

Florida-Friendly Landscaping™

New Construction Checklist



(Newly constructed commercial, municipal, multi-family or residential properties)

UF | IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

Florida-Friendly
Landscaping™ PROGRAM



The Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ (FFL) Program recognizes landscapes that demonstrate a commitment to water conservation and the protection of water quality and other natural resources. This recognition celebrates clients who follow the principles of Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ in the design and installation of their outdoor spaces.

The FFL Checklist for New Construction is used by UF/IFAS Extension agents to evaluate *fully installed* landscapes associated with new commercial, municipal, and multi-family or single-family construction and development. This checklist focuses more on the design, development, and installation of new landscapes rather than on the maintenance of existing ones. Information about the [**FFL recognition program**](#) and other checklists for *existing* **Commercial & Common Areas**, Neighborhoods, or **Home Landscapes** are available on the [**Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ website**](#) or from your UF/IFAS County Extension agent.

Project Information

Project Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

County: _____

Contact Name _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Date: _____

NOTE: Landscapes made up predominately of rock, mulch, shell, synthetic turf, or other similar materials are not eligible for recognition.

Two levels of Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ (FFL) recognition are available for new construction: Silver and Gold. The required practices for each level are outlined below. Recognition is valid for a period of 36 months from the date of initial recognition or re-recognition, unless revoked due to non-compliance. For re-recognition inquiries, please contact fll-recognition@ifas.ufl.edu. After 36 months, the appropriate checklist must be used for continuing recognition as a Florida-Friendly landscape.

To qualify for initial recognition or re-recognition under the FFL Program, the landscape must be in compliance with the checklist in effect at the time the landscape is evaluated for recognition/re-recognition. The [current checklist](#) may be found on the [FFL website](#).

The FFL Program reserves the right, in its sole and absolute discretion, to award or deny recognition to any landscape. The FFL Program further reserves the right, in its sole and absolute discretion, to revoke FFL Recognition if a landscape falls out of compliance with the checklist under which recognition/re-recognition was awarded.

Silver and Gold Requirements

To qualify for Silver level recognition, a landscape must satisfy all required Silver level practices and achieve the indicated number of practices outlined in the Principles section.

To qualify for Gold level recognition, a landscape must meet all required Silver level and all required Gold level practices and the indicated number of practices outlined in the Principles section.

Required Practices for Silver Level

General

- Landscape meets state, county and municipal codes. (Local ordinances may not prohibit Florida-Friendly Landscaping™)
- Landscape and irrigation (if applicable) installation is complete and consistent with UF/IFAS recommendations.

Vegetation and Soils

- Most plants are located in site conditions that are suited to their needs.
- Plants are cared for and healthy.
- The results of a soil pH test have been used to guide plant choices. (Consult the local UF/IFAS Extension office for more information)
- Landscape is being maintained to be mostly weed free.
- Turf areas are functional and garden beds incorporate diverse plant species.
- Landscape does not contain any plants found on the current UF/IFAS Assessment “Prohibited” list.
- Maintained landscape contains at least (10) ten plant species.
- At least 25% of landscape plant species (not individual plants) are site appropriate native plants.

Irrigation

- **Check this box if no irrigation system is used on site. Credit can be given for satisfying all required practices in this category.**
- Irrigation system meets or exceeds state and local regulations.
- Irrigation system has a properly installed and functional rain shutoff device as required by law.
- Irrigation system maximizes uniformity with head-to-head coverage.
- Irrigation system is calibrated to apply ½" to ¾" of water per application to turfgrass areas.
- Spray and rotor heads are installed on separate zones.

Mulch

- A 2"-3" layer of FFL-recommended mulch, is applied in plant beds.
- Tree rings should only have a thin layer of mulch applied on the rootball.

Stormwater

- All downspouts are directed to pervious areas.

Waterfront (including stormwater ponds)

- **Check this box if site is not on a waterfront. Credit can be given for satisfying all required practices in this category.**
- A low-maintenance zone of at least 10 feet is created along the waters' edge (no mowing, fertilizing, or pesticide application).

Required Practices for Gold Level

Vegetation

- Maintained landscape does not contain any plants found on the current [UF/IFAS Assessment](#) list in the following categories: Prohibited, Invasive (no uses), Invasive, and High Invasion Risk.
- Maintained landscape contains at least 15 plant species.
- At least 40% of landscape plant species (not individual landscape plants) are site appropriate native plants.

Irrigation

- **Check this box if no irrigation system is used on site. Credit can be given for satisfying all required practices in this category.**
- An evapotranspiration controller or other water saving technology (such as a soil moisture sensor or similar device) is installed and operational.
- Micro-irrigation is installed in all landscape beds and is zoned separately from traditional heads.
- Irrigation system meets [Landscape Irrigation and FFL Design Standards](#).

Pre-installation

- Compost is incorporated into the soil prior to planting of landscaped areas (turf and beds).

Stormwater

- 90% of roof runoff (with or without downspouts) drains onto lawn or landscaped areas, pervious surfaces, drainage swales, or is harvested in rain barrels or rain gardens.

Waterfront

- Florida-Friendly plants are planted in at least 25% of the littoral zone.

Additional practices

- Native topsoil is saved and re-used onsite.

Notes:

FFL Principles Practices

To qualify for Silver level recognition, a landscape must satisfy all required Silver level practices above and achieve the indicated number of practices outlined below. To qualify for Gold level recognition, a landscape must meet all required Silver level and all Gold level practices above and the indicated number of practices outlined below.

Principle Practices related to maintenance (Principles 3: Fertilizer and Principle 6: Manage Yard Pests Responsibly) are not included in this checklist as they are focused design, development, and installation. Principle 9 practices are in the required section (Protect the Waterfront).

Principle 1: Right Plant, Right Place (3 for silver, 4 for gold)

- Long-lived trees are preserved or planted as part of the landscape design with appropriate tree protection.
- Landscape is being maintained to be mostly weed free.
- Turf areas are functional and garden beds incorporate diverse plant species.
- Shrubs and groundcovers are used where grass is difficult to maintain.
- Trees and shrubs are positioned to improve the building's heating and cooling capacity if space allows.
- The tree requirement below is met (see [FFL Plant Guide App](#) for appropriate medium and large trees).
 - For sites less than $\frac{1}{4}$ acre, (1) one medium or large tree is required, as space allows.
 - For sites between $\frac{1}{4}$ acre to $\frac{1}{2}$ acre, at least (3) three medium and/or large trees are required, as space allows.
 - For sites between $\frac{1}{2}$ acre to 1 acre, at least (5) five medium and/or large trees are required, as space allows.
 - For sites larger than 1 acre, at least (5) five medium or large trees per acre are required, as space allows.
- Existing clusters of vegetation are retained or created in the design.
- Rootballs of shrubs shall be at least 2.5 feet on center from the foundation of structure.
- Removed trees are relocated on site.

Principle 2: Water Efficiently (4 for silver, 5 for gold)

- Check this box if no irrigation system is used on site. Credit can be given for satisfying all required practices in this category.
- Micro-irrigation is installed in at least 50% of landscape beds and is zoned separately from traditional heads.
- Irrigation system operates early in the morning (between 4 and 10am).
- Sprays and rotors do not spray onto impervious surfaces or into micro-irrigation zones.
- Emitters are located at least two feet from building, do not spray building, and are unobstructed.
- Irrigation system has a flow sensor that is connected to the irrigation controller or has a sub-meter.
- Infrastructure for using non-potable or lowest quality water for irrigation is present.
- Turfgrass and landscape beds are zoned separately.

Principle 4: Mulch (2 for silver, 2 for gold)

- Mulch is pulled away (1"-2") from the base of trees and shrubs.
- Self-mulching areas, where appropriate, exist under trees where leaves can remain as they fall. (credit can be given if this doesn't apply).

Principle 5: Attract Wildlife (2 for silver, 3 for gold)

- Plants that provide native or non-invasive berries and seeds for birds and other wildlife are present.
- Host and nectar plants are present for butterflies, hummingbirds and/or other pollinators.
- Landscape preserves snags, tall grasses, or other dense vegetation which provide cover and shelter for wildlife.
- Man-made wildlife shelters are installed.

Principle 7: Recycle Yard Waste (2 for silver, 3 for gold)

- Man-made wildlife shelters are installed.
- Trees are appropriately pruned according to UF/IFAS guidelines.
- Grass clippings are left on the lawn.
- Salvaged or remanufactured materials are used for hardscape elements.

Principle 8: Reduce Stormwater Runoff (2 for silver, 3 for gold)

- Landscape features retain runoff on the property. Ex: rain gardens, swales, berms.
- At least 25% of hardscape surfaces are made of porous materials.
- A cistern, rain barrel or other water harvesting practice is used with proper mosquito prevention techniques in place.
- Erosion prone areas are treated to minimize erosion.

Notes:

Chart 1: REQUIREMENTS (Check yes or no)	Yes	No
All SILVER requirements met? (p. 2-3 in this document)		
All GOLD requirements met? (p. 3 in this document)		

Requirement Result (as long as practices are met in Chart 2)

If Silver equals No: No recognition

If Silver equals Yes and Gold equals No: Silver recognition only

If both Silver and Gold equal yes: Gold recognition

Chart 2: FFL Practices	# met by client	# Req for silver	# Req for gold
Principle 1: Right Plant, Right Place			
Principle 2: Water Efficiently			
Principle 4: Mulch			
Principle 5: Attract Wildlife			
Principle 7: Recycle			
Principle 8: Reduce Stormwater Runoff			
Recognition Level Based on FFL Practices			

Recognition Level Awarded (check):	Silver	Gold	None
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Recognition Level Awarded must reflect both Chart 1 and Chart 2 – Chart 1 level achieved indicates the highest level possible as long as Chart 2 practices are met to that level for the same level.