

FFL Home Landscape Recognition Checklist

By recognizing specific landscapes as Florida-Friendly, the Florida Yards & Neighborhoods (FYN) branch of the Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ (FFL) Program honors clients' efforts to conserve water and protect water quality and other natural resources. A Landscape Advisor should use this checklist to evaluate existing landscapes, referring to *The Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Landscape Advisor's Manual* if necessary. (Page numbers in the right-hand column of this checklist refer to the FYN Handbook, 5th edition, *The Florida Yards & Neighborhoods Handbook (2015)*). New construction, governmental and institutional properties are evaluated with separate checklists that can be found at <http://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/homeowners/recognitions.htm>.

To maintain the integrity of the FYN program and to ensure that FYN Landscape Recognitions have a positive environmental impact, landscape evaluations must be as thorough and accurate as possible. However, the landscape evaluation process should always be a positive, educational, and enjoyable experience for all clients. Focus should be on the educational aspects of the landscape evaluation process, rather than on the recognition itself.

Remember that the FYN program is based on the nine principles of Florida-Friendly Landscaping™:

1. Right Plant, Right Place
2. Water Efficiently
3. Fertilize Appropriately
4. Mulch
5. Attract Wildlife
6. Manage Yard Pests Responsibly
7. Recycle Yard Waste
8. Reduce Stormwater Runoff
9. Protect the Waterfront

In order for a landscape to be considered for recognition it must contain landscape plants. Landscapes made up entirely of rock, mulch, shell, artificial turf, or other similar materials are not considered Florida-Friendly and are not eligible for recognition.

There are two recognition levels available, Silver and Gold.

For **Silver** level recognition, a landscape must meet all required practices and achieve (2) First Tier, (3) Second Tier and (3) Third Tier practices. If the landscape has an in-ground irrigation system, (2) Irrigation practices must be met. If the site is on a waterfront (1) practice must be met.

For **Gold** level recognition, a landscape must meet all required practices plus the additional gold level practices. The landscape must achieve (3) First Tier, (5) Second Tier and (5) Third Tier practices. If the landscape has an in-ground irrigation system, (3) Irrigation practices must be met. If the site is on a waterfront (2) practices must be met.

Client Information:

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____
County: _____ Email: _____ Date: _____

Required Practices for Silver (Check or indicate N/A)

The following practices, when applicable to the landscape being evaluated, are required for Silver level recognition:

- Client certifies that landscape complies with all codes, laws, ordinances, and HOA rules (if applicable).
- Landscape does not contain any plants found on the current UF/IFAS Assessment "Prohibited" list. (<http://assessment.ifas.ufl.edu/assessments/?types=24208>) (p.9)
- Most plants are placed in landscape locations that match their requirements for water, light, soil condition, wind tolerance, salt tolerance, mature size, etc.
- Landscape contains at least 10 plant species.
- At least 25% of the landscape must contain planted (in ground) beds.
- Spilled fertilizer is collected and disposed of properly.
- If fertilizer is used, it is not applied when heavy rain is forecast in the next 24 hours. (p. 24)
- If fertilizer is used, it is applied to turfgrass and landscape beds at less than or equal to the UF/IFAS-recommended rate. (p. 26-28)
- A 2"-3" layer of one of the mulches recommended in the FYN Handbook, is maintained in plant beds as appropriate. (p.30)
- Volcano mulching is not practiced on site. (30)
- If the property is located on a waterfront: a low-maintenance zone of at least 10 ft. has been established around the water body. No grass clippings, pesticides, fertilizer, or irrigation water is applied in this zone. (p. 46)
- If pesticides are used: Only affected plants and turf areas are treated with pesticide applications (spot treatments). (p. 34)
- Adequate mosquito prevention techniques are used throughout the landscape.

If an irrigation system is present and used:

- Irrigation system is calibrated to apply 1/2" to 3/4" of water per application. (p. 18)
- A functioning automatic rainfall shutoff device is maintained on in-ground irrigation systems. (p. 20)

If turfgrass is present:

- If turfgrass is present, turf is mowed at the UF/IFAS-recommended height for the grass species. (p. 13)
- If turfgrass is present, grass clippings are left on the lawn after mowing. (p. 24 & 39)
- Fertilizer is only applied when grass is actively growing. (p. 24)
- Weed and Feed™ products containing herbicide and fertilizer together are not used. (p. 24)

Aesthetics:

- Appropriate pruning and tree maintenance practices are utilized.
- There are defined and maintained (routinely weeded) landscape beds.
- Landscape and household debris are properly disposed of or recycled.

Required Practices for Gold

Gold Level Prerequisites: Landscape must meet these 7 required practices in addition to everything listed above to achieve Gold status. (If the landscape has no in-ground irrigation system, credit can be given for satisfying the irrigation practices.)

- Landscape does not contain any plants found on the current UF/IFAS Assessment “Invasive” list (<http://assessment.ifas.ufl.edu/assessments/?types=1080,1074,24208>) (p. 9)
- Landscape contains at least 15 plant species.
- All plants are placed in landscape locations that match their requirements for water, light, soil condition, wind tolerance, salt tolerance, mature size, etc.
- 100% of roof runoff (with or without downspouts) drains onto lawn or landscaped areas, pervious surfaces including drainage swales, or is harvested in rain barrels or rain garden.
- Not more than 50 percent of the irrigation system (by area) is high-volume.
- Spray and rotor heads are installed on separate zones. (This does not include retrofit.)
- Low-flow irrigation is installed and maintained in plant and flower beds.

Tiered Practices

For Silver level recognition, a landscape must meet all required practices and achieve (2) First Tier, (5) Second Tier and (3) Third Tier practices. If the landscape has an in-ground irrigation system, (2) Irrigation practices must be met. If the site is on a waterfront (1) practice must be met.

For Gold level recognition, a landscape must meet all required practices plus the additional gold level practices. The landscape must achieve (3) First Tier, (5) Second Tier and (5) Third Tier practices. If the landscape has an in-ground irrigation system, (3) Irrigation practices must also be met. If the site is on a waterfront (2) practices must be met.

First Tier: (2 for silver, 3 for gold)

- Trees and shrubs are positioned to improve the building's heating and cooling capacity if space allows.
- Rain gardens, swales, and berms are used to catch and filter stormwater runoff.
- Maintained turfgrass is used for functional purposes (e.g., play area, erosion control, and nutrient uptake). Credit given if no turfgrass on site.
- At least 25% of hardscape surfaces are made of porous materials.
- Main leader of all shrubs are at least 3' away from the foundation of house.
- Trees are located appropriate distance from the foundation of house based on mature size.
- Erosion prone areas are managed to minimize erosion.
- Shrubs and groundcovers are used where grass is difficult to maintain.

Second Tier: (3 for silver, 5 for gold)

- Compost pile or worm bin is installed or community compost bin is available for use.
- Plant material that provides habitat, shelter and/or food sources for wildlife.
- Host and nectar plants are present for butterflies, hummingbirds and/or other pollinators.
- A water source for wildlife exists in the landscape.
- Wildlife shelters exist and are maintained in landscape (e.g., bird or bat houses, snags, brush piles, etc.).
- Landscape waste (tree trimmings, fallen leaves, pine needles) is used on site and/or properly composted or placed at curb for horticulture recycling.
- A cistern, rain barrel or other water harvesting practice is used with proper mosquito prevention techniques in place.
- A soil pH test has been performed within the last year.
- Mulch is pulled away (12"-18") from the base of trees.
- Mulch is pulled away (1"-2") from shrubs.
- Cypress mulch is not used.

Third Tier: (3 for silver, 5 for gold) (If the client does not use fertilizers nor pesticides, credit can be given for gold level for this tier.)

- A soil nutrient test has been performed within the last year.
- No supplemental fertilization is used in the landscape once plants are established
- A broadcast spreader with an operational deflector shield is used to apply fertilizer, or applied by hand.
- Landscape is checked every 1-2 weeks for signs of pest damage.
- Low-impact techniques are used for insect and disease management whenever possible.
- Pollutants such as pet waste and car oils are cleaned up so that they do not end up in storm drains.
- 50% or more of roof runoff (with or without downspouts) drains onto landscaped areas or pervious surfaces. (p. 43)

Irrigation Tier: (2 for silver, 3 for gold) (If the landscape has no in-ground system, or system is not used, credit can be given for satisfying this tier.)

- Not more than 50% of the irrigation system (by area) is high-volume.
- Turfgrass and landscape plants are irrigated only as needed (in compliance with any existing watering restrictions).
- A smart controller (evapotranspiration, soil moisture sensor, or similar) is installed and operational.
- Separate irrigation zones for turf and landscape plants are maintained.
- Low-flow irrigation is installed and maintained in plant and flower beds.
- The irrigation system is maintained regularly to repair clogs and leaks.

Waterfront Tier: (1 for silver, 2 for gold) (If site is not on the waterfront, credit can be given for satisfying all practices)

- Shoreline (riparian zone and littoral zones) is kept free of invasive exotic plant material.
- Seawalls, rip rap, or gabions are used where appropriate to control erosion.
- Plant material is located to provide at least a 10' low-maintenance zone to buffer, filter and prevent erosion.

Client Name: _____

Clients _____ **Race** _____ **Sex** _____

Review Date: _____

Required Practices Met: _____ **Silver** _____ **Gold** _____ **No**

First Tier Practices Met: _____ (Minimum for Silver-2; Gold-3)

Second Tier Practices Met: _____ (Minimum for Silver-3; Gold-5)

Third Tier Practices Met: _____ (Minimum for Silver-3; Gold-5)

Irrigation Practices Met: _____ (Minimum for Silver-2; Gold-3)

Waterfront Tier Practices Met: _____ (Minimum for Silver-1; Gold-2)

Recognition Level Awarded: _____ **Silver** _____ **Gold** _____ **None**

Notes:

Previous Review date (if applicable):

Review Team Members Present:

Is the applicant a Master Gardener?

Was a landscape sign issued?

Date certificate with cover letter issued:

With permission, could the FFL program use the yard for training purposes?

What phone numbers can you be reached at?

If Photos were taken, can they be used for FFL outreach?

Reviewed by Extension staff member and date:

