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IPM: What Does It Really Mean?

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Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a decision making process that strives to make the best use of all available management tools, including cultural, biological, mechanical, environmental, and chemical methods. IPM is also known as Integrated Turfgrass Management, Best Management Practices, or plain old common sense.

Precise definitions of IPM vary, but most agree on the following as its goals. On the one hand, they are to minimize losses to pests, costs, negative environmental effects, negative effects on human health and pesticide resistance potential. On the other hand, they are to maximize cultural, mechanical and biological pest controls, the effectiveness of chemical pesticides, turf quality and populations of beneficial organisms.

Any decisions based on these criteria involve compromise, and will depend on factors such as pest pressure, weather, quality demands, and intended use of the area. Turfgrass managers therefore select distinct IPM practices in various settings and circumstances. As practitioners you know that IPM is diverse and cannot be applied according to "cookbook" recipes. A weed problem in August will be handled differ-

Photography courtesy of Jennifer A. Grant



IPM involves careful examination of developments in the turf

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