



Good Turf Management Results in Low Pesticide Use

Stressed turf results in more disease. Grass areas may develop straw colored blighted appearances. It may cover large parts of a bluegrass landscape or be localized and produce a patchy appearance. Close examination will show leaves that have spots, bands or dieback from the tips. Common leafspot, dollar spot or *Ascochyta* leaf blight may be the causes singly or in combinations.

Disease Development

Compaction, low or excess nitrogen availability, close mowing, temperature extremes, frequent irrigation, rain and extended wet periods all favor development of turf diseases. Especially, practices or not readjusting sprinkler timers during rain periods contributes significantly to disease development. (How many times have you seen sprinklers going full blast during a rain!)

Frequent close mowing also favors disease development by making new sites for infections and by exposing grass crown to heat and drying.

Control

Under normal conditions, good cultural practices are considered sufficient to suppress severe grass disease development.

- Mow grass as necessary to maintain height, 2.5 to 3 inches during hot periods.
- Collect cuttings only when leaf diseases are severe, because fungi can produce spores on dead leaves.
- Water in morning or midday, deeply and as infrequently as possible without creating stress, use ET guidelines for irrigation and turn sprinklers off during rainy periods.
- Avoid excessive applications of nitrogen, which cause more growth, thus more tender leaf tissue that needs to be cut more often, hence more fresh infection sites!
- If severe disease develops, use fungicides only after getting an accurate diagnosis from your local Cooperative Extension, master gardener or turf professional

The bottom line is, do a good job and you will not have to resort to pesticides!