

ask the expert

BY BALAKRISHNA RAO

Chipco 26019 disappearing?

We heard from someone at a conference that Chipco 26019 will not be available in the future. Is this true?

— PENNSYLVANIA

What you heard is partially true. I learned from an Aventis Environmental Science representative that Chipco 26019 can still be used, except on home lawns. That means it is available in the year 2000 and can be used on golf courses, athletic fields and commercial sites. Only residential lawns are restricted. However, before purchasing and/or using Chipco 26019, make sure that the fungicide is labeled for use on your specific site to avoid any future legal problems.

Alternative chemical choices

At a recent conference, a speaker indicated that both Dursban and Diazinon might be discontinued or phased out for our lawn pest management. If it is true, what are the alternatives?

— OHIO

I believe what the speaker might have mentioned is that in the near future we may lose organophosphate products such as Dursban and Diazinon during the evaluation and re-registration process.

In the meantime, become familiar with newer products and different groups of chemistry. For example, some of the pyrethroids such as Talstar, Astro, Scinitar, and Deltagard should help manage surface insects like chinch bugs, billbugs and sod webworms.

Products such as Mach 2, Merit and Flagship would be good to manage white

grubs and a number of other chewing pests. For managing caterpillars, black cutworms, sod webworms and armyworms you can choose among a number of products such as Conserve, Talstar, Astro, etc.

Contact the manufacturer or dealer for pesticide labels and become familiar with the destructive pests and new products in the market. Then, make a timing chart of the pest activity period in your area. Afterward, choose a product that would provide broad spectrum management of pests at a given period with the recommended rates and frequency of application.

In my opinion, the objective should be to spot and treat with multiple target principles. The pest management program should be designed to obtain multiple pest control. If targeted properly, there will be superior control with a minimum exposure to a given pesticide and possible delay or elimination of resistance build-up to a given product.

Dutch elm disease

In the October 1999 issue of Landscape Management, you advised applying two inches of water per week to mature trees to avoid drought stress.

This raises the question: What area is the two inches to be applied over? What if under the tree, the area is covered by grass that gets daily watering?

— CALIFORNIA

I should have emphasized that the two inches of water needs to be applied once a week in a single application.

Soil is moistened from the surface downward as water is applied. In a typical landscape soil, each 0.2 inch of water ap-

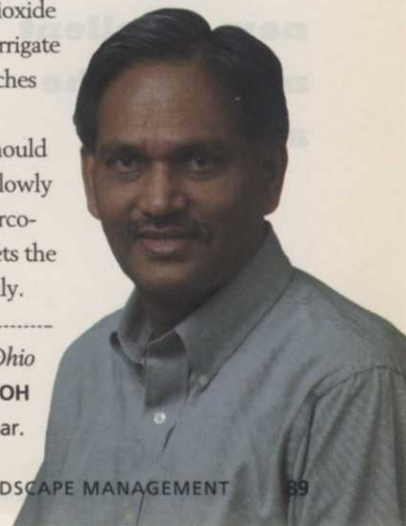
plied over the soil surface will moisten soil to a depth of about one inch. Applying two inches, then, would moisten soil to a depth of 10 inches. Most of the absorbing roots of trees are located within this soil profile.

The actual amount of water required to saturate soils to a depth of 10 inches will vary depending upon texture, density, infiltration and percolation rate, vegetation, temperature and prevailing winds. Because of the variety of contributing factors, it is difficult to generalize the amount and/or frequency of irrigation needed during drought. However, in a survey that we conducted in 1988, most extension and university researchers felt that two inches of water a week was sufficient. You can determine the specific amount of water needed in your situation by monitoring soil moisture content using moisture meters such as a Tensiometer.

Generally, tree roots are watered by irrigating the soil within the dripline area or one to two feet beyond. Because some tree species are sensitive to trunk decay, be sure to keep water away from the trunk.

If the area under the tree is covered with grass, periodically allow the turfgrass in this area to dry out to the point of slight wilting (you should be able to detect "foot printing"). This will improve gaseous exchange in the soil (oxygen in, carbon dioxide out). Then irrigate with two inches of water.

Water should be applied slowly so that it percolates and wets the soil uniformly.



Manager of Research and Technical Development for the Davey Tree Expert Co., Kent, Ohio

SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO: "Ask the Expert" Landscape Management; 7500 Old Oak Blvd.; Cleveland, OH 44130, or email: sgibson@advanstar.com. Please allow two to three months for an answer to appear.