



Late Season Dollar Spot

For the last few weeks, we have had weather conditions that are usually associated with fall. These include cool evenings with heavy dew, and warm days. Such conditions are conducive to growing healthy turfgrass. Right now, unprotected turfgrass may be showing the symptoms and signs of dollar spot. Remember, a symptom is the plant's response to disease (e.g., white leaf blades) and a sign is the observed fungal structure (e.g., white mycelia). On longer-cut fairway turfgrass, the dollar spots are large, coalescing and producing white, fluffy mycelia on the leading edge of the spot.

The late season surge of dollar spot can have a devastating effect on turfgrass because its onset can seem quite sudden. However, the pathogen has been reproducing and creating new foci all summer. At some point in the fall, a warm, humid day can cause a tee or fairway to "light up" with new dollar spot activity. These events are commonly observed from September to Thanksgiving, and as late as November in the Windsor area.

Why is late season dollar spot a problem if winter is just around the corner? Two reasons. The first is because dollar spot is a "perennial disease". The fungus overwinters as stroma on infected turfgrass and therefore, it starts growth in the same area as it was residing the previous fall. The second reason is because the dead turfgrass scars of late season dollar spot will remain in the spring. These areas will either grow in with new grass, or it will be replaced with weeds. In one memorable case, the uncontrolled dollar spot scars were infested with new dandelions. Preventative treatment of dollar spot would have saved an application of herbicide and there would be no need to re-establish void areas with new grass plants.

To control dollar spot this time of year, continue your program of 30 mL of Banner MAXX + 115 g Daconil Ultrex per 100 m² for 14-21 days of control. Daconil Ultrex alone controls dollar spot when used at 115 g/100 m², as does Senator 70 WSB used at 25 - 30 g/100 m². Using Banner MAXX alone at 51 mL/100 m² will resolve existing dollar spots, offer dollar spot protection for 21-28 days, and will also prevent Fusarium patch if the weather becomes cool and wet within 30 days of the application.

Sincerely,
Marie Thorne

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