

Your Yard

Don't Let Pests Ruin Your Time Outdoors Or Your Lawn

(NAPS)—The tough economy is forcing many of us to stay home more often to save money. That means more time in the backyard.

“We may rediscover our backyards for activities such as get-togethers, lawn games or just relaxing,” says Bayer Advanced garden expert Lance Walheim, author of “Lawn Care for Dummies.”

But the warmer weather can bring out bugs that can bite.

- Ticks can attach themselves to you or your pets and feed on blood. Bites can cause mild skin irritation or even transmit Lyme disease or Rocky Mountain spotted fever.

- Fleas can make your dog or cat scratch and can cause skin irritation, severe allergic reactions, anemia and tapeworms.

- Chiggers like to bite people and pets and can cause annoying, itchy red bumps.

There are also insects that attack your lawn and can cost you money if left unchecked, such as armyworms, mole crickets, European crane flies and grubs.

“You can save time by checking your lawn for damage while you’re out cutting the grass,” says Walheim.

Here are some warning signs:

- Armyworms cause arcs or circles of dead, brown grass.

- Mole crickets cause thinning or torn-up grass that dries up or turns brown.

- European crane fly larvae cause bare spots or yellow patches in your lawn because they feed on the roots from underground.

- Grubs eat grass roots, too. Symptoms include brown patches,



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and in extreme cases, you can lift up your grass like a blanket.

Bayer Advanced™ Complete Insect Killer for Soil & Turf (bayeradvanced.com) is a do-it-yourself solution that comes in a liquid (concentrate or ready-to-spray) or a granular form applied with a spreader. The exclusive formula combines two targeted chemistries that kill surface insects in 24 hours and kill underground insects for up to three months. Always read and follow label directions. (This product isn't registered in Long Island, New York.)

Here are other helpful tips that will reduce the chances of insect damage. Mow higher. Water deeply, six inches or more. Be sure to fertilize. Warm-season grasses, such as Bermuda or St. Augustine, require fertilization in late spring. Cool-season grasses, such as Kentucky bluegrass and tall fescue, need to be fertilized in the fall. If you see a problem, attack it fast. It'll save you time and money.