Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ (FFL) – Just Do It!

Master Gardener Conference 2013

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Topics

• Why Florida-Friendly Landscaping™?
• How can communities become more Florida-Friendly
• Helpful tips how to get started
• Conclusion
• Open Discussion - Learning from your feedback and your experience
Why FFL?

The Ultimate Goal

A Florida-Friendly Yard

- Attractive
- Functional
- Low maintenance

• Saves water & energy
• Reduces Pollutants
• Provides Habitat
• Recycles

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Who is our Target Audience?

- Homeowners
- Homeowners Associations
- Condominium Associations
- Civic and Neighborhood Associations
- Mobile Home Parks
What is the Objective of FFL Community Outreach?

**Immediate Goal:** Water conservation and reducing stormwater runoff

**Long-term goal:** Environmentally responsible Behavioral Change that has a positive impact on the environment
What is considered success?
Adopting one or more principles of FFL:

Right plant, right place
Water efficiently
Fertilize appropriately
Mulch
Attract wildlife
Manage yard pests responsibly
Reduce stormwater runoff
Recycle
Protect the waterfront
What are the potential results?

- Decreased use of fertilizer and pesticides that may also lead to cost reduction
- Reduction in pond maintenance
- Healthy and attractive ponds
- Changing landscaping contracts to FFL GI-BMP standard
- Creating wildlife habitat
How can we get started?

Right Plant, Right Place
Consider low maintenance plants
Low Maintenance? Homeowner or Community Landscape?
Counties vary in locality, character and demographics ...
Tools To Use

• Florida Yards & Neighborhoods Handbook/website (www.floridayards.org > Plantdatabase)

• The Florida-Friendly Landscaping Guide to Plant Selection & Landscape Design
  http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/homeowner/publications.htm

• Twenty-Two Ideas for a Low-Care, Low-Cost Landscape
  http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep442
How about FFL Maintenance?

- Mulch
- Recycling of grass clippings, leaves and pine needles and creating self mulching areas under trees
- Re-directing down-spouts from paved surfaces to landscape or incorporating rain barrels/cisterns
Fertilization

- Learn to identify nutritional deficiencies
- Only fertilize as needed
IPM, Pruning
Create Wildlife Habitat
Let’s talk Irrigation …

• Learn how to operate your irrigation time clock
• Is there an rain sensor?
• Spread the word about water restrictions
Steps MGs can take:

- Set examples by practicing the nine principles of FFL in your own yard
- Maintain your landscape, that it looks appealing at all times
- Follow the FFL GI-BMPs from design, plant installation and accurate plant spacing to properly maintaining your yard
Steps MGs can take:

Be informed:

• If living in a Deed Restricted Community – what are the rules?
• Are there any FFL Landscaping Guidelines? (SB 2080)
• Keep abreast of current UF/IFAS research
Get involved:

- Volunteer to improve community landscape
- Initiate an invitation of your FFL Coordinator
- Provide follow-up FFL information
- Join or form a landscape committee
- Run for a board of directors’ position
How do you identify opportunities?

- Attend board meetings to learn about landscaping related issues
- Explore opportunities to improve the landscape in common areas
- Identify common landscaping areas that need attention and provide solutions
How to get started:
Start with a small community project:
• Re-landscape and improve small landscapes
• Calibrate the irrigation system in common landscape areas
• Teach neighbors how to operate their irrigation time clock
More ideas for projects:

• Removal of invasives
• Creating wildlife habitat
• Raise awareness about care and function of stormwater ponds
• Initiate pond project
• Teach educational workshops for residents
Conclusion

• Understanding the dynamics of community associations is essential
• Get your FFL Coordinator involved
• Support FFL educational efforts
• Collaborate with and support fellow master gardeners
• Keep the line of communication open
Conclusion

• Help and teach your neighbor to implement FFL Principles
• Set examples
• Start in your own neighborhood
• You may not see immediate results
• Be patient and persevere
Conclusion

• Even if results don’t occur quickly, the results can be very rewarding

• We are educators - always follow UF/IFAS researched based recommendations
Remember...

You can make a difference and multiply the effort of your FFL Coordinators.
Questions, Comments, Ideas?
Thank you for your attention!

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Community Association Projects
Condo Association beautifies the landscape and conserves water at the same time

2009 TBW WWA Winner

Before

After
Converting to FFL saved HOA Water and $$

Before

After
Community removes Invasives and controls Erosion

2011 TBW WaterWise Award Winner
Before

After
FFL Landscape - HOA-Entrance
Adopting Right Plant, Right Place Principle
A Community Project

Before

Erosion control and beautification

After
Pond Projects
From high to low
Maintenance

Before

After
Eagles Landing

Before
Eagles Landing receives the 2012 Community of Excellence Award & TBW Water Wise Award
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