

Existing Communities:

What to consider for Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Guidelines

(December 13, 2010)

Following is a summary of items to consider incorporating into your community's architectural review board guidelines and covenants, conditions and restrictions.

Please review the attached summary of the *Model Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions* for existing communities. For the full text of CCRs for new and existing communities, go to: http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/community_association_kit.htm

Architectural Review Board (ARB) approval process

- Establish approval process for common areas
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- Establish approval process for residents. Indicate when approval is needed for residential sites, such as when the homeowner proposes new landscape configurations, including:
 - Installing new beds
 - Expanding beds
 - Replacing lawn with a different kind of turfgrass
 - Replacing lawn with a non-lawn plant material that provides the same function as grass (must be living plants)
 - Adding non-living materials to the landscape
 - Removing plants, shrubs, trees, and turfgrasses that are not appropriate for the area in accordance with Florida-Friendly Landscaping™.
 - *List pre-approved Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ plants, shrubs, trees, and mulch types, and include the sun and water requirements along with their height at mature growth.
 - Submit drawing that includes existing beds and proposed changes to beds and turf.
 - Include proposed changes to irrigation.

Develop an ARB application and include information on county contacts if the resident proposes to make changes in easements.

- *The Wilderness Lake Preserve Homeowners' Association uses the below sample application; it does not require a fee if a resident is enhancing his lawn with Florida-Friendly Landscaping. For its full "Alteration Application" package go to:

Wilderness Lakes Preserve – Pasco County
<http://www.wlphoa.com/attachments/ARC%20FFL%20application.pdf>

(Keep scrolling)

**WILDERNESS LAKE PRESERVE HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION, INC.
FLORIDA FRIENDLY LANDSCAPE ALTERATION APPLICATION - NO FEE REQUIRED**

This application is required if:

You are creating new landscape configurations:

- a) New Beds
- b) Expanding existing beds
- c) Replacing lawn with different kind of grass (turf)
- d) Replacing lawn with non-lawn plant material that provides the same function as grass (living plants).
- e) Adding non-living materials to your landscape

Please list plants, shrubs, trees, mulch type, stone, etc., to be used in alteration. Submit drawing - include existing landscape beds and/or turf and proposed changes to beds and turf. Also include proposed irrigation changes. (See Sample Plan) Also attach a plot plan or survey.

LANDSCAPE DIAGRAM PLAN LOCATION	PLANTS, SHRUBS, VINES, GROUND COVER, AND TREES, Common name and Botanical Name	SUN REQUIREMENTS			WATER REQUIREMENTS			TREE HEIGHT
		Full	Partial	Shade	Wet	Moist	Drought	
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
	LIST VARIETY OF GRASS AND MULCH		GRASS TYPE -- SEED , PLUGS OR SOD					
11								
12								
13								
	LIST NON LIVING MATERIALS: STEPPING STONES, STATUARY, ROCKS, PLANT POTTERY, OUTDOOR FURNITURE, WATER FEATURES (BIRD BATHS, PONDS, FOUNTAINS) TRELLIS AND SUCH. INDICATE PLACEMENT ON DRAWING.							
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If this plan will be implemented in more than one stage, indicate stages on drawing. Dug out areas can not remain empty for more than 30 days.

For helpful information please visit these websites as well as the www.wlphoa.com site.

<http://floridavards.org/index.php>

<http://edc.ifas.ufl.edu/en296>

<http://www.ifas.ufl.edu>

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/EP079>

ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE: _____

Education about Florida-Friendly Landscaping™

Provide for regular educational opportunities for residents, with at least one event each year. Contact your local University of Florida IFAS Extension office for information.

Design and Aesthetics

- Include common areas and residential sites
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- Plant groupings--ensure groups of plants have similar needs (right plant, right place)
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- For a reference list and design ideas for Florida-Friendly Landscaping™, see the *Florida Yards and Neighborhoods Handbook* and the *Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Guide to Plant Selection & Landscape Design* at: <http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/homeowners/publications.htm>.
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- For sample plant lists and specific landscaping ideas for the four major hardiness zones in Florida, and for landscaping options that address common situations encountered in various yards, see the Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ pattern books at: <http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/homeowners/publications.htm>.

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- Consider provisions for Firewise Landscaping.
<http://fireinflorida.ifas.ufl.edu/landscaping.html>

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- Research mature growth before purchasing plants and plan for the appropriate spacing before installation.

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- Provide guidance on the size, shape and appearance of landscape beds.

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- Indicate the height of plants in various areas of the landscape.

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- Provide options for types of turfgrasses, groundcovers and other plants.

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- Specify alternative groundcovers for shady areas, hard-to-maintain narrow areas, and eroding areas.

Indicate what is allowable for the appearance and location of composters and rain barrels, cisterns, specialty gardens, rain gardens, and wildlife attractors.

Where downspouts are used, specify that they empty to pervious areas.

Allow turfgrasses to go dormant in winter.

Review use of annuals and perennials—assure they can be maintained with minimal inputs.

Address placement and maintenance of artificial wildlife shelters and attractors (such as nest boxes and bird baths).

Require mulch and specify types.

Include provisions on the appearance of the major landscape situations in yards, such as the front entryway, driveway, around mailboxes, utility boxes and poles.

Encourage pervious areas for hardscapes, such as pavers or mulch for driveways and patios.

Lay out provisions for appropriate mowing heights for the kinds of turfgrasses allowed.

Address plantings of vegetative buffers next to water bodies and in easements.

Address replacement and care of trees and tree debris.

Preserve snags to attract wildlife, as long as the snags do not endanger structures.

Include provisions on allowing fruit trees, including types and maintenance.

Include clauses that do not allow artificial turf, all mulch or rock areas (for yards), rubber mulch, mulch next to roads or driveways where decayed organic matter or the mulch may find their way into storm drains.

Prohibit alteration in stormwater systems (e.g., stormwater swales, culverts, ditches, etc) without proper local, state, and/or federal authorization.

Consider placement of trees and shrubs to maintain visibility and access for emergency services. (Contact your city or county for information on crime prevention through environmental design.)

Maintenance

- Review the landscape maintenance contract at least annually to make any necessary adjustments to reduce maintenance based on change in practices.
 - For contract work, use landscape maintenance professionals who have earned a certificate in Best Management Practices for the Green Industries. For a list of certified individuals by county, go to:

http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/professionals/certification_lists/cert_county_name.shtml

Develop Irrigation Reduction Plans

- Include regular inspection, maintenance and repair plans.
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- Follow right plant, right place concepts (allow sod and plant replacement options when existing vegetation has to be replaced continually).
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- Maintain a 2- to 3-inch mulch layer.
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- After establishment, water only when plants and turfgrasses show signs of wilt.

- Operate irrigation systems manually, especially when rains are expected.

- Use soil moisture sensors.

- Match watering zones to plant needs.

- Encourage conversion to micro-irrigation in planting beds and separate irrigation zones, if possible.

- Cap any irrigation heads where irrigation is not needed.

Develop Fertilizer Reduction Plans

- Conduct soil analyses.

Follow right plant, right place concepts.

Use organic soil amendments.

Limit fertilizers to slow-release unless applied by professionals holding BMP certification.

No use of weed and feed products.

Require residents to pick up and properly dispose of pet wastes.

Keep grass clippings away from storm drains and water bodies.

Encourage residents to keep grass clippings on their lawns.

Require grass clippings in common areas to be kept on the lawn.

Develop Pesticide Reduction Plans

Plant a diverse landscape.

Use plants that have no known serious pests.

Use proper pruning techniques (no excess pruning, which encourages pests).

Use a certified arborist.

Use Integrated Pest Management.

- Reduce irrigation to reduce pest problems.
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Summary list: Model Florida Friendly Landscaping™ CCRs
(September 2010)

Existing Communities

Landscaping

- For new areas, topsoil must be re-spread over exotic fill, where possible.
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- Soil must be tested in newly developed common or managed areas or landscaping on lots.
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- The concept of “right plant, right place” must be used throughout the community and the community must have at least 10 species of plants in common and managed areas.
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- The community must preserve and enhance host plant vegetation that attracts pollinators.
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- The association must follow the UF/IFAS recommendations for turfgrass, including selection of grasses that may be maintained through use of the

low end of the maintenance recommendations and use Integrated Pest Management.

- Turfgrasses must be allowed to enter dormancy induced by drought, shorter days and lower temperatures.
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- Plants must be installed according to the GIBMPs, or *Florida Yards and Neighborhoods Handbook* if owner installed.
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Maintenance

- Landscape maintenance contracts must be consistent with the GIBMPs.
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- Landscape maintenance professionals must be certified in the GIBMPs and use the practices.
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- All supervisors and fertilizer/agrichemical applicators must be certified and all employees should be trained in the BMPs. However, laborers that do not apply any chemicals, including fertilizer, need not pass the written examination and may work under the direct supervision of a GI-BMP certified supervisor.
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- All appropriate areas must be mulched and maintained at a thickness of 2 – 3 inches.

Homeowners

- Must use the concept of “right plant, right place” and each lot must contain at least five species of plants.

- Must preserve existing native vegetation where feasible, including host vegetation for butterflies.

- Must use Integrated Pest Management and follow *The Florida Yards and Neighborhoods Handbook*.

Irrigation

- Association must have a preventative maintenance program in common and managed areas and must inspect irrigation systems monthly.

Systems must have rain shut off devices or soil moisture sensors.

New irrigation systems will meet or exceed state and local regulations.

Zones must not overlap water impervious areas or spray within three feet of buildings.

Turf and landscape beds must be separate zones, where feasible.

The landscape committee must develop an irrigation plan for common and managed areas. It must include a preventative maintenance schedule and include zones, run times and maximum application rates based on seasonal plant water requirements, recent rainfall, recent temperatures and soil moisture.

Upon installation, landscape beds will be established with temporary micro-irrigation or irrigated by limited-hand watering or micro-irrigation only.
