



Planning, Prevention and Spot Treatments Are Key to IPM

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DeBary Golf and Country Club

Our spraying program is most likely the same as most clubs. We have a limited budget so we have to use our pesticides wisely.

We start in November with the preparation of the budget. Without allocating the proper funding, it's hard to implement an IPM program.

We start with known expenses: Ronstar application for the roughs in March; limited Chipco Choice applications in May; Dursban bait application in early August and pre-emergent control for the overseeding in October. We try to assess the rest of the products we will need from last year's application records.

Our IPM program changes drastically from year to year, depending on how successful our efforts were the previous year. If we had good results from the Ronstar application in the roughs last year, we may only spot treat the roughs this year. The Chipco Choice worked so well last year in the fairways that this year we're treating the roughs instead.

These days we rarely put out a preventive fungicide treatment. The greens are scouted daily and we train employees to spot problems before they get out of hand.

When infestations are detected, other areas throughout the course are checked to see if we can treat just the infected greens or tees or if we should treat all 18.

The easiest program to implement was for sod webworms.

We have several greens that are checked regularly; we know that if these greens become a host, the rest are sure to follow. We try our hardest to limit pesticide applications as much as possible. With the owner's support of our programs, it's easier to endure some damage every now and then.

Spot-spraying is a vital part of our program. My assistant and I both have three sprayers mounted on our carts: one 15-gallon electric, one 2-gallon pump-up and

a 1-quart handheld sprayer.

We use the 15-gallon sprayers according to the season. In the spring we may have it loaded with Trimec to treat the hard-to-pull broadleaf weeds.

In the summer we may use a different mix each week: Roundup for the large landscape beds; MSMA for some crabgrass that made it past the Ronstar application; or some insecticide to treat a bunker face that has a few worms.

The 2-gallon sprayer is used for mole cricket control on the greens, using a mixture of 8 oz of Down-n-Thru and several drops of Oftanol to the 2 gallons of water. The mix is then injected into each burrow. We generally get 90 percent control and can keep the cricket damage to a minimum with both of us checking the greens weekly.

The 1-quart sprayer filled with 1 tablespoon of Sencor and dye as needed is our biggest asset. The goosegrass barely stands a chance with this mixture and one jug of Sencor has lasted four years.

We treat each plant with a small squirt and recheck the treated areas weekly for plants we may have missed during our daily routine. The dye helps to prevent treating the same plants twice and indicates which ones we may have missed the first time around.

For our large-scale broadcast applications we have a 120-gallon Broyhill sprayer mounted on a three-wheeled Cushman with a dry boom. We switch among three different nozzles depending on the application.

The Twinjet 8005 nozzles work great for contact fungicides and herbicides. The standard 8005 and 8006 flat fan nozzles fill our remaining requirements depending on the gallons per acre and the wind conditions.

The sprayer is calibrated before each use and fully rinsed after all applications. The rinsate is sprayed on the back of the driving range or in nearby landscape beds according to labeled uses.

Our chemical room is limited in size, so we try not to keep too much product. All shelving is steel and all dry formulations are stored above the liquids. There's a 4-inch lip built into the entrance of the room to prevent any spillage from escaping; a ventilation fan runs continuously.

Only three persons have access to our chemical storage area: the superintendent, assistant superintendent and the spraytech. The room is equipped with a self-locking door preventing it from accidentally being left open. All safety equipment is stored in the maintenance shop away from the chemical room.

Our spray records are kept in a 1-inch, 3-ring binder that is clearly marked for the current year. A new folder is made for each year and is colored differently to distinguish the year easily.

We keep the old folders in my office next to the MSDS file, which is a 5-inch thick, 3-ring binder.

We also keep a copy of C&P's *Turf and Ornamentals* handy in case we're missing any MSDS's. DTN now has MSDS's available on their system.

The DTN weather system service is a very important part of our program. It's nice to be able to glance at the radar to see if it's worth making an application. There's little point in spraying if it's going to rain in the near future.

We've been fighting nutsedge on our greens for several years by mainly hand spraying with Manage. The amount of time it took to monitor and hand spray each green became overwhelming. We decided to boom spray all 18 greens with the Manage last summer and the results have been outstanding. We may need one or two more applications to eradicate the weeds. We have seen no adverse effects on the bermudagrass.

Another outstanding product we incorporate into our spray program each year is Award Fire Ant Bait. We make two wall-to-wall applications, one in the spring and another in late summer. We have yet to have a problem with fire ants and rarely need to spot-treat mounds with powders or drenches.

Planning is a key to any IPM program, whether it's for budgeting purposes or scouting for problems. After working at DeBary for four years, it's easier to anticipate the seasonal pest problems and where those problems are going to occur. Longevity at a club helps to build a solid program and ensure its success. It's hard to plan for future problems if there is no history to build from.