

FACT SHEET: Green Industries–Best Management Practices (BMP)

LYNN BARBER
FLORIDA-FRIENDLY LANDSCAPING™ AGENT

The Green Industries- Best Management Practices (GI-BMP) training is a science-based educational program for Green Industry workers (lawn-care and landscape maintenance professionals). This training, developed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and endorsed by the pest control industry, is designed to provide corporate, governmental, environmental, and other personnel the Best Management Practices for lawns and landscapes.

The GI-BMP program teaches environmentally safe landscaping practices that help conserve and protect Florida's ground and surface waters, saves Florida homeowner's money, time, and effort, increases the beauty of the home landscape, and protects the health of your family, pets, and the environment. The focus of this training is to reduce non-point source pollution resulting from improper fertilization and pesticide application.

Florida Senate Bill 494 states that those who apply fertilizer for commercial gain within the urban landscape must have a license from the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) **by January 1, 2014**. To get this license, each Green Industry worker must be trained in the GI-BMP or approved equivalent program, and receive a certificate of completion from UF/IFAS and FDEP.

This training is important because it has a direct impact on Florida residents and the environment. Groups that should attend include: supervisors and employees in the lawn care, pest control, or landscape industry, municipal parks and recreation facility supervisors and employees, irrigation industry workers, commercial property managers, city and county planning department staff, city and county environmental department or water quality staff, city and county commission staff, builders and developers, landscape designers and architects, golf course employees, and anyone working in the areas of water quality, urban development, or environmental issues. It is also important that non-lawn and landscape professionals are aware of this legislation and the educational requirements because they make decisions on the selection of these professionals for homeowner/community associations or personal landscapes.

There are in-person training classes held at various Extension offices around the state. Industry professionals can take the GI-BMP training online, with both English and Spanish class agendas and manuals available for download. For more information about this program, classroom, on-line training, and the statewide training schedule and registration, go to: <https://gibmp.ifas.ufl.edu>

The program includes a pre-test, the following information, a post-test and CEUs:

Overview - Green Industries BMPs for protection of water resources in Florida; history, background and overview of the BMP Program and local ordinances; how to use the BMPs to protect water quality.

Lawn and Landscape Cultural and Fertilization BMPs: For healthy lawns and landscapes; includes mowing, pruning, fertilization and irrigation effects on plant health and ability to tolerate pest pressures.

Irrigation BMPs: To reduce disease and insect damage; irrigation BMPs include: irrigation requirements, design, installation, monitoring, troubleshooting and proper management of irrigation.

Fertilizer BMPs: Sources: comparisons and responses.

Pesticide BMPs: Use of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in a management program; pesticide selection, storage, handling and disposal.

The information in this article was taken from the following website:

http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/professionals/BMP_overview.htm

Contact Susan Haddock, Commercial Horticulture Agent, (813) 744-5519 x 103, for additional information in Hillsborough County Extension or Don Rainey, UF/IFAS at **941-457-0219**, email: drainey@ufl.edu for overall program information. We can help!