



# *Healthy lawns, Healthy families*



*A new generation of accredited lawn care practitioners,  
committed to keeping your lawn healthy, is finding big success —  
in a way that is responsible to the environment. This is the story ...*

IPM accredited lawn care professionals:

# “We believe in practices that promote plant health and pest resistance.”

“Our efforts are audited to ensure proper horticultural and control procedures.”

A new initiative by lawn care professionals is providing healthier lawns for Canadians. It is called Integrated Pest Management. Beyond healthier lawns, the result is a healthier lifestyle for families and a healthier environment for all.

#### What is Integrated Pest Management?

IPM is a multidisciplinary, ecological approach to the management of plant health problems based **first** on good horticultural practices, and when needed, a control (biological, cultural, genetic or mechanical), using chemical treatments only when necessary. IPM operates within a framework of protecting human health, respect for the diversity of ecosystems and the protection of the environment. IPM aims to reduce and control the populations of harmful organisms, rather than to eradicate them.

Diagnosis and evaluation are crucial to an Integrated Pest Management program. Treatments are conducted only when the need arises to deal with a specific problem.

IPM's goal is to obtain the facts on damaging pests (insects, diseases or weeds) and apply management techniques to effectively suppress those pests.

IPM is the only scientifically recognized method to manage harmful and problematic organisms while advocating caution when using pesticides and other controls.



#### How can I see that IPM is used on my property?

IPM accreditation requires ongoing education, testing, record keeping and a commitment to follow the *IPM Code of Practice* (see page 7). Compliance is achieved through strict, annual third-party audits. Only those who meet the standards may use the IPM logo.

The best way to implement a successful IPM program on your property is through the help of an IPM accredited professional. Look for the IPM logo, and enjoy a healthier environment.



## How does IPM work?

The following explanation is from Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA). The IPM Accreditation program follows this agency's guidelines to help Canadians achieve healthier lawns. Originally developed for agriculture, IPM is now used in turf care and other horticultural fields, as well as indoor pest control. More information on the Agency's work is available at [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pmra-arla](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pmra-arla).

### IPM practitioners:

- **Manage** landscapes to prevent pests from becoming a threat;
- **Identify** potential pests (weeds, diseases and insects);
- **Monitor** environmental conditions, pest and beneficial organism populations and pest damage;
- **Decide whether treatment is needed** on the basis of population and damage thresholds;
- **Use biological, mechanical, and behavioural control** methods (such as resistant plant varieties, physical barriers and traps) to reduce pest populations to acceptable levels;
- When necessary, **use targeted applications** of pesticides; and,
- Have a built-in **evaluation** process.

By ensuring that pesticide applications are warranted, well-timed and performed in concert with other management practices, IPM can greatly minimize any risk to health or the environment. It can also extend the useful life span of a pesticide by delaying the development of resistance.



# Why turfgrass is important, and how good care improves your lawn.



## Benefits of lawns in our urban areas

Turfgrass provides health benefits and protects the environment. These benefits cannot be overlooked in an overall lawn care program:

- **Enviro-therapy:** turf grass controls soil erosion caused by water and wind.
- **Oxygen-therapy:** a 2,500 square-foot lawn provides enough oxygen to meet the needs of a family of four for a year.
- **Allergy relief:** green lawns reduce dust and pollen problems in areas near homes, schools, and downtown cores.
- **Aroma therapy:** turf grass purifies polluted air, reducing the carbon dioxide load and replenishing oxygen.
- **Soothing sounds:** lawns reduce noise levels by up to 30 percent.
- **Soothing temperature:** the front lawns of a block of eight houses have the cooling effect of 70 tons of air conditioning.
- **Water purification:** lawns preserve and enhance the quality of surface and ground water.
- **Physical therapy:** healthy turf provides a superlative field for sports, offering prime playability while reducing injuries.
- **Financial benefit:** attractive lawns increase the market value of properties.
- **Morale:** lawns reduce the stress of urban life and crowding.

## Benefits of good cultural practices for your lawn

**Lawn health depends on good cultural practices. These include proper soil, mowing, watering, aeration, dethatching, top dressing and overseeding. Here are a few tips for effective lawn maintenance:**

### Soil

Good soil is the foundation of all plant health. Ensure that you have at least 12 inches of good quality soil base before seeding or sodding.

### Mowing

Turfgrass can be mown repeatedly because its growing point is below the mowing height. However, over-mowing will deplete the plant. The mowing schedule should be flexible and dictated by grass growth.

The ideal mowing height for a lawn during summer is 6 to 9 cm (2½ to 3½ inches). This encourages deep rooting, making the lawn less sensitive to lack of water or winter frost.

Mower blades should be kept sharp to get a clean cut and allow the leaves to heal quickly. Poorly sharpened blades give a lawn a ragged look. Grass clippings should be left on the lawn, as they contribute organic matter and nutrients.

### Watering

A lawn needs approximately 2.5 cm (one inch) of water per week to remain healthy. This amount of water should be given in one deep, heavy watering, rather than several light sprinklings. Like mowing, watering contributes to the development of deep roots.

### Aeration

This is a critical cultural practice in lawn maintenance. Core aeration punctures the topsoil and relieves soil compaction. More than one aeration can be performed each season. However, even if the soil isn't compacted one aeration per year can promote deeper roots and improve water and nutrient penetration. Ideal times include spring or at the end of the summer, when roots are actively growing.

### Fertilizers

Like gardens, trees and flowers, grass needs to be fed. Plants need different elements for growth and development. They get these elements from fertilizers and from organic matter decomposing in the soil. These elements include those known as major elements, such as nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and potassium (K). In fertilizers, you also find such secondary elements as calcium and minor elements such as iron, boron and zinc.

**The information given above is the foundation of a healthy lawn care program. A thick, healthy lawn can aggressively compete against most weeds, light insect infestations and disease. Your IPM professional can recommend and explain management practices every step of the way.**



Pesticides used on our lawns:

# Are they safe?



Few people realize that just like lawn care pesticides, products designed to control harmful bacteria, fungi, and viruses in private and public swimming pools are pesticides as well. Both are regulated under the same Pest Control Products Act, a federal statute. Only products that pose no unacceptable risks to health or the environment of Canadians are accepted for registration in Canada.

### Did you know...?

That the majority of pesticides are used in agriculture? In fact, farm producers buy 96 percent of pesticides sold in most areas. Less than one percent of all pesticides sold are used for lawn care.

### Is pesticide use regulated?

Pesticides are carefully regulated in Canada through a program of premarket scientific assessment, enforcement, education, and information dissemination. The Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) of Health Canada has the mandate to protect human health, safety, and the environment by minimizing risks associated with pesticides, while providing Canadians access to the pest management tools they require for agriculture, forestry, industry and personal use.

Canada has a long-standing history of implementing the precautionary approach in science-based programs of health and safety, environmental protection and natural resources conservation. For further information contact the PMRA at 1-800-267-6315 or online at [www.healthylawns.net](http://www.healthylawns.net) and [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pmra-arla](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pmra-arla).

### What qualifications must commercial pesticide applicators have in order to apply pesticides?

Only technicians who are licenced or certified can perform pesticide treatments. Further, all purchase and application records for pesticides will be subject to third party audits under the IPM-PHC Council mandate.



The details:

## Integrated Pest Management Code of Practice



This Code spells out exactly how your accredited lawn care company will approach your lawn's health challenges. It has earned IPM accreditation by agreeing to follow these practices.

Each practitioner's accreditation is kept current through

- testing
- continuing education
- required record-keeping and
- strict audits.

**Keep this Code for reference, and remember: Choosing an IPM accredited company to manage your property will help spark a healthy glow in your lawn, your family and your world.**

## IPM Code of Practice

### IPM accredited companies and organizations will:

- 1 **Agree** to follow the *IPM Code of Practice*.
  - 2 **Focus** their businesses on the promotion and implementation of cultural practices such as using optimum soil depth and quality, suitable turf varieties, over-seeding, proper mowing heights, watering, fertilizing, aeration and de-thatching as components for maintaining healthy lawns and preventing pest problems.
  - 3 **Encourage, educate** and **solicit** the assistance of the property owner/manager in ensuring that optimum cultural practices are followed.
  - 4 **Monitor** customers' lawns for pest infestation at regular intervals, maintain a log of observations and provide the collected monitoring data in support of a province-wide monitoring network and database. This information will be relayed to a provincial monitoring database every two weeks from March to November.
- Support** the principles of Integrated Pest Management as defined by Health Canada:  
**Integrated Pest Management or IPM "is a decision-making process that uses all necessary techniques to suppress pests effectively, economically and in an environmentally sound manner to sustain healthy landscapes."**
- 5 **The elements of IPM include:**
    - Identifying potential pest organisms
    - Monitoring pest and beneficial organism populations, pest damage, and environmental conditions
    - Managing ecosystems to prevent organisms from becoming pests
    - Managing pest populations using strategies that combine biological, cultural, mechanical, behavioural, and when necessary, chemical control
  - 6 **Support** mandatory IPM re-certification for all licensed employees.
  - 7 **Document** pesticide reduction and pesticide alternative strategies through IPM and agree to monitor and keep records of pesticide use (active ingredient per square metre) for audit purposes.
  - 8 **Offer** a pesticide-free alternative to customers who choose not to use pesticides.
  - 9 **Not apply** pesticides unnecessarily.
  - 10 **Not sell** programs that are based on numerous pesticide applications, but rather encourage programs based on IPM-PHC.
  - 11 **Use** pesticides **only** after rigorous examination (monitoring) and diagnosing, and in combination with additional horticultural measures.
  - 12 **Prepare** all sites for proper application; *i.e.* remove items from the lawn, *etc.*
  - 13 **Apply** treatments that are properly timed to maximize effectiveness. Preventative treatments are discouraged and will only be used based on pest history as locally monitored. A province-wide monitoring system will also be utilized.
  - 14 **Utilize spot treatments** for the control of weeds and insects. Blanket applications are only used if warranted.
  - 15 **Implement** an effective staff training and safety procedure.
  - 16 **Apply** pesticides **only** to **target** areas.
  - 17 **Implement buffer zones** (where necessary) when making applications adjacent to sensitive sites.

IPM-PHC Council, [www.planthealthcare.ca](http://www.planthealthcare.ca), (905) 875-1805



# *The IPM-PHC Council*

*The following organizations are committed to cooperation in promoting IPM strategies, and comprise the IPM-PHC Council:*

**Crop Protection Institute of Canada**

**Environmental Coalition of Ontario**

**Hydro One**

**International Society of Arboriculture**

**Landscape Ontario Horticultural Trades Association**

**Ontario Golf Superintendents Association**

**Ontario Parks Association**

**Ontario Vegetation Management Association**

**Professional Lawn Care Association of America**

**Professional Lawn Care Association of Ontario**

**Sports Turf Association**

**Structural Pest Management Association of Ontario**

**Urban Pest Management Council**

*Technical Advisors:*

**University of Guelph Turfgrass Institute**

**Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs**

Courtesy of

***Questions or comments?***

Please visit [www.planthealthcare.ca](http://www.planthealthcare.ca) or contact the IPM-PHC Council at (905) 875-1805