



Bayer

Monitor for chafer infestation ahead of the summer months.

Now is a key time to monitor for chafer grubs. You can effectively treat for them between May and July, so it's important to be on the lookout for tell-tale signs of an infestation.

A key indicator is drought stress, where grass leaves turn straw coloured. This occurs because the grubs, hatched from the eggs that the adult beetles laid in the soil last year, have been feeding on the roots of the turf grass through last summer, and now through the spring. With a damaged root system the grass plant doesn't have access to the water and nutrients it requires, so dies back and turns a bleached straw colour.

Sometimes, look for are whether the grass lifts easily. The grass won't have roots anchoring it to the soil, and in the most severe cases will actually come away from the ground, and peel off like a carpet.

An increase in predators such as rooks, starlings, badgers and foxes feeding on the grass is another sign that you may have chafers present. These animals will easily tear up the unstable turf in search of grubs to feed on. Situations like these have been known to cause catastrophic damage to the playing surface, and can take an entire season to rectify, presenting a tough repair challenge.

Ultimately, if you suspect chafer grubs to be present, the best way to check is to remove the turf and see whether they're in the soil. Really bad infestations will have 1000 grubs per square meter.

If you have a problem, you'll be able to see the adult beetles in flight, usually around mid-May. Merit® Turf is the only approved product for controlling chafer grubs in the amenity sector.

The most effective time to apply it is when adult chafers are flying around. This is when adult insects burrow into the soil and lay their eggs close to the surface before the grubs hatch and start feeding on the grass plant roots.

Merit® Turf works via direct contact with the larvae and through a systemic mode of action. Once it has been applied it's taken up by the plant, the grubs then ingest it, through feeding on the roots, and are controlled. It's important to remember that it can only be applied once per year, so it's critical to optimise the efficacy of Merit® Turf by watering it in well.

