

Weston Hills Homeowners Association, Inc.

FLORIDA FRIENDLY LANDSCAPING GUIDELINES

These guidelines are being adopted pursuant to the Florida Friendly Landscape Requirements as established in Florida Statute 720.3075

HOA's are permitted to establish reasonable guidelines for Florida friendly landscaping so any homeowner who decides to transition their lot to Florida friendly landscaping does so while staying within the parameters of the design of their community. Please keep these guidelines in mind when submitting your application for ARC approval.

Florida Friendly Landscape is allowed throughout the yard, but only after receiving prior written approval from the ARC. Homeowners must adhere to all landscaping standards, the governing documents of the Association, AND the Florida friendly landscaping standards outlined herein.

There are nine principles inherent in Florida Friendly practices. They are as follows:

1. **Right plant, right place** (Only from Florida friendly list of approved plants)

- Make a note of the type of soil, sunlight exposure and water conditions of the planting site before you shop.
- Have your soil tested and submit testing results along with your A.R.C. request.
- Choose plants that thrive under the conditions you noted.
- Limit the number of plants that need a lot of water or care.
- Remove invasive exotic plants so they don't steal water and nutrition from Florida-friendly plants.

2. **Water efficiently**

- By choosing plant materials with like water requirements that fit the site conditions, an efficient watering program can be developed to fit the landscape design selected for the property.
- Water your lawn and plants only when you know they need it or show signs of stress.
- Use a rain gauge or moisture sensor so you will know if rainfall has done the job.
- Install a drip or micro-spray system in your plant beds.
- Install an automatic rain shutoff device to avoid watering when it's raining.
- Stop over watering! Over watered grass have short roots that make it harder to survive pest attacks, disease and drought.
- Collect water in a rain barrel to use to water your plants, locate barrels only in back yard away from street view.

3. **Fertilize appropriately**

- No use of weed & feed products.
- Only use slow-release fertilizers that make nutrients available to plants for a longer time.
- Use iron instead of nitrogen if you want to "green-up" your lawn.
- Hold off on fertilizing if a heavy rain is expected, and don't over irrigate after applying.
- Follow the directions on the fertilizer package and use a drop spreader instead of a rotary spreader to apply it.
- Pick up and properly dispose of pet wastes
- If applied by a professional must be GIBMP Certified

4. **Mulch** (Only those listed below as approved)

- No mulch allowed next to roads, or driveways where decayed organic matter or the mulch may find their way into storm drains. Pine Needles or Pine Bark Allowed. Cypress, Melaleuca or rubber mulch is prohibited.
- Keep the level of mulch up to 2-3 inches by applying it once or twice a year.
- Keep mulch 2 inches from the base of plants to avoid disease.

5. **Attract wildlife** (helpful insects, butterflies and hummingbirds – not animals)

- Plant vines, shrubs and trees to create cover, nesting areas and food.
- Provide wildlife shelters such as a bat house, birdhouse in rear yards.
- Protect the health of wildlife visitors. Limit pesticide use by spot-treating only the areas that need attention.

6. Manage yard pests responsibly (Remove by hand or strong water spray)

- Learn to identify beneficial insects and let them do the work for you.
- Be tolerant! Low levels of pests will do minimal damage.
- Check plants regularly and prune off a plant's infected areas or pick off insects when possible.
- Use pesticides only to spot-treat affected plants and lawn areas. Avoid blanket applications.
- Read and follow pesticide labels carefully for safe use and disposal.
- All pest control companies servicing a Homeowner's property must have valid state and county licenses, follow Integrated Pest Management as prescribed in the Florida Green Industries BMPs handbook, and have a valid certification

7. Recycle yard waste

- When possible utilize a mulching mower to recycle nutrients back into the existing turf areas. Grass clippings should not be visible after mowing.
- Use approved mulch under trees and shrubs.
- Composting of yard waste is allowed with an approved composting device. Create and maintain a compost pile with yard waste and kitchen scraps (no animal products) in your rear yards. Compost is a great natural fertilizer and mulch

8. Reduce storm water runoff

- Direct downspouts and gutters into your lawn, plant beds, rain barrels, cisterns or containment areas. (Do not allow run off into your neighbor's yard)
- The use of rain barrels to reduce storm water runoff is allowed in the back yard areas only.
- Sweep grass clippings, fertilizer and soil onto the lawn so they don't get washed into storm drains.
- Clean up oil spills and leaks on the driveway and roadways
- Use cat litter to absorb oil and clean up litter after they have done their job.
- Pick up pet waste to help reduce bacterial and nutrient pollution.
- Remove trash from street gutters before it gets washed into storm drains.

9. Protect the waterfront

- Never prune aquatic vegetation or remove any aquatic vegetation without first seeking proper permits and guidelines.
- Establish a 10-30 foot "no fertilizer, no pesticide" zone along your shoreline.
- Remove invasive exotic aquatic plants by cutting, pulling or raking.
- Plant a buffer zone of low-maintenance plants between your lawn and shoreline to absorb nutrients and to provide wildlife habitat.

Weston Hills guidelines are as follows:

1. All nine principles must be applied to be Florida Friendly
2. **Allowed turf grasses:** St. Augustine and Zoysia Sod Only. (No seeding or over seeding)
3. The grass strip between the sidewalk and road shall remain grass or ground cover. Groundcover cannot be any taller than 6" in mature height.
4. Rain barrels and compost bins shall be placed in the back yard where they are not visible from the street. Rain barrels must be covered as not to harbor mosquito larvae.

Allowed Planting Materials: Any native plant listed on the attached Florida Friendly Gardening list, as said list may from time to time be amended. The association is not limiting the planting material to this list, it is just encouraging the planting of native Florida plants.

Not Allowed Planting Materials: Any plant listed as a Prohibited Species as produced by the Federal Noxious Weed List, Noxious Weed List of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Prohibited Aquatic and Wetland Plants List of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council's List of Invasive Plant Species. This also includes these lists as they may from time to time be amended (Current list are attached for reference)

Prohibited Ground Coverings: White gravel, shells, and other similar light colored materials are prohibited as major landscape ground coverings in lieu of vegetation. However such materials may be used as porous surfaces for walkways, patios or drives, for erosion control, mulches, or as landscaping accents. The HOA may regulate the aesthetics of such materials. Shredded tires, or any man-made material, or any other mulch, not noted is not allowed.

Florida friendly is not an excuse to keep a sloppy yard. It is important to note that when these nine principles are not included in your landscaping scheme the landscape is no longer considered Florida friendly. Therefore it is important to research and plan your design to ensure you follow these principles.

As a homeowner you are responsible for maintaining your yard in a clean, attractive manner regardless of the style of landscaping you display. Trees, bushes, shrubs, grass, and all other plant matter, must be kept free from disease, trimmed so as not to obstruct a motorists, residents, or pedestrian's view. This material may not encroach upon a driveway, sidewalk or walkway.

An ARC form must be submitted. When submitting a request for Florida friendly, it must include all of the following:

- 1) An A.R.C. request form (available from www.westonhills-hoa.com or www.weatonhills.us)
- 2) The Landscape Design Plan should include the following:
 - a) Property layout (lot survey) including all property lines and structures. The lot survey should include any adjacent roads, sidewalks and Right-of-way, north arrow and scale.
 - b) A list of existing mature vegetation to remain/removed and preservation.
 - c) Percentage of sod to remain in front yards and side yards.
 - d) Percentage of sod to remain in back yards.
 - e) Plant schedule of proposed plants to be installed on the property including quantities for each plant bed. Sources for all plant matter chosen. (Include source material/literature for plant matter).
 - f) A soil test of your lot (by a licensed Florida tester) indicating your specific lot dated within 3 years.
 - g) The light level requirements of the chosen plant matter and their relationship to your lots lighting exposure. Specifically have you chosen plant matter suitable to your lots exposure to sun and/or shade throughout a typical day?
 - h) The specific irrigation requirements, based on the above soil test, as well as the frequency these plant matters require irrigation.
 - i) The specific maintenance schedule needed for your Florida friendly landscaping. This should include when, and how, each area will be maintained, with regards to debris, watering, overgrowth, fertilization, and pesticide use.
 - j) Spacing of proposed plant material.
 - k) Locations of all planting beds.
 - l) Identify planting bed edging material if applicable.
 - m) Type of mulch to be used.
 - n) Location of rain barrels
 - o) Location of composter and manufacturer (homemade composters are not allowed).
 - p) Identify turf species and locations.
 - q) Provide photographs of all existing landscaping.
 - r) Locate any above ground utility boxes or structures on the landscape plan.

In addition to the requirements for the landscape design plan, a separate irrigation design layout plan shall be submitted for approval including the following.

- a) Property layout including all property lines and structures.
- b) Adjacent roads, sidewalks, and right-of-way.
- c) North arrow and scale.
- d) Existing mature vegetation.
- e) Backflow prevention device.
- f) Available water pressure and flow in Gallons per Minute (GPM).
- g) Zone schedule identifying irrigation method for each zone and application rates in (GPM or gallons per hour (GPH)).
- h) Scheduled zones runtimes and seasonal adjustments.
- i) Spray head, rotor head, micro irrigation and drip tube manufacturer, model, locations and spacing. Note: use separate symbols for each head or emitter type and radius.
- j) Spray/rotor head radius.
- k) Verify the use of matched precipitation rate nozzles.
- l) Irrigation clock/timer manufacturer, model number and number of zones.
- m) Locate rain shut off device and/or moisture sensor.