

Did you know that Florida-Friendly Landscaping promotes science-based, low-impact, sustainable, environmentally friendly landscaping practices that conserve water, reduce pollutant loading to Florida waters, and protect Florida's natural resources. Principles of Florida-friendly landscaping include:

- 1. Right plant right place** – Reduce the amount of supplemental water, fertilizer or pesticides, saving you time and money. Position trees and shrubs strategically to naturally cool your home. Tree shade can reduce air conditioning costs significantly. An air-conditioning system's outdoor compressor/condenser unit uses less energy when it is shaded from direct sun during the day—but be careful not to block the unit's airflow.
- 2. Water efficiently** – An efficient irrigation system conserves water, helps to ensure that fertilizer does not flow into water bodies, and uses rain shutoff devices to prevent irrigation after a rain event.
- 3. Fertilize appropriately** – Improper fertilization can cause damage to the environment by allowing fertilizer runoff and leaching which can pollute Florida's waters.
- 4. Mulch** – Helps to retain soil moisture, protects plants, and inhibits weed growth. Consider creating self-mulching areas under your trees by allowing fallen leaves to stay in place.
- 5. Attract Wildlife** – Select plants with seeds, fruit, foliage, flowers, or berries that provide food. Supply sources of water, such as a rain garden or birdbath. Leave snags (dead trees), if they do not create a hazard, for birds to perch and nest.
- 6. Manage yard pests responsibly** – To prevent disease and insect outbreaks, select pest-resistant plants and put them in suitable locations. Spot treat only rather than blanket spraying, and use selective rather than broad-spectrum insecticides.
- 7. Recycle yard waste** – Keep as much yard waste onsite as possible to conserve nutrients and reduce the amount of energy required to move it from place to place. Decomposing organic matter releases nutrients back to the soil in a form that plants can easily use. Using yard waste for composting is a sustainable way of creating organic fertilizer.
- 8. Reduce stormwater runoff** – Create shallow rain gardens or slopes with berms and swales that can help slow runoff from heavy rains and allow the water time to soak into the ground. Maintain permeable walkways, and patios to allow rain to soak into the ground.

For more information, contact Town Planner, Ingrid Allen, at 561-278-4540 (ext. 3)