

Florida Friendly Landscaping™ Recognition Criteria (Homes with Florida Water StarSM certification)

To receive Florida-Friendly Landscape recognition the following conditions must be met.

1. Native topsoil is saved and re-used on landscaped areas

Soil is an integral part of any ecosystem, but urbanization often changes soils in ways that negatively affect plant development. Soils in urban areas often have compacted soils, variable pH and low organic levels.

2. Results of a soil test of landscape area provided with species list

A soil test can tell you some of the nutrients your soil contains or the pH of your soil. County Extension offices can test your soil for a small fee or provide you with a kit to send a soil sample to the University of Florida/IFAS Extension Soil Testing Laboratory. You'll get the results within a few weeks, helping you make smart plant and fertilizer choice.



Typical soil at new home construction site

3. No invasive exotic plant species are in the landscaped area, IFAS assessment

Invasive exotics can aggressively out-compete native plants, contributing to habitat loss. Learn to identify problematic plants and dispose of them carefully.

<http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/assessment/conclusions.html>

4. The landscape contains at least 10 species of plants, 50% of which should be documented host or nectar plants

Pollinators provide cross-pollination, which is essential to produce many varieties of flowers, fruits, and vegetables. Providing pollinators and wildlife with the needed food sources and habitat will not only benefit the environment it will also bring beauty your home landscape.



5. At least 50% of hardscape is pervious or semi-pervious

Reducing stormwater runoff allows the water time to seep into the ground helping to recharge the aquifer and filter pollutants from your yard. Whenever possible use porous materials for walkways, driveways, and patios. Other methods to reduce runoff are also acceptable such as; rain gardens, rain barrels, berms and swales, and directing downspouts into landscaped areas.

