

HWS Grounds Pest Policy

At HWS we are sensitive to our environment and follow an Integrated Pest Management plan to eliminate undesired plants and weeds to keep our campus landscape healthy and attractive. These plans include both mechanical and chemical practices. A systematic approach is taken to manage pests, with minimal impact to human and environmental health. When chemicals are used they are applied sparingly, strategically and in a manner consistent with DEC guidelines.

Standard Operating Procedure:

Our mechanical practices include:

Aerating- this is a practice of perforating the turf. This can be done by slicing or pulling grass plugs. This is used to open soil for to reduce compaction. Holes allow more nutrients to reach roots, splitting roots promote additional growth, and cutting weeds can kill them.

Irrigating- ensuring our turf is on a regular schedule for watering allows the turf to stay healthy and strong. A healthy turf can keep out unwanted weeds from growing.

Over-seeding- using both perennial and annual mixes we over-seed areas to fill any exposed soil with grass to eliminate an opportunity for weed growth.

Manual weeding- grounds members manually pick weeds, this reduces the need of chemical use.

Our chemical application policies and procedures:

The HWS Grounds department has 4 licensed pesticide applicators, and detailed logs are recorded after any pesticide application. Additionally we have several technicians who work under applicators.

Chemical usage pertaining to HWS campus grounds are used as nonselective herbicide, selective herbicides, fertilizer, and insecticides. Wind speed/direction, temperature, and weather are all critical factors when applications can be made.

Fertilizers are used on campus to improve health and vigor of plant material. They range from organic such as fish waste or leaf compost tea. This also includes synthetic for our athletic fields, flower displays, or fall turf feeding.

Selective herbicides are used as a primary defense against weeds and other undesirables because of their selective nature. They are used to target dandelions, clover and other common turf weeds.

Non-select herbicides are used sparingly and strategically when necessary in order to maintain health, safety, and aesthetics of campus.

Insecticides are used on both turf and larger plant material such as flowers or trees. This practice is used very minimally and only used when a specific pest is identified.

We continue to develop our policies and procedures as the landscape industry continues to advance. Being sensitive to our environment is a priority of ours. Taking a responsible and realistic approach both mechanically and chemically is imperative to keeping the HWS campus landscape at its highest quality.