

Local Florida-friendly landscaping ordinances.

(1) As used in this section, the term:

(a) “Local government” means any county or municipality of the state.

(b) “Florida-friendly landscaping” means quality landscapes that conserve water, protect the environment, are adaptable to local conditions, and are drought tolerant. The principles of such landscaping include planting the right plant in the right place, efficient watering, appropriate fertilization, mulching, attraction of wildlife, responsible management of yard pests, recycling yard waste, reduction of stormwater runoff, and waterfront protection. Additional components include practices such as landscape planning and design, soil analysis, the appropriate use of solid waste compost, minimizing the use of irrigation, and proper maintenance.

(2) Each water management district shall design and implement an incentive program to encourage all local governments within its district to adopt new ordinances or amend existing ordinances to require Florida-friendly landscaping for development permitted after the effective date of the new ordinance or amendment. Each district shall assist the local governments within its jurisdiction by providing a model Florida-friendly landscaping ordinance and other technical assistance. Each district may develop its own model or use a model contained in the “Florida-Friendly Landscape Guidance Models for Ordinances, Covenants, and Restrictions” manual developed by the department. To qualify for a district's incentive program, a local government ordinance or amendment must include, at a minimum:

(a) Landscape design, installation, and maintenance standards that result in water conservation and water quality protection or restoration. Such standards must address the use of plant groupings, soil analysis including the promotion of the use of solid waste compost, efficient irrigation systems, and other water-conserving practices.

(b) Identification of prohibited invasive exotic plant species consistent with s. [581.091](#).

(c) Identification of controlled plant species, accompanied by the conditions under which such plants may be used.

(d) A provision specifying the maximum percentage of irrigated turf and impervious surfaces allowed in a Florida-friendly landscaped area and addressing the practical selection and installation of turf.

(e) Specific standards for land clearing and requirements for the preservation of existing native vegetation.

(f) A monitoring program for ordinance implementation and compliance.

(3) Each water management district shall also work with the department, local governments, county extension agents or offices, nursery and landscape industry groups, and other interested

stakeholders to promote, through educational programs, publications, and other district activities authorized under this chapter, the use of Florida-friendly landscaping practices, including the use of solid waste compost, in residential and commercial development. In conducting these activities, each district shall use the materials developed by the department, the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Florida, and the Center for Landscape Conservation and Ecology Florida-Friendly Landscaping Program, including, but not limited to, the Florida Yards and Neighborhoods Program for homeowners, the Florida Yards and Neighborhoods Builder Developer Program for developers, and the Green Industries Best Management Practices Program for landscaping professionals. Each district may develop supplemental materials as appropriate to address the physical and natural characteristics of the district. The districts shall coordinate with the department and the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Florida if revisions to the educational materials are needed.

(a) The Legislature finds that the use of Florida-friendly landscaping and other water use and pollution prevention measures to conserve or protect the state's water resources serves a compelling public interest and that the participation of homeowners' associations and local governments is essential to the state's efforts in water conservation and water quality protection and restoration.

(b) A deed restriction or covenant may not prohibit or be enforced so as to prohibit any property owner from implementing Florida-friendly landscaping on his or her land or create any requirement or limitation in conflict with any provision of part II of this chapter or a water shortage order, other order, consumptive use permit, or rule adopted or issued pursuant to part II of this chapter.

(c) A local government ordinance may not prohibit or be enforced so as to prohibit any property owner from implementing Florida-friendly landscaping on his or her land.

(4) This section does not limit the authority of the department or the water management districts to require Florida-friendly landscaping ordinances or practices as a condition of any permit issued under this chapter.