



Living Water

Lawn & Tree Care



Necrotic Ring Spot & Summer Patch Fact Sheet

Both Necrotic Ring Spot and Summer Patch belong to a complex group of diseases known as Fusarium blight. However, Necrotic Ring Spot is prevalent in spring and fall, in contrast to Summer patch, which is a warm to hot weather disease. These diseases become severe when the lawn is under stress. They may present a recurring problem which scars the turf, leaving unattractive areas in the lawn. Both diseases cause somewhat circular patches of dead grass with a spot of living turf in the center, giving a "frog eye" or "doughnut shaped" look.

Typically, scattered light green patches about 2" to 6" in diameter appear. These patches enlarge and then rapidly fade to reddish-brown and finally, straw colored. Healthy grass in the center gives the frog-eye appearance. Serious damage occurs when rings are numerous and overlap. They may also increase in size for several years.

Necrotic Ring Spot - This disease is particularly damaging to Kentucky bluegrass sod, which is 2 to 4 years old. Shaded areas of lawns are especially vulnerable. Symptoms become more evident following a hot, dry period.

Summer Patch - This disease is primarily associated with established Kentucky bluegrass growing in full sunlight. Summer Patch occurs during periods of sustained high temperatures which follow periods of ample moisture. Symptoms will become more evident following hot, dry conditions.

PRACTICES FOR CONTROL

1. Application of a specialized fungicide is available in three applications throughout the season to aid in the control of this disease. For best results treatment should begin in April or May.
2. Proper fertilization and sulfur is vital for the lawn. Several seasonal fertilizations containing sulfur are beneficial to lawns with Necrotic Ring or Summer Patch. Organic fertilizers provide a better suppression of this disease compared with regular fertilizers.
3. Aeration will remove excessive thatch which harbors the fungi and should be done prior to the application of fungicides.

CULTURAL PRACTICES FOR CONTROL

1. Conduct proper watering practices to keep the lawn from going into a stressful condition or into dormancy.
2. Maintain adequate moisture on south and west facing sunny slopes and lawn areas next to sidewalks or driveways which dry out faster and have higher soil temperatures than other lawn areas. Use soaker hoses or cycle sprinkler systems to avoid run-off. Water early in the morning so that the lawn will dry before dusk.
3. Maintain a mowing height of 2" to 3" and remove no more than 1/3 of the leaf blade.
4. Select sod from a quality grower who plants lawn grass varieties which are resistant to Necrotic Ring Spot and Summer Patch.
5. Overseed scarred areas with seeds which are resistant to these diseases.

Give us a call at 1-800-LAWNCARE if you have any questions.