



Integrated Pest Management *Quick Tips*



Partnerships between golf courses and schools provide excellent opportunities for students to learn about the natural environment in various natural and controlled settings.

In Your Backyard

- Can you remember when you last sharpened your mower blades? If it's been a while, do your lawn a favor-- sharp blades will prevent tearing and injuring the grass and help to keep your lawn healthy.
- Check out your mowing height-- most mowers are set too low. Many turf grass species are healthiest when kept between 2 and 3 inches. Longer grass takes in more sunlight, grows thicker, shades weeds, and develops a deeper root system.
- When you mow, aim to only take off about one-third of the height of the grass blades. Scalping it lower won't necessarily mean you'll cut it less often-- it will just leave more clippings and highlight any bare spots.

At School

- Investigate! Find out what types of insect pests are problems at school and what treatment methods are used. You can then investigate with your students the life cycle and natural history of those insects.
- Try to identify what conditions at school create or exacerbate the problem. You may even be able to set up science experiments to test your theories about what attracts the insects. Your research may lead to habitat modifications or new solutions to bring the pest under control.

On the Golf Course

- Set thresholds! Follow these three steps to determine a threshold level for the insect and disease problems that regularly occur on your course:
 1. Decide how much aesthetic or economic damage can be tolerated.
 2. Find out how large the pest population can grow before it causes that level of damage.
 3. Establish treatment methods that keep the pest population small enough so that it doesn't cause an unacceptable level of damage.
- Monitoring regularly for insect and disease pressures and keeping an eye on weather conditions that favor the growth of problems will help you to establish reasonable threshold levels. It will also help you to take appropriate action at various stages of problem development.

At Corporate/Business Properties

- If you hire a landscape contractor to take care of your grounds, find out if they practice IPM. Ask whether they make regular chemical treatments to prevent problems or treat only when disease or insect threshold levels are exceeded. You can also ask them whether they assess underlying conditions that may cause insect, weed or disease problems. This may include poor drainage, improper watering, poor soil, excess thatch, or improper plant choices or placement. Some companies address these conditions, while others simply offer advice. If you have underlying problems, try to deal with them promptly. You'll save money and time in the long run if you do.

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