

## Chinch bugs

July 2013

Chinch bugs often appear in Texas lawns during hot, dry conditions. Usually damage starts in sunny locations or near driveways and sidewalk areas. Damage appears as irregular dead patches in the lawn surrounded by yellowing or dying grass. Chinch bug damage can be mistaken for other lawn problems like white grubs or fungal diseases, so confirmation of chinch bug activity is needed before progressing to proper treatment.

So how do you tell if you have chinch bugs? Look for the insects. One way is to cut both ends out of a can, push it into the ground using a twisting motion and then fill the can with water for about 10 minutes and wait for any bugs to float to the top. Another way would be to get down on your hands and knees and part the grass to look for the insects. For both methods, samples should be taken in the damaged (yellowed grass), not dead, grass areas.



Chinch bugs are small (about 1/5 of an inch). Adults are black with white wings that have triangular black marks on them. Nymphs, or immatures, are yellowish to pinkish with a light colored band across their body. Nymphs do not have fully developed wings and gradually turn darker (grey to black) as they get closer to being adults. Some populations of chinch bugs have adults with shortened wings (see image).

Treatment is usually a liquid or granular formulation. Liquid formulations are often bottles that you can attach to the end of the garden hose or concentrates that you mix into a tank sprayer. Granular formulations are put out with push spreaders and need to be watered in after treatment.

Treatment should be applied in the area where damage is occurring and several feet out from the damaged area; the entire yard does not have to be treated. All label instructions should be read and followed before and during the treatment.

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### For more information contact:

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