

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

By Roger Funk, Ph.D., Davey Tree Expert Co., Kent, Ohio

Q: We would like some information on Devrinol by Stauffer Chemical Company and growth retardants for ivy.

A: Devrinol (common name, napropamide) is a selective herbicide with an acute oral LD₅₀ greater than 5000 mg/kg. Devrinol, available as an emulsifiable concentrate (2-E), a wettable powder (50%) and as 10% granules, is labeled for the control of several grass and broadleaf weeds in orchards and vineyards. It is also effective for weed control in direct seeded tomatoes, strawberries, tobacco, and certain other crops. Read the label and check with your local extension agent for specific instructions in your area.

Q: Much has been written about insecticides and chinch bug controls. What are the procedures for repairing the damaged turf areas, basically on home lawns?

A: The simplest method of renovation would be to verticut the damaged area and seed with a compatible mixture or blend. The soil should be moist (but not wet) and verticutter adjusted to cut into the soil about 1/4 inch in order to provide the proper seed bed.

Q: I would like to know if there are any new methods to kill moles. Is chlordane still used?

A: I do not know of any new materials or methods to control or kill moles.

Chlordane was used to eliminate grubs, a primary food source for moles, but chlordane is no longer labeled for use on turf. Diazinon, Dursban and Proxol are currently labeled for grubs, but the timing of application is more critical than with chlordane because of the shorter residuals. Also, elimination of grubs is no guarantee that the moles will go away.

Other standard methods of mole control are traps, poison baits or fumigation. The most effective method probably is the use of the harpoon or choker traps. To find actively inhabited tunnels, raised sod should be rolled or trampled down. If the tunnels are raised the next day, a trap should be set in that place. Traps which are not "tripped" should be reset in another place daily. Gases have proven ineffective since gas will diffuse out of the tunnel through the thin layer of sod overhead. Poisoned baits are generally ignored by moles.

Q: Because of very hard water from our own well, the trees at our golf course become coated with a

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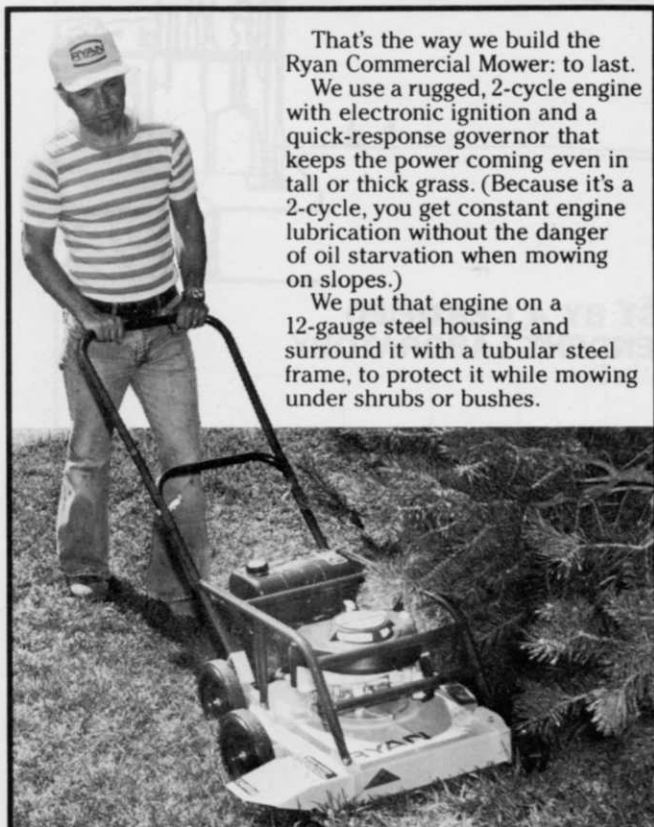
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white material which covers leaves, needles and trunks. This either chokes the trees to death or weakens them to a point that they grow very little.

Is there any chemical which I can put on the trees to eliminate this hard water deposit buildup?

A: Calcium deposits are extremely common where there is hard water. When the water dries, the calcium remains on the trees and shrubs.

I have not found an economical way to treat the large volume of water required in irrigating a golf course. The U.S. Department of Agriculture is conducting studies on desalting farm and range land which may provide answers for your problem; I suggest you contact the USDA office in your area.

Another branch of the government is working on utilization of sea (salt) water for irrigation. The same procedure could be used on your water; however, it presently does not appear to be economically feasible.

Q: Which chemical will prevent crabapples from falling off the tree? What time of year and how often should application be made?

A: Fruit trees are sometimes planted for shade in lawn or home garden areas, but the owner wishes to eliminate the fruit which normally becomes a problem. Unsprayed fruit will become wormy and rotten each year and drop before it matures. The undesirable fruit attracts bees, flies and other insects and makes additional problems in mowing and caring for the lawn.

The following chemicals are suggested for trial on apples and crabapples: naphthalene acetic acid and naphthalene acetamide. Apply according to the directions. Rates of 15-30 ppm have been suggested by one state experimental station. Apply the spray when trees are in full bloom; if the bloom period is prolonged, make a second application in 3-4 days.

Q: I am seriously considering starting my own lawn spray business. I have some experience in the field but need to get some answers, such as licensing required in Michigan. Also, any tips on starting my business would be much appreciated.

A: Since you are in Detroit, contact Carl Dollhopf, the regional supervisor, 1120 West State Fair, Detroit, Michigan 48203, phone (313) 368-2230. Unless the procedure has changed recently, it is as follows: 1) Apply for applicator certification tests, accompanied by fee; 2) Receive self-study guide; 3) Take test and, if passed, will receive certification number valid for three years; 4) Apply for company license, submitting fee, and for applicator's certification number. You must also submit proof of bonding (annual renewal).

Q: I would like to know about any products that inhibit growth on broadleaf evergreens such as privet, photinia and English laurel, used for hedges.

A: There are two plant growth retardants which have been commercially available for a number of years; both are labeled for a limited number of trees and shrubs. The products are maleic hydrazide, sold by Uniroyal, Inc., under the trade name Slo-Gro; and chlorflurenol, sold by U.S. Borax and Chemical Corporation, under the trade name Maintain CF-125.