Alachua County Water Quality Code

Chapter 77 (Ordinance 02-27) prohibits non-storm water discharges into storm water management systems, which includes most roads.

The Storm Drain System

was built to collect and transport rain to prevent flooding in urban areas. In most areas, anything that flows or is discharged into the storm drain system goes directly into local creeks without any treatment.

NEVER direct grass clippings, leaves, or other debris into the street where they can enter the storm drain; instead use this material in your landscape or compost or bag it up before putting it on the curb.

Resources

Florida Yards and Neighborhoods
www.FloridaYards.org

IFAS Extension
http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/

Alachua County Environmental Protection Department
www.AlachuaCountyWater.org

Gainesville Clean Water Partnership
www.GainesvilleCreeks.org

Florida Friendly Landscaping

Right Plant, Right Place

Plants selected to suit a specific site will require minimal amounts of water, fertilizer, and pesticides.

Water Efficiently

Irrigate only when your lawn and landscape visibly need water (folded leaf blades, footprints remain visible, bluish-grey color. Efficient watering is the key to a healthy Florida-Friendly yard and the conservation of limited water resources.

Attract Wildlife

Plants in your yard that provide food, water, and shelter can preserve Florida's diverse wildlife.

Manage Yard Pests Responsibly

Unwise use of pesticides can harm people, pets, beneficial organisms, and the environment.

Recycle

Grass clippings, leaves and yard trimmings recycled on site provide nutrients to the soil and reduce waste disposal.

Reduce Storm water Runoff

Water running off your yard can carry pollutants such as debris, fertilizer, and pesticides that can adversely impact water quality. Rain gardens, rain barrels, cisterns, and redirecting down spouts are good ways to utilize storm water in your own yard.

Alachua County, Florida

CITY OF GAINESVILLE
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BMP for Landscaping and Lawn Services

In this guide:

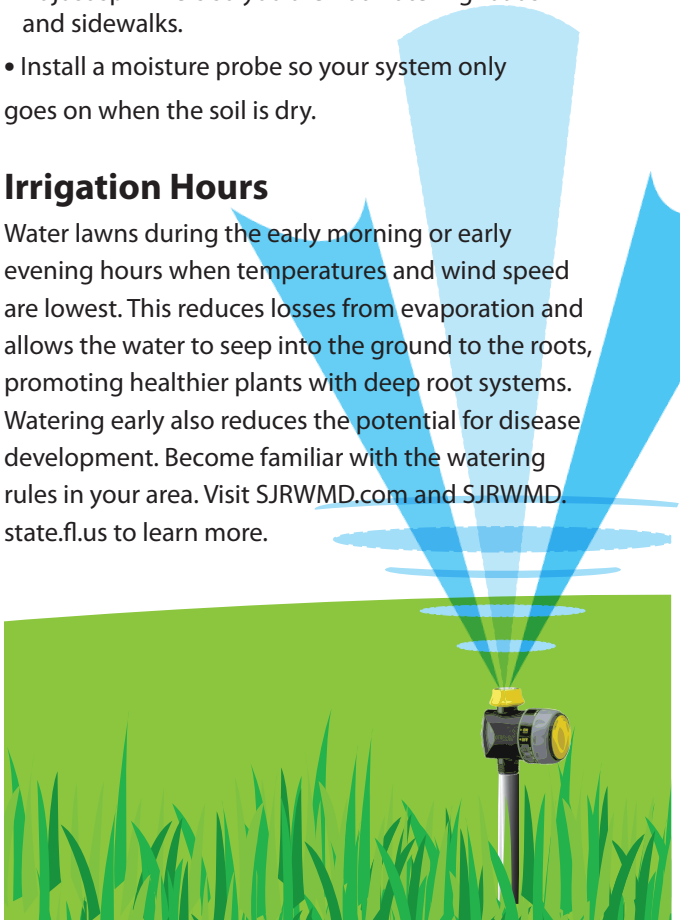
- Information on potential sources of water pollution from landscaping activities.
- How to implement Best Management Practices to (BMPs) to prevent water pollution.

Irrigation

- Group plants with similar water needs together to reduce watering.
- Application rate should not exceed the ability of the soil to retain or absorb water applied during a single use.
- Only water plants when they show signs of stress (folded leaf blades, footprints remain visible, bluish-grey color).
- Lawns go dormant in the winter and need little to no water.
- To minimize runoff, small turf areas should be irrigated with spray heads, not sprinklers.
- Make sure your rain shutoff valve turns your automatic sprinklers off when it's raining - it's the law.
- Adjust sprinklers so you are not watering roads and sidewalks.
- Install a moisture probe so your system only goes on when the soil is dry.

Irrigation Hours

Water lawns during the early morning or early evening hours when temperatures and wind speed are lowest. This reduces losses from evaporation and allows the water to seep into the ground to the roots, promoting healthier plants with deep root systems. Watering early also reduces the potential for disease development. Become familiar with the watering rules in your area. Visit SJRWMD.com and SJRWMD.state.fl.us to learn more.



Fertilizer

You can save time and money if your yard does not need fertilizers. Try cutting back to only fertilizing in the spring and see if this works for you.

Fertilizer-free Zone

No fertilizer may be applied to impervious (non-porous) surfaces, and any spillage must be cleaned up immediately. Fertilizer may not be applied within 10 feet of any water body or wetland (additional restrictions may apply for conservation areas, sinkholes, and retention basins).

Low-Maintenance Zone

A wide low-maintenance buffer of native vegetation around all surface waters and wetlands will protect water quality and provide habitat.

Prohibited Application Period

No fertilizer containing nitrogen or phosphorus shall be applied to turf or landscape plants if heavy rains are expected. This can wash fertilizers (and your time and money) down the storm drain.

Phosphorus Applications

It is best to use a fertilizer with no phosphorus (i.e.: 6-0-6) because most Florida soils have plenty already. Shall not exceed 0.25 pounds per 1,000 square feet at each application, and shall not exceed a total of 0.5 pounds per 1,000 square feet per year.

Nitrogen Applications

Nitrogen fertilizer must contain at least 50% slow-release nitrogen. No more than 4 pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet may be applied to turf or landscape plants each year.
Your landscape may do fine with less. To learn about calculating rates, visit FYN.ifas.ufl.edu.

Deflector Shields

A deflector shield is required on all broadcast spreaders to prevent fertilizer from being applied within 10 feet of any water body or wetland. Sweep up any spilled material from paved surfaces.

What to look for in your lawn maintenance company

Do they:

- Maintain certification through the Green Industries Best Management Practices Program?
- Use a minimum 50% slow-release nitrogen fertilizer product?
- Use a deflector shield on all broadcast fertilizer spreaders?
- Blow grass clippings from the roadway, storm drains, and ditches onto the yard so that less fertilizers are needed?
- Promote the benefits of a low maintenance zone around water bodies?
- Minimize the use of fertilizers and pesticides? Less is better (and cheaper)!