

**For professionals: Improving spring dandelion efficacy and safety to non-target plants
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It is consistently more effective to treat for dandelions in the fall than in the spring for a number of reasons (see <http://turf.unl.edu/pdfctarticles/Turf101fallbdlv.pdf>). As importantly, fall applications minimize potential risk to non-target trees and ornamentals that are highly susceptible to damage as they leaf out (http://turf.unl.edu/pdfctarticles/april_springdandelionoffsitedamage.pdf). However, professional applicators are often asked to control dandelions in client lawns. Recent Kansas State research suggests spraying a few weeks before peak bloom or a few weeks after peak bloom provides better long-term control than when applying at full flower stage. This is slightly different than our previous recommendations of waiting until at or after peak bloom to apply. Furthermore, their data implies that thick, competitive turf results in smaller (likely weaker) dandelions and improved control from spring applications regardless of timing. Like has been shown before, they found addition of active ingredients like pyraflufen in 4 Speed XT, sulfentrazone in Surge, or carfentrazone in Speedzone quicken burn-down but have no effect on long-term control. Finally, consider using an amine formulation of 2,4-D to help minimize volatility and potential off-target damage. In their studies, the amine formulations of 2,4-D in Surge, Escalade 2, and Trimec Classic were a good compromise between efficacy and reduced volatility to reduce chance of off-site damage.

The link to the Kansas State information is at:

<http://www.ksuturf.org/blog/2014/03/when-controlling-dandelions-in-the-spring-application-timing-matters-3/>

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Controlling dandelions in the spring is usually required by professional lawn care operators, but attempting it comes with risk of damaging trees or ornamentals as they leaf out or newly planted vegetables. Careful applications and choosing appropriate herbicide and application timing are important.