many are beneficial. This step can be easy or hard. Grubs are easy to spot, while some types of wood boring insects can be a real puzzle at times. But good identification is the essential first step to good control.

3. Treatment: When treatment is necessary, we encourage you to use all the cultural tools available, including good watering, mowing and fertilization practices to help plants survive and recover from attacks. Often, if a large and damaging population of insects is

When large and damaging insect populations attack, timely treatment with control materials is critical to saving your valuable plants.



Checklist for better insect management

- Whenever possible, seek out and plant varieties that are more insect resistant.
- Make sure plants you want to install are well-suited to your site.
- Keep all your landscape plants and your lawn healthy with good watering and fertility practices.
- Look at your plants frequently. If you see serious damage, call. Early detection and treatment can make a big difference.

