

Irrigation of lawns and landscaping in Florida represents the single largest use of water from our municipal water supplies. This water use has seriously impacted the aquifer, which is the source of our drinking water and water that supports Florida's magical springs and other ecosystems. In addition, fertilizers and pesticides used on lawns are major sources of pollution in our lakes, rivers and bays.

Whether you are new to Florida or have lived here all of your life, learn how to protect Florida's environment. Get started in your own back yard by implementing the Nine Principles of Florida-friendly landscaping listed below. Learn to landscape and garden the Florida way - the smart way to grow!

Nine Principles of Florida-friendly Landscaping

- 1) Right Plant, Right Place:** Plants selected to suit a specific site will require minimal amounts of water, fertilizers and pesticides.
- 2) Water Efficiently:** Irrigate only when your lawn needs water. Efficient watering is the key to a healthy yard and conservation of limited resources.
- 3) Fertilize Appropriately:** Less is often best. Over-use of fertilizers can be hazardous to your yard and the environment.
- 4) Mulch:** Maintain two to three inches of mulch to help retain soil moisture, prevent erosion and suppress weeds.
- 5) Attract Wildlife:** Plants in your yard that provide food, water and shelter can conserve Florida's diverse wildlife.
- 6) Manage Yard Pests Responsibly:** Unwise use of pesticides can harm people, pets, beneficial organisms and the environment.
- 7) Recycle:** Grass clippings, leaves and yard trimmings composted and recycled on site provide nutrients to the soil and reduce waste disposal.
- 8) Reduce Stormwater Runoff:** Water running off your yard can carry pollutants, such as fertilizer, pesticides, soil and debris that can harm water quality. Reduction of this runoff will help prevent pollution.
- 9) Protect the Waterfront:** Waterfront property, whether on a river, stream, pond, bay or beach, is very fragile and should be carefully protected to maintain freshwater and marine ecosystems.