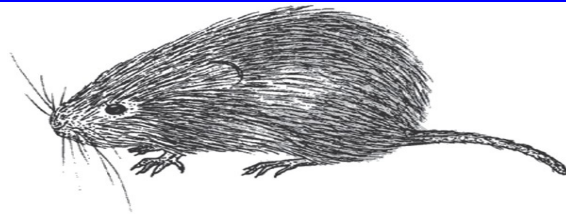


Got Voles?



Voles are very destructive in Valley County. Voles are very similar to a mole in shape and size. They can be active at night or during the day. They feast on our yards, bulbs, perennials, shrubs and trees and even our gardens. I have seen whole tomato plants disappear down their holes. Voles will typically live in the fields and areas of little traffic during the summer and will move into our yards under the cover of snow during the winter causing their havoc. Some will stay in your yards through the season creating mounds and destroying your plants. There is hope. We have been testing a number of products to test their effectiveness and have gotten tips from our customers on what works for them. Several years ago we began testing Biosol as a vole repellent. Biosol is an organic fertilizer that works extremely well. On a tip from a nursery owner in Truckee, California which has the same battles with voles that we do, we tried the Biosol as a vole repellent and it worked.

In almost all of the yards that it was tested on, there was 80% to 100% reduction in vole damage. In a few yards, there was damage, but the damage was reduced and the voles did not eat the entire root system of the grass which allowed the grass to recover faster. All in all, there was a definite improvement.

A Master Gardener stated that she had no vole damage to a lawn that she was trying to protect. Another customer placed Biosol down vole holes in her perennial beds and they vacated the area. She has not seen any since. This is good news to gardeners that wish to stay away from poisons.

There is also a product that is produced by Bonide that is a Mole and Gopher Repellent called MoleMax. This product contains Castor Oil which repels the voles. We have had good reports from customers using this product. Using a combination of Biosol and this repellent will give the best results. And the best thing is that both are organic and safe to use.

Trees and shrubs with single stems can be girdled by voles. The best protection for these plants are vinyl tree guards. They wrap around the trunk and prevent voles from reaching the bark.

Another item that has been successful with some customers is the product that puts out vibrations. We carry both Solar and Battery operated. They should only be used when it is not freezing weather.

And then of course, we have the bait that poisons them called MoleTox II. This you want to be careful with so that pets and wildlife can't get to it. Usually, placing it down the holes is most effective. We have also used it around the outer perimeter of the property that adjoins wild areas or fields. We place this down within 24 hours of a snowfall to prevent animals or birds from getting to it. Snow comes in, covers it up, and the voles eat it when they reach it travel-

ing to your yard.

In most yards that we treat using the Biosol, Mole Max, and MoleTox Pellets, we have successfully achieved up to 100% reduction in Vole damage for 13 years running. Of the very few yards that did have damage, damage was reduced to almost zero. We are very pleased with these results and so are our customers.

A good product to use when planting new bulbs is actually a deer repellent but it also works for voles. It is a tablet that you plant with the bulb. When the bulb absorbs the tablet, the bulb becomes bitter. When the vole then bites into the bulb, they are repelled by the bitter taste.

Cats are also a great vole deterrent. They will catch and kill voles until the snow covers the ground. Once we have snow on the ground, cats can't get to them. I have watched my cats sit on the snow staring down into the snow perplexed, knowing that those pests are under there but no way to get to them unless they surface.

Application Rates and Procedures

Biosol: Use 1 bag per 2,000 square feet of lawn. Use a broadcast spreader to apply.

Mole Max: A 5 lb Jug covers 2,500 square feet and a large bag covers 5,000 square feet. Use a broadcast spreader to apply.

Mole Tox Bait: Sprinkle pellets along outer perimeter of yard where your yard or planting area meets up with a field, meadow, or woods.
Apply 1 lb can per 15 feet.

VERY IMPORTANT: For Winter Protection Only put these items down within 24 hours of a snowfall that will stay. If put on too early, the ingredients will begin to breakdown and lose their effectiveness. When applied right before the snow that will stay, the ingredients are at their full effectiveness and remains so until warmer temperatures arrive in the spring. Applying right before a snowfall also prevents other animals from becoming exposed to the poison pellets. **As an added bonus**, Biosol organic fertilizer will activate in the spring and will fertilize your lawn and plants.

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