

## BUILDING A WICK HERBICIDE APPLICATOR



The wick applicator pictured here is designed for applying water-soluble herbicide products to cut stem surfaces. It can be assembled from commonly available PVC plumbing fittings and pipe. Starting at the top (right side of photo) and working down, the parts needed to build an applicator are:

- 3/4-inch threaded male plug
- 3/4-inch ball valve (threaded)
- 3/4-inch male thread to smooth female adapter
- 3/4-inch pipe (26 inches long for 8oz. capacity)
- 3/4-inch smooth female to male thread adapter
- 3/4-inch ball valve (threaded)
- 3/4-inch male thread to smooth female adapter
- 3/4-inch pipe (approximately 5 inches long)
- 3/4-inch smooth female to male thread adapter
- 3/4-inch threaded female to 1 1/2-inch smooth male hex bushing
- 1 1/2-inch smooth female to male thread adapter
- 1 3/4 x 3-inch cylinder of dense open-cell foam (cut from foam block using a 1-7/8" hole saw, minus the pilot bit).
- 2 self-drilling, 1/2" x 5/8" long, hex-head sheet metal screws
- 1 1/2-inch threaded cap
- PVC primer and cement
- Teflon tape

The pipe section between the valves serves as the reservoir. It's loaded at the top (using a funnel). The upper valve serves as an easy leak-proof seal. The threaded plug keeps dirt out. Flow of herbicide solution to the wick is controlled with the lower valve. If the wick gets too wet and begins to drip, the valve can be opened and excess liquid can be tipped backwards into the reservoir. When the wick is not in use, both valves should be closed and the threaded cap can be put on to protect the foam tip and minimize any leakage. The slightly oversized foam wick is retained in the female end of the 1 1/2" fitting by inserting two sheet metal screws. Drill holes for the screws near the base of the threaded portion so the threaded cap will still screw on.

Open cell foam is available at fabric stores but you may need to go to a foam and upholstery supplier to find *dense* good-quality foam. The local supplier we buy it from refers to it as # 38 foam.

Threaded pipe fittings are used so repairs can be made quickly if necessary. The applicators have been quite durable so far.

Three Rivers Park District, Charlie Evenson (Now retired).  
11/30/10

### 2014 notes:

- *If foam is too porous the head may drip; a cotton athletic sock zip-tied over the end fixes this problem.*
- *Drain and clean the PVC reservoir after each use or store for a day or two with plastic bag zip tied over the end for transport. (Herbicide can leak out, dry and cake during storage.)*

Updated by Janet Van Sloun 2/18/14