



TICK ALERT II

Here comes a new tick-borne illness. HGE symptoms are more severe than Lyme disease, and they appear sooner.

by James E. Guyette
Contributing Editor

■ Landscape managers are being alerted by public health officials that another tick-borne illness is being carried by deer ticks. The symptoms are similar to Lyme disease, but the sickness strikes much sooner.

So far, the ailment has struck about 60 victims in New York, Minnesota and Wisconsin. However, it is difficult to diagnose—and there may be considerably more cases that have yet to be detected, according to Dr. Yasuko Rikihisa, a professor of veterinary microbiology at Ohio State University.

"The bacteria that cause the disease have not been isolated, and they can only be identified by DNA analysis of a victim's blood," she reports. "The disease has probably existed for years, but we just haven't known how to diagnose it."

The illness—human granulocytic ehrlichiosis (HGE)—attacks victims' white blood cells like a virus, causing the immune system to weaken, Rikihisa says. A weakened immune system makes people

susceptible to other illnesses. These secondary sicknesses are what have thus far claimed four lives in the United States.

"If you have been bitten by a tick and are experiencing flu-like symptoms that your doctor cannot diagnose, have the doctor check to see if it could be HGE," Rikihisa says. "Always be sure to tell a physician that you have been bitten by a tick if flu-like symptoms arise."

The bacteria involved are similar to types that have caused illnesses in animals for years, and a customer's pet stricken with these diseases can experience fever, depression, weight loss, bleeding and even death. The dog tick can be a carrier of this.

A person coming down with HGE will become sicker much sooner than someone suffering from Lyme disease, which is the nation's leading tick-borne illness. "Lyme disease is a chronic disease and it can be present in the body for weeks, months or even years before symptoms appear," says Rikihisa. "HGE is an acute disease occurring in the blood, so symptoms will show up much more quickly."

HGE, like Lyme disease, is easily treatable with antibiotics once it is diagnosed. The sooner HGE is spotted, the better chance there is of effective treatment before a secondary illness moves in.

Standard tick treatments will defeat the deer tick, and landscape managers and their clients are advised to check themselves for ticks when in tick-infested areas.

Environmental awards deadline is Oct. 31st

BURNSVILLE, Minn.—Closing date for the fourth annual Environmental Steward Awards is Oct 31, 1995, according to their four sponsors: Ciba Turf & Ornamental, Rain Bird, Jacobsen Division of Textron and Lebanon Turf Products.

Entry forms are available from any of the sponsors, program coordinator Ceres Communications or in the September issue of *Golf Course Management*, the monthly magazine of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

Awards are given in three categories: public, private and resort golf courses. One national winner is selected in each, and up to 24 regional winners are also chosen. Merit winners may be selected at the judges' discretion.

Last year, 31 superintendents received the awards, which were created to recognize work in protecting and enhancing local environments.

"Promoting environmental stewardship...is the primary reason we helped create the program, and that's one of its major functions," says Bill Liles of Ciba, one of the program's founders.

Dial One to try landscape again

LOS ANGELES—Dial One Inc., a property-care franchise operation, says it's ready to expand again.

Dial One says it's recruiting landscapers, plumbers, roofers, carpet cleaners and a wide variety of other established local contractors to join the franchisees now licensed under the Dial One name.

Dial One took off with a bang about 10 years ago but ran into trouble when it expanded too quickly. Its new management team, led by President and CEO Dennis Galloway, says the company has charted a course of controlled growth.

Dial One will enter the San Francisco/East Bay market early this fall. That model will then be used in other cities to build the network system into a national provider of multiple services for residential and commercial properties, says Galloway.

For more information: Dial One Inc., 1036 Taft Ave., Orange, CA 92665.