

Aberdeen Creek is glad to embrace the nine principals of Florida Friendly Landscaping into the ACC standards for our community. Please keep in mind, when preparing to go with FFL that you must still obtain prior approval and follow the landscaping guidelines below. We encourage you, when following our rules and utilizing FFL, to incorporate these into all your bedding areas. Because we believe in the nine principals, suggested by the University Of Florida, we are allowing an increase in the bedding areas of all yards (as noted in the landscaping areas below) and also encourage you to visit the Hillsborough County Cooperative prior to choosing your plants, developing your design, and submitting all to the ACC for approval.

**FLORIDA FRIENDLY LANDSCAPING (FFL):**

The principles of Florida-Friendly 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 storm water runoff, and waterfront protection.

Florida-Friendly Landscaping promotes the conservation of water by the use of site adapted plants and efficient watering methods which generally results in a long-term reduction of irrigation, fertilizer, and pesticide requirements, costs, energy, and maintenance; and WHEREAS, a Florida-Friendly Landscape encourages a reduction of total energy expenditures such as water pumping and treatment, manufacture and shipping of fertilizers, insecticides, and other gardening chemicals, operation and maintenance of mowers, edgers, blowers, and other combustion based yard equipment, as well as labor; and WHEREAS, community-wide Florida-Friendly Landscape efforts are designed to save significant amounts of water to preserve local water supplies such that cumulative benefits may reduce or postpone the need for community potable water supply expansion.

**The intent of this document is to address the (9) principles of Florida landscaping and how they will be enforced and applied to residents that want to install a Florida-Friendly Landscape.**

**The nine principals of FFL are as follows:**

***1. Right plant – right place:***

- 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 ACC request.
- Choose plants that thrive under the conditions you noted.
- Limit the number of plants that need a lot of water or care.
- Keep only as much grass as you directly use for recreation and other purposes, as defined below in the landscaping section.
- Plant beds and mulched areas use less water than grass.
- Remove invasive exotic plants so they don't steal water and nutrition from Florida-friendly plants.

***2. Water efficiency:***

- 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. They use water more efficiently than traditional spray heads (requires ACC approval).

- 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 areas as defined in below landscaping section.

### **3. Fertilize Appropriately:**

- Fertilize lawns, trees and plants only to maintain health. Don't exceed recommended amounts. Fertilizer will not help poor growth caused by too much shade, disease or pests.
- Use slow-release fertilizers that make nutrients available to plants for a longer time. They are kinder to the environment and are usually more cost-effective.
- 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.
- Avoid weed and seed products.

### **4. Mulch:**

- Cut down on mowing by replacing grass with mulch in areas that are shaded or difficult to mow, only in areas allowed in landscaping standards below.
- 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.
- Let fallen tree leaves stay under a tree to create self-mulching areas.

### **5. Attract wildlife:**

- Plant vines, shrubs and trees to create cover, nesting areas and food.
- Provide wildlife shelters such as a bat house, birdhouse or brush pile in rear yards.
- Protect the health of wildlife visitors. Limit pesticide use by spot-treating only the areas that need attention.
- Flowering plants or plant material with flowers and berries can be used for front yards and side yards for corner lots that will attract wildlife, however, only back yard areas can be designated a wildlife habitat area.

### **6. Manage yard pests responsibly:**

- 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.
- Choose the least-toxic pesticides such as horticultural oils, insecticidal soaps and *Bacillus thuringiensis* (BT).
- Read and follow pesticide labels carefully for safe use and disposal.

### **7. Recycle:**

- When possible utilize a mulching mower to recycle nutrients back into the existing turf areas. Grass clippings should not be visible after mowing.
- Use fallen leaves and pine needles as mulch under trees and shrubs, in bedding areas in your rear yards.
- 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.

- 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.
- Use swales (low areas) to hold and filter water.

**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.

**ABERDEEN CREEK  
FLORIDA-FRIENDLY LANDSCAPING™  
ADDENDUM TO THE  
ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL COMMITTEE  
CRITERIA**

**1. Definitions**

“**ACC**” means the Architectural Control Committee as defined in the Declarations of Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions for Aberdeen Creek..

“**Association**” means the Aberdeen Creek Homeowners’ Association.

“**Bedding Areas**” are considered any area, not specifically defined below, and bordered by approved material. Bedding areas surround plants, trees, or other areas as approved by the ACC.

“**Certified Professional**” means a person who possesses a certificate of completion in the Florida Green Industries Best Management Practices.

“**Florida-Friendly Landscaping™**” (FFL) 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 storm water 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.1

“**Front Utility Easement**” is defined as the area between the sidewalk and the street inside the property line and further defined on the lot survey.

“**Front Yard**” is defined as the area between the sidewalk and the front wall of the dwelling and inside the property line. This excludes the front utility easement.

“**Florida Green Industries Best Management Practices**” includes those practices defined in the most recent version of the Florida Friendly Best Management Practices for Protection of Water Resources by the Green Industries.

“**Homeowner**” has the same meaning as “Owner” in the Declarations of Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions for Aberdeen Creek.

**“Landscape”** consists of all plant matter (bushes, trees, shrubs, grass, etc.) as well as mulch, bedding, and objects located outside the physical dwelling.

**“Low Impact Development”** or **“LID”** is development that utilizes storm water control techniques to control rainfall runoff by utilizing decentralized controls (such as pervious pavement, green roofs, vegetated swales, and infiltration trenches) by allowing water to infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate, percolate and detain, as appropriate, in place using biophysical characteristics of a property.

**“Rear Yard”** is defined as the area from the rear most portion of your dwelling to the rear of the property and inside the property line.

<sup>1</sup>Fla. Stat. §373.185(1)(b) (2010)

**“Side Yard”** is defined as areas behind the front wall of the dwelling to the rear most portion of the dwelling and inside the property line.

**“Surface Water Management System”** or **“SWMS”** is defined as the system, which is in place to regulate and control the flow of surface water. The SWMS incorporates methods and facilities to reduce impervious surface, disconnect impervious surfaces, infiltrate, convey, collect, store, retain, detain, absorb, inhibit, treat, use and/or reuse storm water to prevent flooding, over drainage, environmental degradation and water pollution. The SWMS includes land, easements, improvements, facilities, Low Impact Development elements, and appurtenances.

**“University of Florida Institute for Food and Agricultural Sciences”** or **“UF/IFAS”** is a federal-state-county partnership dedicated to developing knowledge in agriculture, human and natural resources, and the life sciences, and enhancing and sustaining the quality of human life by making that information accessible.

## **2. Landscaping**

**Florida-Friendly Landscaping™.** The Association may not prohibit any Homeowner from implementing Florida-Friendly Landscaping on the Homeowner’s private property in accordance with this document and Florida Statutes Section 373.185 (2010).<sup>2, 3</sup>

**Site Preparation: Soil Testing.** Prior to initial installation of Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ on a Lot, the Owner must obtain soil analysis information from a reputable soil testing lab or the UF/IFAS Cooperative Extension facility to assess soil conditions such as soil type and texture, and pH.

<sup>4</sup>

### **Design and Layout for Homeowners**

**Bedding areas,** located in the front yard (not to be confused or counted with the front utility easement) are encouraged to be expanded beyond that which the builder originally installed and to be landscaped as Florida Friendly Landscape (FFL). This expansion is not to exceed beyond 2/3 (66%) of the grass area. The front utility easement and a 1/3 (33%) of the front yard, closest to the sidewalk, must remain grass/lawn. (See also Section 2.5.2). All expansion details must be submitted to the ACC for approval, prior to performing the expansion. (Details of what must be submitted with your ACC Request Form are found at the end of this document).

**Bedding** and/or grass/lawn areas in the rear yards have no size restrictions.

**Florida-Friendly.** The Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ concept of right plant, right place will be used. The Homeowner will design the landscape so that plants serve a number of functions including, but not limited

<sup>2</sup>Fla. Stat. §720.3075(4)(b) (2010)

<sup>3</sup> At a minimum to be a Florida-Friendly, Homeowners must use maintenance contractors who are certified in the Green Industries Best Management Practices program, have maintenance contracts that reflect Green Industries Best Management Practices, and provide continuous education to their residents about Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ design and maintenance practices at regular intervals. Maintenance companies do not become certified, only individual employees. Under the minimum requirement, the following certification is required: All supervisors and fertilizer/agricultural applicators must be certified and all employees should be trained in the BMPs, but laborers that do not apply any chemicals, including fertilizer, need not pass the written examination and may work under the direct supervision of a certified person.

<sup>4</sup> An analysis of soil infiltration rate is also recommended but implies extra costs. For soil testing recommendations and information see the Soil and Water Science Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, University of Florida/IFAS at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/SS156>.

to, cooling, privacy screening, shade, aesthetics, wildlife habitat, runoff pollution prevention, and directing traffic flow onto and within the property.

<sup>5</sup>

**Existing Native Vegetation.** Homeowners will retain and incorporate existing native vegetation into the landscape whenever feasible.

**Florida Friendly Landscape (FFL)** is allowed throughout the yard, but only after receiving prior written approval from the ACC, and provided the FFL guidelines set forth in this document are followed. Homeowners must adhere to all landscaping standards, the governing documents of the Association, AND the FFL standards outlined herein.

**Landscaping Selection.** In accordance with the relevant local government landscaping ordinances and the most current version of the UF/IFAS Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Plant Selection Guide, the Developer, Association, or Homeowner, as applicable, will select landscape plants suited to the soil and other site characteristics utilized by the Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ concept. The Homeowner should have at least five species of plants in the yard, consistent with the new homeowner Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ recognition checklist.<sup>6</sup>

**Community ButterflyScaping.** Homeowners are encouraged to preserve and enhance existing butterfly host vegetation on their properties. Homeowners will use plants listed in the most current version of the UF/IFAS Friendly Landscaping™ Guide to Plant Selection and Landscape Design or Landscaping Committee Approved Plant List for suggestions. The UF/IFAS plant list is not all-inclusive, and many plants not listed may be Florida-Friendly as long as they match site conditions and are not invasive exotics. By the same token, many plants that are listed may be unsuitable in some locations. Where doubt exists, the Landscaping Committee should refer the matter to the UF/IFAS County Extension Service Florida Yards & Neighborhoods agent or the Commercial Horticulture agent for assistance. However, the role of these agents is strictly educational, and all final decisions about plantings are to be made by the Association.

<sup>7</sup>

**Turfgrasses.** Turfgrasses that will be allowed are as follows:

St. Augustine Floratam – for full sun yards

St. Augustine Palmetto – for yards with 50% sun and 50% shade

St. Augustine Bitter Blue – for shaded yards

St. Augustine Seville – for shaded yards

**Appurtenances.** Homeowners are encouraged to use rain barrels, cisterns, rain gardens, and compost bins, as needed, within the Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ design concept as allowed by Hillsborough County Ordinances.

Composting of yard waste is allowed with an approved composting device no larger than 40" Height x 36" width/depth located in the backyard or sideyard of the property at least 10' back from the front wall of the residence and is screened from view of the adjacent roadways and the first floor of adjacent residences.

<sup>5</sup> Please see UF IFAS Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Design and Plant Selection Guide (2010); For more information, Please see Hansen et al, 2009. "Adopting a Florida-Friendly Landscape: Steps for Converting a Typical Development Landscape to a Florida-Friendly Landscape". Available at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep396>

<sup>6</sup> Checklist available at [http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/materials/FYN\\_Yard\\_Recognition\\_Checklist\\_2010.pdf](http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/materials/FYN_Yard_Recognition_Checklist_2010.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> For more information, please see, "Community ButterflyScaping: Community ButterflyScaping: Move beyond butterfly gardening to create a large-scale butterfly habitat." available at [http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/Butterfly\\_FlyerPrint\\_may\\_2010.pdf](http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/Butterfly_FlyerPrint_may_2010.pdf)

The use of rain barrels to reduce storm water runoff is allowed if located in the backyard or sideyard of the property at least 10' back from the front wall of the residence and screened from view of the adjacent roadways and the first floor of adjacent residences. Proper mosquito netting must be used at all times.<sup>8</sup>

**Plant Installation.** All Homeowner plant installations will be conducted in accordance with the most current version of the Florida Yards and Neighborhoods Manual.

### **Mulching.**

**Florida Green Industries Best Management Practices.** All mulching will be conducted in accordance with the most current version of the Florida Green Industries BMPs handbook guidelines.

**Placement.** Mulch will be placed at least 3–4 inches from the trunks of trees or the stems of landscape plants and will be maintained at a depth of 2–3 inches. Large mulched areas that slope to impervious surfaces or water bodies will be bordered by a turf or other groundcover to slow and absorb nutrient-laden runoff from the mulched area.

**Mulch** must be replaced at any time the area beneath the mulch becomes visible from the street. Replacing mulch with the below, approved material, does not require ACC approval.

**Organic Mulch.** Organic mulch may require weeding and replenishment once or twice a year to maintain a total depth of 2–3 inches. Mulch will be applied to a tree's drip line or beyond at least an 8-foot diameter around the tree. Organic mulch and recycled mulch (including leaves, pine needles, grass, and shrub clippings) are recommended.

**Cypress Mulch.** Cypress mulch is often made from waste wood generated in manufacture of these products, but it may also be produced from whole trees cut from wetlands. The use of cypress mulch may not be recommended, as its origins may be difficult to determine.

**Inorganic Mulch.** Shell, crushed stone, or pebbles can be used as mulch but will not contribute to the soil's nutrient and organic content or water-holding capacity. Limestone and shell both raise soil pH and reflect heat, increasing the water needs of plants. If these products are used, they must be installed over top of a woven or other pervious ground cloth to keep them from sinking in sandy soils. These mulches last a long time, but will need to be cleared of debris to look their best.

**Surface Below Mulch.** Impervious surfaces, including plastic sheeting, will not be placed below mulch.<sup>9</sup>

**Other Prohibited Ground Coverings.** White gravel, shells, and other similar light colored materials are prohibited as major landscape ground coverings in lieu of vegetation. This does not prohibit the use of woven or other pervious ground cloth.

**Homeowner Maintenance.** Homeowners are required to conduct routine maintenance including fertilizer use, if needed, and mowing in accordance with the most current version of the Florida Yards & Neighborhoods Guide to Florida-Friendly Landscaping™. 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. Use of artificial turf is not consistent with Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ and is not recommended. Shredded tires, or any man-made material, or any other mulch, not noted above, is not allowed.

<sup>8</sup>See Fla. Stat. § 720.3085 (2010)

<sup>9</sup>Placing plastic sheeting or any other impervious substance below mulch prevents water from being absorbed into the ground and can increase flooding.

<sup>10</sup>These materials increase the need for herbicide use, have no habitat value, reflect rather than absorb heat, and do not produce oxygen like plants. UF/IFAS, FDEP, et al., Guidelines for Model Ordinance Language for Protection of Water Quality and Quantity Using Florida Friendly Lawns and Landscapes, 2009, available at <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/nonpoint/pubs.htm>.

Neighborhoods Guide to Florida-Friendly Landscaping™. Mowing adjacent to swales or water bodies will be performed such that no clippings are deposited into any swales or water bodies. All clippings that may have been deposited on impervious surfaces will be swept back into the vegetated area. Unless the turf is diseased, turf clippings will be left on turf areas or composted on-site to recycle nutrients. Any clippings or landscape material that fall on impervious surfaces such as sidewalks, driveways, or roads will be swept onto turf areas or composted. Turf clippings or landscape material will not be deposited in any swales or water bodies. Homeowners are encouraged to compost their vegetation for use on landscaped areas.

**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.

**Weeds** should be routinely kept to an extreme bare minimum and can never exceed the height of the surrounding approved plant matter.

**Turfgrass** areas may not have excessive bare spots.

#### **Landscape Maintenance Contracts.**

All lawn maintenance contracts will follow the University of Florida Institute for Food and Agricultural Sciences and Florida Department of Environmental Protection Green Industries Best Management Practices manual, and if needed, irrigation, fertilizer and pesticide applications must be at the low end of the maintenance recommendations contained in the most recent copy of the manual.

All contractors must employ Green Industries Best Management Practices certified supervisors and applicators of fertilizer or pesticides. At least one certified person must be on site when work is being performed.<sup>11</sup>

### **3. Pest Control**

#### **Pesticide Application.**

Preventive<sup>109</sup> blanket applications of pesticides are prohibited, except those performed as part of an IPM program in accordance with the most current version of the Florida Green Industries BMPs handbook or for termite prevention.

Homeowners will use Integrated Pest Management for controlling pest problems and follow the most current version of the Florida Yards & Neighborhoods Guide to Florida-Friendly Landscaping™.

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.

<sup>11</sup> Maintenance companies do not become certified, only individual employees. Under the minimum requirement, the following certification is required: All supervisors and fertilizer/agricultural applicators must be certified and all employees should be trained in the BMPs, but laborers that do not apply any chemicals, including fertilizer, need not pass the written examination and may work under the direct supervision of a certified person.

***Florida-Friendly Landscape Submittal Requirements:***

It is understood that the installation of FFL, when approved, is not a substitution for quality care and maintenance of your yard.

A landscape design plan shall be submitted to the ACC for review and approval of any modifications to the existing landscape design prior to making any modifications. Approval by the ACC does not relieve the homeowner of obtaining all required County and Southwest Florida Water Management District permits.

When submitting a request to have FFL, it must include ALL of the following:

- 1) An ACC request form (available from [www.aberdeencreek.com](http://www.aberdeencreek.com))
- 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 for corner lots.
  - 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 (Example would be the Hillsborough County Cooperative – 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 FFL 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.