

# Snow Mold Prevention Season

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Plans are underway for treating golf course greens, tees, many fairways and other areas within the next few weeks. Last winter's heavy snow accumulation was ideal for snow mold damage in much of the state, and we've received several inquiries concerning control suggestions. "Are there any changes from previous seasons?"

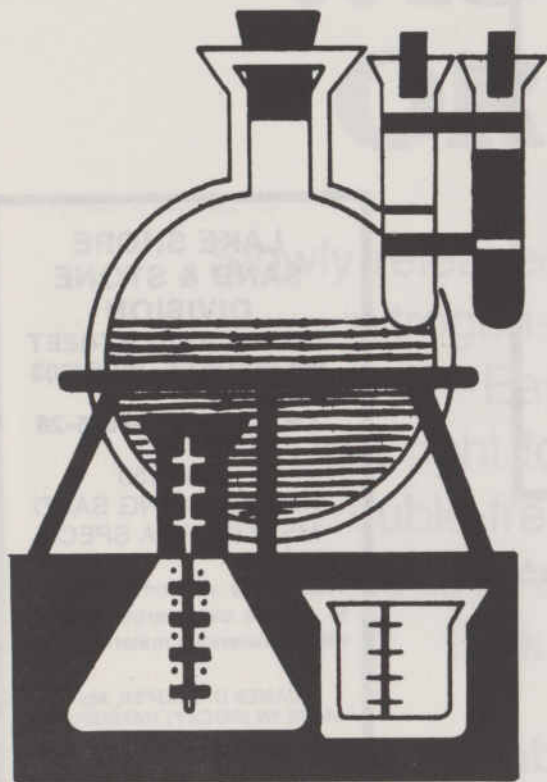


Our comments concerning snow mold control treatments are based upon a large number of trials conducted from 1970-1979, and from many visits with golf course superintendents and other observers. I shall first indicate what I believe to be the most dependable treatment options for Wisconsin greens and tees, and then offer some comments concerning them and snow mold control in general.

1. Treat for both gray snow molds (*Typhula*) and pink snow mold (*Fusarium*). The disease may occur singly — *Typhula* is the more common — but often they appear together as a complex. Some fungicides are effective or registered for only one or the other type of mold.
2. Combinations of chemicals have given us the most consistent results over the years where snow mold severity has been substantial. Moreover the combinations that have appeared best in the southern part of the state have not been the best in the north. Thus we offer the following suggestions:
  - a. for northern Wisconsin or areas with histories of very severe snow mold damage, combine an inorganic mercury (Calaclor or Calogran) with a formulation containing pentachloronitrobenzene, or PCNB (Actidione RZ, Lawn Disease Control, ProTurf 14-3-3-II (Terraclor or Turfcide). Most dependable results are achieved when a mid-October application of Danconil or PMA is applied, and a moderate summer disease control program is followed.

b. for less snow mold-intense areas, additional options exist. These include chloroneb (Fungicide II or Tersan SP) plus either PCNB or benzimidazole (such as Cleary's 3336, Duosan, Fungo 50 or Tersan 1991) or an inorganic mercury.

Success with single fungicides is also commonly achieved in the southern half of the state. In addition, newer fungicides such as triademefon (Bayleton), iprodione (Chipco 26019) and vinclozolin (Vorlan) carry registration for at least some snow molds.



My personal preferences from the many observations in southern Wisconsin is a minimum labeled rate combining inorganic mercury with chloroneb. The inorganic mercury provides traditional stability while the chloroneb softens and adds to mercurial activity. There is no value in going above minimal label rates when



combinations are used. Most of the benefit to be achieved comes from, say, 3 ounces of Calaclor and 6 ounces of Tersan 5P/1000 ft.<sup>2</sup>. In fact if budget pressures wouldn't permit me to use *both* of these products at the minimum labeled rate, I'd use 2 ounces + 4 ounces for virtually the same anticipated results. The additional product, if affordable, would simply make me sleep better!

I've not had personal opportunity to examine the newer products under heavy snow mold pressure. These are excellent summer disease control products, however, and my inclination is to reserve their use for that purpose, and reduce the possibility of encouraging resistant strains of summer disease organisms from developing by using these products during winter months.

Fairways are damaged by snow molds, too, and home lawns were hurt last year in some parts of the state. Control is more difficult because the mercurials are prohibited in these sites and costs also are a consideration. The cheapest product is PCNB — the most effective choice might be a combination of PCNB and chloroneb.

Don't forget the possibility of a "touch up" treatment next March when the snow goes off. And if you want to have a really fast start, apply 1/2 to 1 pound of nitrogen in November as a dormant application. We've not observed any snow mold increase from this, and if any should occur, recovery has been faster in the fertilized areas of our plots.

Here's hoping for a snow mold-free winter ahead! ■