

Our Commitment

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is an effective and environmentally sensitive approach to pest management that relies on a combination of common-sense practices. IPM programs use current and comprehensive information on the life cycles of pes

Prevention

The grounds crew takes preventative measures while managing the lawns, planting beds, natural areas, and hardscape surfaces to minimize the chance of pests becoming a risk.

1. Lawn Turf

- 1. Soil Testing) Comprehensive soil testing is used to determine what is currently present in existing soils and what may or may not need to be done to ensure healthy soils.
- 2. Fertilizer) In the past the fertilizer used was all categorized as synthetic. In 2019, the University of Illinois transitioned to treating all lawn turf using fertilizers that fit into the category called "bridge organic" products. "Bridge organic" products are comprised of all organic matter but may also contain "fertilizer". "Fertilizer" is used to extend the window of effectiveness.
- 3. Herbicide) Time released granular crabgrass and broadleaf weed control will be applied in the spring to prevent widespread invasion. We are currently pursuing organic weed control methods.
- 4. Mowing Height - Set mower decks to 3-4 inches height. A longer healthy lawn is proven to better compete with pests. The baseball outfield lawn may require a reduced mowing height.
- 5. Mowing Times - Lawns should be mowed when grass is dry whenever possible to avoid spreading turf diseases.
- 6. Mower Maintenance - Use sharp blades to reduce plant stress. Mower blades should be sharpened regularly.
- 7. Grass Clippings - Grass clippings will be left in place to degrade. This practice provides an organic source of nitrogen and additional organic matter. Grass clippings also provide a thatch layer that is beneficial if no greater than 1/2 inch. Thatch exceeding 1/2 inch will be removed when lawn is healthy and has the best chance to recover.
- 8. Aeration & Overseeding - Lawn areas are aerated and overseeded as necessary.

2. Planting Beds and Trees

- 1. Weed Removal) Low volume weed growth in planting beds are to be removed mechanically or by hand periodically to prevent major infestations.
- 2. Pruning) Shrubs and trees are to be pruned away from buildings and off the ground to allow proper air circulation.
- 3. Plant Selection) Plant material replaced or proposed shall be selected using our University of Illinois Recommended Plant List. Specific plant selection considerations include survivability, aesthetics, native selections, disease resistance and pollinator friendliness.

Control

If preventive procedures are no longer available or effective, the IPM programs evaluate proper control methods for risk and effectiveness. Effective but less risky herbicide control methods are selected first like mechanical removal. If the less risky controls aren't working through monitoring and action thresholds, then more pest control processes are to be employed. Applying of pesticides is the last resort.

- 1. Herbicide) Additional applications of herbicide will be determined by comparing monitoring results with threshold levels. Spot treating weeds using herbicide will be done during mid and late season and only as necessary to meet threshold level requirements.