

TURF TWISTERS

MILD WINTERS

Question: We have had a very mild winter to date and I've been told if the ground doesn't freeze before the snow flies, snow mold incidence will be more severe than normal. (Massachusetts)

Answer: Very true, so be sure to apply your preventive treatment to minimize damage. Snow mold fungi seem to thrive when snow or ice lays over unfrozen ground. The resultant soil line temperatures seem to be ideal for maximum fungal growth.

ICY WALKS

Question: Around the clubhouse, I have an extensive sidewalk system which is surrounded by bluegrass turf, shrubs, and flower beds. Is there anything I can use to melt the ice on them and not damage the vegetation with salt? (New York)

Answer: Yes! You can sprinkle the sidewalk with a urea-form fertilizer or any dark organic fertilizer. This will melt the ice, plus, it will give your turf, shrubs, and flowers a good start in the spring.

SALTY GRASSES

Question: Do turfgrasses vary in their salt tolerance? (Arizona)

Answer: They certainly do! Work by Dr. V. Youngner at the University of California at Riverside shows the following range of salinity tolerance (from high to low tolerance):

- Improved and common bermudas
- Zoysia
- St. Augustine
- Tall fescue
- Creeping bentgrass
- Perennial ryegrass
- Meadow fescue
- Red fescue
- Kentucky bluegrass
- Colonial bentgrass