

Turfgrass Pests



There are a variety of pests that add challenges to maintaining a healthy lawn. They include animals, diseases, insects, and weeds.

Most damage initiated by animals happens when they are digging for insects in the lawn. Raccoons, skunks and armadillos are the prime culprits.

Most diseases are caused by fungi, which are

actually small plants, and other disease organisms. They use the living tissue of desirable plants for their food.

Insects cause direct damage to plants by feeding on plant parts. They cause indirect damage when animals tear up the area seeking them for food. When insects eat too much, the plants die.

Weeds can be unsightly and they can crowd out desirable plants.

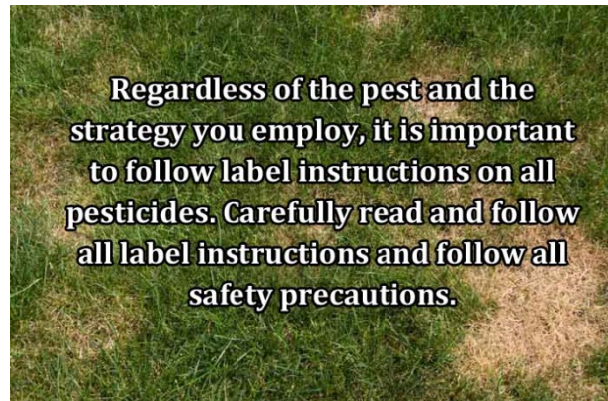
The first step in control is recognizing a problem and determining what pest is causing it. The next step is deciding if the pest is causing enough damage to warrant control. In small quantities, any of these pests are fairly inconsequential. In some cases the best course of action is to take no further steps.

If control is warranted, the next step is deciding the best control to use. These are the primary steps in what is known as Integrated Pest Management (IPM).

The best way to avoid pest damage is encouraging healthy grass plants. Whether these plants are in a lawn or other landscaped areas, used as a playing surface for a sport, or used for environmental protection or aesthetics along roadsides, if they are healthy they'll be less bothered by pests.

If a pest control is warranted there are usually several choices. They can include cultural or biological controls. They might include pesticides. These can be organic or synthetic.

When using any pesticide it is important to use it properly. Read the label and follow all instructions. This includes mixing the pesticide according to directions, following all safety precautions and applying it under the proper conditions.



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