



Lee County Landscape Professional Certification and Business Registration

Pursuant to Lee County Ordinance No. 08-08

(Rev. June 2009)

What is the Lee County Landscape Certification?

Lee County recognizes the importance of water resources to sustaining the economic, environmental and human health of our community. To ensure adequate protection of water resources, the County requires all lawn/landscape companies or anyone paid to provide such services and working within unincorporated Lee County to have at least one person per business Best Management Practices (BMP) certified and registered with the Lee County Tax Collector. In addition, one field operations staff BMP certified must be on site at all times when fertilizer is being applied.

Lee County has partnered with the University of Florida IFAS Extension Program to provide the necessary BMP training to meet County certification requirements. This partnership not only provides required training and information sharing opportunities to local landscape professionals, but it also supports other business and residential needs throughout Lee County.

What is the Lee County Landscape Certification Course all about?

The certification class entitled *Best Management Practices for Protection of Water Resources in Florida* was developed by Florida Green Industries; a partnership of various state agencies, universities, and private industry professionals. It is a statewide program for landscape professionals which focuses on Best Management Practices (BMPs) relating to lawn fertilization, proper landscape waste disposal, pesticide use, irrigation practices, and plant selection to reduce non-point source pollution and conserve water. For a class agenda please visit:

<http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/Hort/HortClasses/BMP2009Agenda.pdf>

To download the manual please visit:

<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/nonpoint/docs/nonpoint/grn-ind-bmp-en-12-2008.pdf>

Who needs to be Lee County Landscape Registered and Certified?

Registration and certification are the two separate requirements of this ordinance. All businesses or institutions performing lawn or landscape services in unincorporated Lee County must register with the Lee County Tax Collector's office to obtain the necessary truck/trailer decals. Certification in landscape BMPs applies individuals who are paid to provide lawn or landscape services whether or not that individual is employed by a lawn/landscape company or other organization (e.g. home owners association employees).

What are the steps for a landscape company to become County Registered and employees to become BMP Certified? *Note: Companies are registered and individual landscape professionals are certified.

1. To become BMP Certified, contact the Lee County IFAS Extension Office (239-533-7503) to sign up for a scheduled BMP course. Course schedules can be found at <http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/calendar.shtml>. The course lasts 6 hours plus one hour for lunch (lunch provided). The Registration form and \$25 fee (per person) are due 5 work days prior to the class day.
2. After attending the course and passing the post-test, the State will directly mail you a certificate of completion within two weeks. Professionals can earn up to 5 continuing education units (CEUs) for this course.
3. Business owners must pay the registration fee and complete a registration application at the Lee County Tax Collector's office. Please be prepared to show your State BMP certificate (at least one person per company) at the Lee County Tax Collector's or Natural Resource's office. The company's "qualifier" does not have to be the owner, but must be on file with the tax collector for this professional registration. (For more information: Lee County Tax Collector's website for hours and locations at 239-533-6000 or http://www.leetc.com/home.asp?c=home&r=1&page_id=locations)

A fee of \$45.00 per company will be due with the application in addition to any decal fees that apply. All company trucks or trailers must display decals. The first two decals are included in the registration fee and each additional decal must be purchased for \$5.00 each.

4. Decals must be displayed on the bumper of all state licensed vehicles or trailers. Random checks of landscaping trucks will occur, so please post the decals on every work truck or trailer as soon as you receive them. Individuals who have completed and passed the BMP course receive a Florida Department of Environmental Protection Green Industries Institute BMP wallet card recognizing that they have passed the certification exam. Please note that certified employees must carry their wallet card while performing lawn and landscape services within unincorporated Lee County.
5. Renewal of the County registration is required for all businesses annually. The company must pay a \$45.00 renewal fee due at the time of their business tax receipt and additional decal fees if the company requires more than two (2) decals. Renewals will be done via mail after the initial (one-time) professional registration has been completed.

For more information please go to:

www.fertilizesmart.com