

## Landscape Pest Control

Landscape pests come in many forms, from mites or aphids to gophers or deer. No matter their size or sparseness in number, all can take their toll on a landscape.

Ideally, the best way to avoid pest problems or keep them under control is to be pro-active. This is accomplished by keeping plant material from becoming stressed due to overly damp conditions, maintaining the needed sunlight for each plant species, removing dead wood from trees on a regular basis, maintaining good plant structure through proper pruning procedures, and fertilizing on a predetermined schedule.

Once a pest does become a nuisance, there are four principal control options: Biological, Cultural, Mechanical, and Chemical. A good rule would be to consider the first three control methods before chemical applications are used. If the problem can be corrected at a reasonable cost with one of these preferred methods, the need for repeated chemical applications can be eliminated.

The following are brief descriptions of how the different control options work. Biological control involves identifying a predator to the pest and introducing it into the environment. Cultural control is the use of plants that are resistant to a known pest. Mechanical control is physically removing the infected parts of a plant.

Chemical control is the use of an approved chemical to control a specific pest for which the chemical's label identifies. These pesticides come in a liquid or granular form and are either applied directly to the pest for immediate results or they are applied systemically to control an ongoing problem or expected re-occurring season infestation.

It is clear that the best and most cost efficient method to control pests is to be pro-active. JPA is available to discuss these control options for use in your landscape.



# Fall Landscaping Punch List

## Organic Fertilizer

Apply on shrubs and ground cover to increase plant vigor.

## Weed Control

Apply pre-emergent to turf and groundcover.

## Color Beds

Place your Winter color order now. It is also the time to have bulbs planted. For small special areas in the community, bulbs are a cost effective way of providing color during the Winter months year after year.

## Outdoor Lighting

Check all outside lighting, especially in parking areas and dark corners. Clocks get turned back on October 29<sup>th</sup> and it may be dark for people returning home from work.

## Concrete Replacement

This is a good time of year to remove trip hazards. The rain season hasn't started yet and children (aka concrete artists) are in school.

## Irrigation

Install water conserving rain sensors. This is an effective way of controlling water usage when precipitation and automated irrigations systems overlap.

## What is Thatch?

As the horizontal stems of turf above ground (stolons) die, they, along with un-decomposed leaves and blades of grass, form thatch. This interlaced layer of organic matter accumulates on the soil's surface and is resistant to decay.

A certain amount of thatch—½" deep is beneficial since it reduces evaporation, protects the lawn from wear, and can keep soil temperatures cool. In excess, however, thatch build-up can prevent water, air, and fertilizers from reaching soil, can become saturated interfering with drainage, and can raise the turf height in relationship to the fixed elevation of the sprinklers resulting in poor coverage.

To solve the problem of thatch build-up, the thatch must be removed and the area then over seeded. This is done with vertical blades that slice through the dense mass and drag it in clumps to the surface. The best time to do this is, now, in the cooler climate of fall. Along with resolving the adverse conditions listed above, the removal of thatch will also encourage new grass growth and promote healthy, vigorous turf.

If you have any questions, or would like to get more information about getting your turf de-thatched, please call or email us at: [info@JPALandscape.com](mailto:info@JPALandscape.com).



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