

LANDSCAPE LOG

by the Editorial Advisory Board, *Weeds Trees & Turf* magazine

May work keys on summer protection

Seven experts willingly share their knowledge. Please write the magazine if there are specific areas of landscape management you would like to see addressed on a monthly basis.

Mid-Atlantic landscape managers begin preparing for summer heat stress in May. John Hall of VPI suggests raising mower cutting height beginning in May for cool-season grasses. He recommends aerification and verticutting for both cool- and warm-season grasses in May, followed by fertilization and application of postemergence herbicides for crabgrass where preemergence applications did not provide control. May is a good time to begin sprigging and sodding repairs to bermudagrass turf according to Hall.

Areas with a history of grub, cutworm, armyworm, billbug, or sod webworm should be sprayed in May. A second application of fungicides for leaf spot control may be needed.

Great Plains landscape managers should initiate fertilization of warm-season grasses and cool-season grasses which received a late-season fertilization the previous year. Broadleaf weed control should switch to postemergence herbicides no later than mid-May, says Bob Shearman of the University of Nebraska. Fungicide applications should be made for leaf spot, melting out, and stripe smut. Adult bluegrass billbugs may be controlled in May with insecticides.

Shearman recommends insecticide applications for scale crawlers on affected ornamentals in May, in addition to control of cankerworms, tent caterpillars, borers, and aphids.

Ornamental disease control should begin for black spot on roses and rust and scab of crabapples. Peonies should be sprayed with Bordeaux mix after flowers emerge.

Fertilize roses and spring flowering plants in May and prune them after they finish blooming.

Trees needing attention in May are pines for Diplodia tip blight and pine needle blight, junipers for Phomopsis blight, birch for bronze birch borer, and honeylocusts for insects.

Northeast landscape managers should concentrate on soil conditions in early May, says Martin Petrovic at Cornell. Dethatching, coring, pH control, light fertilization, and deep watering are important now.

In the northernmost portions of the Northeast pre-emergence herbicides are still being applied. In most areas, however, control has switched over to postemergence broadleaf herbicides.

Disease or insect prone areas should be watched closely for symptoms and damage. Leaf spot, dollar spot, stripe smut, and summer patch (hot weather Fusarium blight) are all possible in May. White grubs, chinch bugs, sod webworms, bluegrass billbugs, and hyperodes weevil are all problems at this time and may require treatment.

Deep watering and fertilization of trees and

shrubs are important in May says Petrovic. Narrow-leaved evergreens can be pruned in May.

Insects to control are aphids, birch leaf miner, dogwood borer, forest tent caterpillar, gypsy moth, and lilac borer. Diseases of trees and shrubs to control include fire blight, anthracnose, leaf blotch, and leaf spot.

In preparation for June work, order fungicides for pythium and brown patch of turf.

North Central landscape managers should have plans for annual beds finished and plants ordered for installation in May, says Doug Chapman of Dow Gardens. Transplanting of trees and shrubs should be limited to container and balled-and-burlapped plants.

If cool and wet conditions exist, apply sprays for apple scab and Phomopsis twig blight. Deciduous shrubs can be pruned immediately after flowering. Spray vulnerable stages of chewing and sucking insects.

Midwest landscape managers should follow tips for the Great Plains. Harry Niemczyk, Ohio State University turf entomologist, suggests attention to grub prevention and mite damage to turf. He says preventative treatment for chinchbugs and billbugs should be down by May 10.

Florida landscape managers have experienced a record dry winter says Bruce Augustin, extension turf and water specialist at the University of Florida. Water restrictions may be possible if rains don't occur before May.

Augustin suggests cutting heights for St. Augustine and bahiagrass be raised to 3 inches. Bermudagrass greens should not be cut lower than $\frac{3}{16}$ -inch warns Augustin. Verticutting and aerification are recommended for thatchy turf since recovery is fastest in warm temperatures.

Turf areas should receive $\frac{3}{4}$ -1-inch of water twice per week in May. Fertilization should be withheld until the rainy season begins in mid-June. Herbicides should be applied very cautiously if drought continues.

Chinchbugs are especially troublesome in May says Augustin. He recommends cautious use of organophosphate insecticides due to resistance problems.

Pruning of trees and shrubs to improve appearance and reduce wind resistance is appropriate in May.

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Editorial Advisory Board members are: **Bruce J. Augustin**, extension turf and water specialist, University of Florida, Fort Lauderdale, FL; **Douglas Chapman**, horticulturist/director, Dow Gardens, Midland, MI; **Jack Hall**, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA; **Kent Kurtz**, professor of horticulture, California Polytechnic Institute, Pomona, CA; **Harry Niemczyk**, professor of entomology, Ohio State University, Wooster, OH; **Martin Petrovic**, assistant professor of turfgrass science, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY; **Robert Shearman**, associate professor of turf, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE