KINGMAN IS GROWING! COLUMN

Weed Control
By Marjorie Martinovic, Kingman Area Master Gardener

Before continuing, I want you to take a test. Do you have all your Christmas gifts purchased? Do you pay your bills as soon as you receive them? Are all your photographs labeled and in albums? If you answered yes to the above questions, this article is not for you. But if you are always playing catch-up, this is the article you must read.

The ideal time to prevent weeds for next year, 2009, was in September, but you can do it now and it will be effective next spring.

The following are various ways to control weeds. Read on and pick the method that you prefer.

The primitive and often the best way to prevent weed growth is by mechanical removal. This is a fancy way of saying any method that involves sharp hoes, shovels, knives, or hand pulling. This is effective when the weeds are small and the area is small.

Power mowers and weed beaters may be useful when the weeds and area are larger. Operate these devices with care to prevent injury to people, pets, and desirable plants.

You may apply pre-emergent herbicides. Soil-applied herbicides do not affect dormant weed seed. Control depends on contact of the herbicide with the living weed. The herbicide should be mixed into the top few inches of soil. This can be done by rainfall, irrigation, or mixing the
herbicide into the soil. These herbicides must be applied uniformly so that all the weeds are treated. Basically, what you are doing is killing the weed before it spreads its seeds.

Soil-applied growth regulators are applied to the soil, not the plant, and are absorbed by the roots of the plant. They slow the growth of established plants, particularly those plants whose foliage has been removed. After 6-8 weeks, some of the perennial weeds may recover and begin to make new growth. You may need to reapply the herbicide. Killing the plants stops the life cycle which would produce more weeds if left to live for another season.

Another herbicide is a foliar-applied contact herbicide. This means that the herbicide is absorbed through the leaves and foliage. Young, active growing weeds respond to foliar-applied herbicides better than older or moisture-stressed plants.

This herbicide usually enters the plants in 4 to 6 hours after application. Applying this type of weed control requires less physical effort than hoeing or hand removal. Just be sure to avoid drift of the herbicide onto nearby plants.

There is another herbicide that is called foliar-applied translocated herbicide. This one is applied to the foliage and is absorbed through the foliage. It kills the plant by interfering with its growth process.

**TYPES OF WEEDS**

It is important for you to know the weed you want to eliminate so you can select the proper method.

**BROADLEAF OR GRASS**

Weeds can be classified as broadleaf weeds, such as mustard or spurge, and grass weeds, such as crabgrass and Johnson grass. These two types of weeds respond differently to many herbicides.
ANNUAL

In AZ, weeds are usually annual or perennial. Control of each type requires a different technique.

Annual weeds grow from seed each year. They flower, produce seed, and die in one season. Examples are spurge, crabgrass, and mustards. Control can be achieved by timely application of soil-applied herbicides or early destruction of top growth.

A summer annual weed germinates throughout the spring and summer and matures rapidly. A winter annual weed germinates during the fall and winter.

It is important to apply soil-applied herbicides before annual weeds emerge from the soil. The best time to use these herbicides is before new weeds begin to grow in the spring and fall.

PERENNIAL

Perennial weeds can live for several years. Examples are nutsedge and Bermuda grass. They usually produce seed each year and may reproduce by above ground stems or underground stems and root systems which store large amounts of plant food reserves. Control of perennial weeds should begin when the weed problem is small.

WEED RESISTENCE

Plants can become resistant to herbicides. Applying the same pre-emergent herbicide for 10 or more years often results in the resistant weeds. A treatment that always had worked now fails.

This problem can be avoided by destroying weeds that survive the pre-emergent treatment by hoeing, knifing, or using a foliar-applied herbicide. You should also rotate pre-emergence herbicides by applying one for 2-3 years and then switching to a different one.

HERBICIDE APPLICATION

Correct application is one of the most important factors in eliminating weeds. The herbicide must be applied evenly and at the exact rate described. Make sure you read the label. The
label is a legal document that not only tells you how to use the product, but also tells you the toxicity of the product. The word **caution** on the label indicates the lowest risk or toxicity, progressing to **warning** and then to **danger**.

Code numbers for identifying the product, active ingredients, and a note to physicians advising treatment are on the label. Also listed are first aid instructions and information for proper storage and disposal of the container. There is a telephone number to answer your questions concerning the product.

Remember to store all herbicides out of reach of children. Keep products in the original container. I must say again: read the label.

Chemical weed control products are one of the most important weapons in the fight against weeds. Careless or incorrect use can make these chemicals useless or dangerous.

Pre-emergence herbicides are generally active in the soil for 4-6 months after application. If you are a procrastinator, mark your calendar in February or March. You can begin your late spring and summer weed control then. Then maybe you can get those pictures in albums.

For more information contact The University of Arizona Mohave County Cooperative Extension at 101 E. Beale Street, Kingman or telephone 928-753-3788.

**The next Master Gardener workshop will be held Saturday, October 18, 2008, 9:45 AM to 12:15 PM for “NEWCOMERS TO THE AREA” at The University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, 101 E. Beale St. Kingman. Seating is limited, call to reserve your place (928) 753-3788.**

**CONTACT: VICKI COOMBS**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE ASST**  
**THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA**  
**MOHAVE COUNTY**  
**COORDINATING EXTENSION**  
**101 E BEALE ST STE A**  
**KINGMAN AZ 86401-5808**  
**928 753-3788/928 753-1665 (FAX)**  
**mohavece@cals.arizona.edu**
Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, James A. Christenson, Director, Cooperative Extension, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences, The University of Arizona.

The University of Arizona is an equal opportunity, affirmative action institution. The University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation in its programs and activities.