

November 10, 2020

Review of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Plan
Athletic Fields
City of Pensacola

Since this is a living document, I like that it is at least a starting point. Any new plan will take some time to settle in and become perfected. My comments are listed below, based upon my experience with IPM through Extension.

Page 1 -Detection and Monitoring

Typically, IPM (from Extension) consists of the following steps:

- Prevent problems through sound cultural practices including proper water, fertilization, and placement of plants

- Monitor the area for signs of problems

- Decide if a problem requires action – is there a level of tolerance for the imperfect?

- Intervene using a non-toxic or least toxic approach

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention

- Return to monitoring if successful or decision making if not.

The City of Pensacola plan varies slightly in that it defaults to some type of treatment or appears to do so. Having said that, treatment could also mean an intervention, such as hand picking a problem away.

Step 3 – apply preventive methods to reduce the occurrence of pest problems –

Is “preventive methods” referring to cultural practices or treatment options? If it refers to cultural practice changes, I feel that should be specifically stated.

Page 2 - Preventive Measures and Treatment

Bullet 2- Physical: Other lawn problems: “...by pruning tree branches to minimize...”

This is an IPM document but since pruning is being referenced as a cultural practice method, does it need to be specified that reference to proper pruning techniques, including cut types, appropriate time of year, and minimizing damage or opportunity for disease to set will be conducted?

Bullet 3 – Cultural: the last sentence refers to watering “...during the summer before sunrise or after sunset to reduce...” It is never recommended to water after sunset because the water that remains on the turf will increase the likelihood of fungal growth. Based upon Extension recommendations, watering should always be performed at a time when the excess water can dry from the surface of the turf to reduce the opportunity for a fungal infection to set in.

Page 3 – Preventive Measures and Treatment (con't.)

Bullet 3 – Fertilization: there is no mention of proper fertilization timing. Generally, fertilizer is recommended between April 15 and October 15, to coincide with the rise and decline in soil temperature. Soil cooler than 70F, generally before April 15 and after October 15, is unable to make nitrogen available to the plants. Hence, it is a wasted product and wasted money when applied at the wrong time. Additionally, there is no mention of any state or federal regulations around the application of chemical fertilizers, although there is a general mentioned on page 4 regarding the application of pesticide and chemicals.

Page 4 – Preventive Measures and Treatment (con't.)

Chemical > Weeds – using vinegar will burn back the leaves, but generally does not kill the plant. This may result in bare patches in which the weed will regrow, or a new weed take hold faster than the turf is able to fill in.