

ASK THE EXPERT

DR. BALAKRISHNA RAO

Surflan on grassy weeds

Problem: We have used Surflan to manage annual grassy weeds. In some situations we have had poor results. What do you think we may be doing wrong? How can we get better results with Surflan? (Virginia)

Solution: From your question it is not very clear whether you used Surflan as a pre-emergence material before the grassy weeds emerged or as a post-emergence herbicide to manage already established weeds.

Surflan is a selective pre-emergence herbicide for control of annual grasses and several broadleaved weeds. It does not work as a post-emergence herbicide.

If you have used Surflan as a pre-emergence herbicide and experienced variable results the following explanation might be helpful. Make sure that you are following good mixing procedures when tank mixing. Follow the guidelines given in the label while mixing Surflan alone or in combination with other materials. It is important to have agitation all through mixing as well as spraying. Without proper agitation Surflan may settle to the bottom of the sprayer tank. This could contribute to poor results. Surflan does not have to be incorporated. However, it should be watered in within 21 days with $\frac{1}{2}$ - to one-inch of water.

Read and follow label specifications for better results.

Locust tree seedlings in the lawn

Problem: Please advise on the best means to control locust tree seedlings that have invaded my lawn from my neighbors locust tree "jungle." (New Jersey)

Solution: Locust is extremely sensitive to triclopyr, which is contained in Turflon lawn herbicides.

Products containing 2,4-D would be less effective but could be used if triclopyr is not available. If the locust is a true seedling—that is, derived from seeds—there should be no injury to the parent tree. If, however, the locust is a root sucker, systemic herbicides such as triclopyr or 2,4-D may translocate to the parent tree and cause injury.

While the seedlings or suckers are very small, regular mowing can help manage the problem.

Read and follow label specifications for better results.

Pin oaks and pH

Problem: One of our clients wants to install a blacktop parking lot. In this area there are a number of large pin oak trees. They were interested in using limestone as a base underneath the blacktop cover. Our concern is this operation will increase the pH and cause nutrient deficiency. Since pin oaks are very sensitive to alkaline pH, we are interested in finding some solution to neutralize the limestone effect. Is there an easy method to deal with this problem? (Iowa)

Solution: Your concern of using limestone under a blacktop parking area and potential increase in pH causing nutrient deficiency is also a major concern to me.

Pin oaks are extremely sensitive to alkaline pH. Although reports indicate that limestone material can provide a better compacted and stronger base for parking lots, there is a potential for soil pH increase. Unfortunately, there is no "quick fix" solution or product to deal with the problem.

Sulfur or sulfur containing products may be used to lower the pH effect. However, our experience and research indicates that it would be impractical to lower the pH to a desirable (neutral) level without causing an adverse effect on plants.

Your best option is to suggest using river gravel as a base. In addition to this, provide good cultural practices such as watering, mulching, fertilizing and aerating to help improve plant health.

Provide pest management as needed.

Reader responses to past questions

What goes with black walnut?

The following are readers' comments regarding a question concerning what kinds of plants can be planted or grown within the root spread of black walnut trees (January 1993 LM):

"Please add Hosta to your list of plants growing under black walnut." Source: The Hosta Book: Making Sense of Gardening, by Paul Aden, Timber Press, Oregon.

On wolmanized wood

"The column in the July 1993 issue of LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT ran an item entitled "Defining Wolmanization."

The local lumber store representative badly misled you when you sought his answer to the question, resulting in an incorrect response.

The term is in fact a trade name for a particular brand of pressure-treated wood. There are many such trade names, including SupaTimber, which is offered by those who purchase chemicals from our company, Chemical Specialties, Inc. These brand names refer to wood that has been pressure treated with chromated copper arsenate (CCA), a wood preservative that is highly effective in deterring decay and insect attack.

Of further interest to your readers, a new wood preservative, ACQ, ammoniacal copper quaternary, is now on the market. It is just as effective as CCA but does not contain chrome or arsenic. This product is new, and is currently being marketed under the brand ACQ Preserve."

For more information, contact Chemical Specialties, Inc., One Woodlawn Green, Suite 250, Charlotte, NC 28217.

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Mail questions to "Ask the Expert," LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT, 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44130. Please allow two to three months for an answer to appear in the magazine.