

The Villages®



WATER WISDOM

SMART MANAGEMENT OF WATER RESOURCES IN FLORIDA'S FRIENDLIEST HOMETOWN

Florida Friendly Landscaping

The best time to establish a drought-resistant landscape is long before a drought. A Florida Friendly / *Water Wise* landscape follows a common sense approach to landscaping, which includes having the right plants in the right place so that the use of water, fertilizer and pesticide, is at a minimum. Once established, a Florida Friendly Landscape will be highly self sufficient with a deep established root system that needs less water to survive a drought. In many Florida households as much as 50% of water use is from outdoor use. Conserving water and reducing water pollution are important issues for us all. A Florida Friendly landscape will reduce your labor and your water bill, not to mention, give you a healthy, drought and disease resistant landscape.

Florida Friendly Landscaping includes 9 principles:

- Right Plant, Right Place - Plants selected to suit a specific site will require minimal amounts of water, fertilizer, and pesticides. Pick native vegetation that is resistant to disease and pests.
- Water Efficiently - Irrigate only when your lawn and landscape need water. Efficient watering is the key to a healthy yard and conservation of resources.
- Fertilize Appropriately - Less is often best. Over-utilization of fertilizers can be hazardous to your yard and the environment.
- Mulch - Maintain a 3" layer of mulch to help retain soil moisture, prevent erosion, and suppress weeds. Do not distribute in direct contact with plant stems.
- Attract Wildlife - Install plants in your yard that provide food, shelter, and water to benefit Florida's diverse wildlife.
- Control Yard Pests Responsibly - Unwise use of pesticides can harm people, pets, beneficial organisms and the environment.
- Recycle - Grass clippings, leaves, and yard trimmings should be recycled on site to provide nutrients to the soil and reduce waste disposal.
- Reduce Storm Water Runoff - Water running off your yard can carry pollutants that can adversely impact water quality. Reduction of this runoff will help prevent pollution.
- Protect the Waterfront - Property on a lake, pond, wetland, or storm water basin, should be carefully protected because these fragile ecosystems can be negatively impacted.

The Villages Water Wisdom program aims to help you become a *Water Wise* resident and a better steward of the precious water resources.