

# Lawn Diseases Strike During Hot Weather

Little purple spots, rings of dead grass and lawn areas speckled with white powder are indications of lawn diseases, says Dr. J. M. Vargas, Michigan State University turfgrass pathologist.

Little purple spots on grass leaves are the first symptom of Helminthosporium leaf spot — a fungus disease that attacks Kentucky bluegrass and

red fescue during cool, moist weather.

According to Vargas, grass infected with leaf spot will begin to thin out in July or August when the disease reaches the crown and root system.

"Circles of dead grass with healthy green grass in the center are a good indication of powdery mildew, a fungus disease that attacks Kentucky bluegrass and

red fescue during cool, moist weather. The symptoms usually appear during dry periods, because infected plants have stunted root systems that can't stand drought.

Lawn areas that look like they have been sprinkled with flour or some other white, powdery substance are suffering from powdery mildew. It usually occurs in damp,

shaded bluegrass lawns. "Many bluegrass are especially susceptible," says Vargas.

"Helminthosporium leaf spot can be chemically controlled with Actidione, Thiram, Fore, or Daconil 2787," says Vargas. "Good management practices also help."

or two inches and removing the clippings can help check the disease. "In the Kentucky bluegrass, resistant varieties such as Merion, Nyking, Penstar and Nugget help avoid leaf spot," Vargas says. "For fusarium blight, Vargas recommends Benomyl (Tersan 1911). "Two to five applications give effective control in most situations," he says. "The first application should be made in late May or early June and other applications, as needed, should allow at two week intervals."

Use eight ounces of tenomyl with each eight allons of water (enough to cover about 1,000 square feet of lawn). "Apply the mixture and drench it into the root zone before it has a chance to dry in the foliage," says Vargas. "Fusarium blight can also be minimized by adequate watering and nitrogen fertilization," says Vargas.

Karathane or sulfur can be used to control powdery mildew, but applications have to be repeated every seven to 10 days. "The best bet is to sod or reseed badly infected areas with red fescue because it isn't susceptible to the disease," Vargas stresses. "A mixture of fescue and bluegrass will give you a nice looking, more disease resistant lawn."

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## Pick Best Polish For Your Floor

Floor polish protects a resilient floor from grit that might scratch the surface. It prolongs the life of the flooring and keeps it bright and shiny for many years.

Because there are so many floor care products on the market, the Better Floors Council makes these recommendations on how to select the right one:

Read the labels carefully to find out what each particular product is designed to do. There are finishes for white and light-colored floors that will not yellow; fast-drying clean-and-polish finishes; special ones that resist scuffing and finishes for areas where there is a slip hazard. Some are water solvent and some are water-resistant. The latter, also called "polymer" finishes, must be stripped more often. Some finishes contain naphtha and should not be used on asphalt tile floors you can always smell the naphtha.

On floors that have become worn and porous, such as old linoleum, you may need two coats to get a good gloss.

With finishes that both clean and polish, first sweep or vacuum carefully.

Apply finishes in as thin a coat as possible. Spread with a clean mop or cloth, using long, even strokes. Allow it to dry thoroughly before walking on the floor.

Accumulated coats should be periodically stripped — completely removed with a stripping solution — because they may yellow the flooring or become gummy and hold dirt. Once or twice a year is sufficient with water-based finishes. Polymer finishes should be removed after every three or four applications.

It is a good idea to follow the recommendations of tile manufacturers on all maintenance procedures. They do not always agree with the makers of floor finishes and cleaners.

## Yard Storage Survey Urged

Before building outdoor storage, a survey of present and future needs is important so the space won't become frustratingly inadequate.

A list of items to be stored, separated into tall, bulky, stackable and other categories, will help in planning the variety of cabinets and shelves needed. Checking code restrictions is recommended. Western-pines or cedar, Douglas fir and hemlock lumber, treated with a preservative where it contacts the ground, is suggested for building storage units.

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