



Topic: Soil Drench works well for Royal Palm Bugs

Question: I am the landscape chairman for our community association. We have been treating our royal palms about every two years with a Merit drench. It has been two years since our last drench and our landscape company wants to do a Merit injection instead of a drench. What is your opinion on the injection vs. the drench?

Cindy, Fort Myers

Answer: Insecticides can be absorbed through the leaves, trunk and roots of a plant. Leaves are sprayed, trunks are injected and the soil is drenched with a liquid for root absorption. The use of Merit every other year as a soil drench is standard practice when there is a problem with royal palm bugs. The insects feed on the leaves of the palm. The leaves are well beyond the reach of most persons and their ability to apply an insecticide to the foliage. While trunk injections may work just as well as a soil drench, it is nonetheless an intrusive procedure that requires a hole in the trunk. Thus, in this case, there might be little justification for administering it as an injection.

Useful Links:

[Royal Palm Bug Control](#)

Stephen Brown is a horticulture agent with the Lee County Extension Service. Submit questions by calling the horticulture desk at 533-7504 between 9 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. or by e-mailing brownsh@leegov.com. Visit his Web page at <http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/hort/GardenHome.shtml>. For native plants click on Publications A-Z.

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