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Battle The Grubs Now!

White grubs feed on grass roots, causing the grass to thin, yellow, and die. As a result, white grub damage results in irregular shaped areas of weakened or dying turfgrass that increases in size overtime. Heavily infested grass can be easily removed, since the root system was eaten.

Before treating, lawns should be inspected to determine the presence of an infestation. In order to inspect an area, soil sections 3 to 4 inches deep should be taken randomly to total one square foot for every 1000 square foot infested area. If more than 5 white grubs are found within this square foot, then treatment should be applied. Insecticides should only be applied if a grub worm infestation exists in your lawn, since unnecessary use of insecticides can cause insect resistance and harm to beneficial organisms. For the DFW metroplex, optimal treatment time is in late July to early August.

Some Treatment Options:

Non-Chemical Control Options:

For prevention of grub worm infestation, keep turfgrass healthy. This will not guarantee a lawn to be grub-free, but healthy turf will suffer less damage than poorly maintained turf.

Several non-chemical treatments are available for controlling white grubs, such as beneficial nematodes. Some examples are in the genera *Steinernema* and *Heterorhabditis*, which can be purchased in stores or through garden supply catalogs. One-quarter inch of water should be applied before and after nematodes have been sprayed onto the lawn to allow contact with the grub worms.

Chemical Control Options:

Imidacloprid, halofenozide, and clothianidin are some chemical options that should be applied before extensive grub worm damage is seen, since they are effective on smaller grub worms. Lambda-cyhalothrin and trichlorfon are some examples of chemicals used after larger grub worms are detect. Before treating with an insecticide, water should be applied to encourage the grub worms to the soil surface and allow the

insecticides to penetrate through the soil. Also water should be applied after treating to allow the insecticide to reach the root zone. If using a liquid insecticide, ½ to 1 inch of water should be applied. If using a granular insecticide, water should be applied within 24 hours. Application of water should occur slowly, in order to avoid runoff.



Photo of grub worm by Wizzie Brown, Program Specialist-Urban IPM, Travis County.