

LANDSCAPE LOG

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

Healthy Plants' Drought Defense

Northeast Emphasis is clearly on insect and disease control in June. Pythium and summer patch are the primary disease concerns at this time according to Martin Petrovic. Sod webworm and bluegrass billbug are primary insect worries. Regular inspection of turf for damage from these pests is advised to halt destruction early.

Golf greens may require treatment for cutworms says Harry Niemczyk. Other problem insects may be greenbug aphids and chinchbugs.

Crabgrass control may actually include both postemergence and preemergence products in June. Second preemergence herbicide applications are still being made in some areas. Postemergence herbicides are most effective against young crabgrass, so waiting until July to make postemergence treatments may not be the best idea.

Summer fertilization should favor slow release products over quick release. Turf needs to be able to resist and recover from pest damage, but excessively lush turf invites diseases.

Irrigation should be timed for the morning and should be heavy and infrequent rather than light and frequent. Turf pathologist Dr. Joe Vargas is recommending daily, very light mid-day irrigation of dis-



Irrigation controllers are adjusted to weekly rainfall

ease-prone turf to provide a suitable environment for beneficial organisms in the thatch. Problems with irrigation systems should start to be apparent in June and should be corrected before summer stress increases.

Trees and shrubs also prefer deep watering. Insect-prone shrubs should be watched carefully for infestations of aphids, arbovitae leafminer, birch leafminer, black vine weevil, dogwood borer, cottony maple scale, bronze birch borer, leaf hopper, lilac borer, and wooly peach aphid.

Narrow-leaved evergreens can be pruned in June. Storm damaged plants can be removed and replaced

successfully with container-grown plants says Doug Chapman.

Great Plains—Bob Shearman recommends preventative treatments in June for summer patch (*Fusarium blight*), brown patch, and pythium blight. It is also time for second preemergence herbicide treatments and application of insecticides for bluegrass billbug and chinchbug where needed.

Annual flowers can be safely planted in June, rose fungicide sprays should continue, and insecticides used to control lilac borers, bagworms, and honeysuckle aphids.

Trees should be inspected and treated for elm leaf beetle, peach tree borer, sawflies, and bronze birch borer. Junipers may be treated with benomyl to control *Phomopsis* and with copper fungicides to control *Cercospora* twig blight. Pines may be sprayed with copper fungicides for needle blight.

Mid-Atlantic—Jack Hall recommends fertilization, aerification, verticutting, and irrigation of warm-season grasses in June. Sodding and sprigging are safely performed in June.

Cool-season turf has the extra worry of leaf spot, brown patch and *Fusarium* diseases in June.

Both cool and warm-season turf should receive application of postemergence herbicides for crabgrass and insecticides for sod webworm, billbug, and chinchbug control. A second, half-rate application of preemergence herbicide may be beneficial if extended summer crabgrass control is needed.

Florida enters the hurricane season in mid-June. Before the rains start, says Bruce Augustin, the soil is dry and irrigation is very important. Chinchbugs may take advantage of this dry, warm period to damage turf. The turf is growing rapidly.

When the rains begin in late June, diseases may become a concern. New plantings of St. Augustine are susceptible to gray leaf spot, and established warm-season grasses may become infected with brown patch and leaf spot. Heavy rainfall in late June may cause rapid leaching of fertilizers from sandy soil making extra fertilizer applications necessary.

Editorial Advisory Board members are: **Bruce J. Augustin**, extension turf and water specialist, University of Florida, Ft. Lauderdale, FL; **Douglas Chapman**, director and horticulturist, Dow Garden, Midland, MI; **Jack Hall**, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA; **Kent Kurtz**, professor, ornamental horticulture, Cal Poly, 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

