

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY – RIGHT-OF-WAY LANDSCAPE CODE

Chapter 18B

Sec. 18B-1. - Short title and applicability.

(A) *Short title.* This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Miami-Dade County Right-of-Way Landscape Ordinance".

(B) *Applicability.* This chapter shall be a minimum standard and shall apply to all public rights-of-way both in the incorporated and unincorporated areas except for zoned or dedicated rights-of-way adjacent to lands being used for bona fide agricultural activities as defined in Chapter 18A of this Code. Enforcement in the unincorporated area shall be by the County and in the incorporated areas by the municipalities; provided, any municipality may establish and enforce more stringent regulations as such municipality may deem necessary. In the event the provisions hereof are not enforced within any municipality, the County shall enforce same.

(Ord. No. 09-36, § 1, 5-5-09)

Sec. 18B-2. - Purpose and intent.

It is the intent of this chapter to establish minimum landscape standards for public rights-of-way in incorporated and unincorporated Miami-Dade County that enhance, improve and maintain the quality of the landscape, and to:

(A) Promote Florida friendly principles through the use of drought-tolerant landscape species, grouping of plant material by water requirements, the use of irrigation systems that conserve the use of potable and nonpotable water supplies and restrictions on the amount of lawn areas.

(B) Use landscape material, specifically street trees, to visually define the hierarchy of roadways, and to provide shade and a visual edge along roadways.

(C) Prevent the destruction of the community's existing tree canopy and promote its expansion.

(D) Provide for the preservation of existing natural forest communities and specimen sized trees in conformance with Section 24-49, as may be amended from time to time; re-establish native habitat where appropriate, and encourage the appropriate use of native plant material in the landscape.

(E) Promote the use of trees and shrubs for energy conservation by encouraging cooling through the provision of shade and the channeling of breezes, thereby helping to offset global warming and local heat island effects through the added absorption of carbon dioxide and reduction of heat islands.

(F) Contribute to the processes of air movement, air purification, oxygen regeneration, ground water recharge, and retention of stormwater runoff, as well as aiding in the abatement of noise, glare, heat, air pollution and dust generated by major roadways and intense use areas.

- (G) Reduce the negative impacts of exotic pest plant species and prohibit the use of noxious exotic plants which invade native plant communities.
- (H) Promote the use of trees to protect and buffer the effects of high winds on structures.
- (I) Promote the concept of planting the right tree or plant in the right place to avoid problems such as clogged sewers, cracked sidewalk and power services interruptions.

(Ord. No. 09-36, § 1, 5-5-09)

Sec. 18B-3. - Definitions.

The definitions contained in Chapters 18A, Code of Miami-Dade County, Florida, shall apply to this chapter.

(Ord. No. 09-36, § 1, 5-5-09)

Sec. 18B-4. - Minimum standards.

(A) *Irrigation.*

- (1) All newly-planted and relocated plant material shall be watered by temporary or permanent irrigation systems until such time as they are established and subsequently on as needed basis to prevent stress and die-off in compliance with existing water use restrictions.
- (2) Irrigation systems shall be prohibited within native plant communities and natural forest communities, except for temporary systems needed to establish newly planted material. Temporary irrigation systems shall be disconnected immediately after establishment of plant communities.
- (3) Irrigation systems shall be designed, operated and maintained to:
 - (a) Meet the needs of the plants in the landscape.
 - (b) Conserve water by allowing differential operation schedules based on hydrozone.
 - (c) Consider soil, slope and other site characteristics in order to minimize water waste, including overspray or overflow on to impervious surfaces and other non-vegetated areas, and off-site runoff.
 - (d) Minimize free flow conditions in case of damage or other mechanical failure.
 - (e) Use low trajectory spray heads, and/or low volume water distributing or application devices.
 - (f) Maximize uniformity, considering factors such as:
 - 1. Emitters types,
 - 2. Head spacing,
 - 3. Sprinkler pattern, and
 - 4. Water pressure at the emitter.
 - (g) Use the lowest quality water feasible (graywater shall be used where approved systems are available).
 - (h) Rain switches or other devices, such as soil moisture sensors, shall be used with automatic controls.

- (i) Operate only during hours and on days permitted under Chapter 32 of this Code.
 - (j) Where feasible, drip irrigation or micro-sprinklers shall be used.
- (4) During dry periods, irrigation application rates of between one (1) and one and one-half (1½) inches per week are recommended for turf areas.

(B) *Plant material and mulch.*

- (1) At least fifty (50) percent of the plant material shall be low maintenance and drought tolerant. Canopy trees are preferred where conditions are appropriate.
- (2) Eighty (80) percent of the plant material shall be listed in the Miami-Dade Landscape Manual, the Miami-Dade Street Tree Master Plan and/or the University of Florida's Low-Maintenance Landscape Plants for South Florida list.
- (3) Right-of-way landscaping shall include the use of native plant species in order to re-establish an aesthetic regional quality and take advantage of the unique diversity and adaptability of native species to the environmental conditions of South Florida.
- (4) Where feasible, the re-establishment of native habitats shall be incorporated into the landscaping.
- (5) Existing specimen trees, native vegetation (including canopy, understory, and ground cover) and Natural Forest Communities shall be preserved to the maximum extent possible and all requirements of Section 24-49 of the Code of Miami-Dade County.
- (6) In order to conserve water, reduce maintenance, and promote plant health, plant species shall be selected and installed based on their water needs, growth rate and size, and resource inputs. Plants with similar water needs shall be grouped in hydrozones. Adequate growth area (including rooting space), based on natural mature shape and size shall be provided for all plant materials.
- (7) Trees and shrubs shall be planted in the energy conservation zone where feasible, in order to reduce energy consumption by shading buildings and other structures and shall be used to reduce heat island effects by shading paved surfaces.
- (8) Street trees shall be used to shade roadways and provide visual order. Where feasible, selected species shall be used to establish a road hierarchy by defining different road types.
- (9) Prohibited trees shall be removed.
- (10) Special attention shall be given to the use of appropriate species located under, or adjacent to overhead power lines, and near native plant communities and near underground utility lines. Adequate growth area shall be provided for all plant materials.
- (11) Landscaping shall be designed in such a way as to provide safe and unobstructed views at intersections of roadways, driveways, recreational paths and sidewalks in accordance with Section 33-11 of the Code of Miami-Dade County and in compliance with federal and state standards.
- (12) Historic landscapes and landscape features designated by local, State or federal governments shall be preserved.
- (13) Mulches shall be applied and maintained in accordance with the most recent edition of the Florida Yards and Neighborhoods Handbook titled "A Guide

to Florida Friendly Landscaping" by the University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) and available online at <http://www.floridayards.org/landscape/FYN-Handbook.pdf>.

(14) Cypress mulch shall not be used because its harvest degrades cypress wetlands