

Common myths about moles in lawns

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Back in 2004 I became aware of a local chapter of Moles Anonymous – those individuals often shunned by society due to their mole problems and their feeble attempts to extradite Mr. Mole from their lawn. Many homeowners in Michigan who have started to wander out to their lawns in the last couple weeks have turned an ankle as they've stepped in a **mole tunnel**. If you're one of the Moles Anonymous legions, you've no doubt started to form your plan for ridding these little devils out of your lawn. Here are the common myths about moles.

Mole Myth 1: I have moles in my yards so that means I have grubs, right?

False. Moles eat lots of stuff and grubs are not the only entrée on their menu. It is not appropriate, or for that matter legal, to apply a grub control insecticide to eliminate moles. First of all it won't work, second of all the pesticide label is the law and insecticides are not labeled for mole control.

Mole Myth 2: Juicy Fruit, Bubblicious, or Extra Spearmint gum control moles.

I usually tell people if it works for you that's great, however I have no evidence to support this recommendation. I suppose if nothing else you'd have moles with good breath.

Mole Myth 3: Mole repellants, underground sonic waves, pinwheels in the yard will get rid of my moles.

False. Pinwheels are decorative though.

The only time tested effective method for controlling moles is a good trap. They come in many different styles and will likely require some practice before you snare your first mole. To improve your success make sure to get your scent off the trap. I've heard of mole trappers boiling their traps in water to rid the human scent. Handle the trap with some gloves when setting the trap. Make sure to find an active tunnel – this is easier for the eastern mole that produces the surface tunnel than for the star-nosed mole that has a deeper tunnel and makes the volcano in the lawn. Flatten the tunnel one day and then come back the next to see if the tunnel is raised – if raised, it's an active tunnel.

Finally, there is a relatively new mole bait product on the market called Talpirid. The bait is "disguised" to look just like an earthworm – reminds me of a gummy worm. You place the worm in the tunnel; mole eats it, end of story. I don't have any personal experience using this product but have heard many stories from the mole battle field that folks are having good results. The "worms" aren't cheap though so you may need to assess your mole disgust level before starting this eradication program.