



The Bay You Save May be Your Own: Community Partnerships Address Nonpoint Source Water Quality Protection in Collier County.

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In March 2008, the City of Naples passed an ordinance as part of a multipronged approach to help protect the water quality of Naples Bay from nonpoint sources, specifically, turf and landscape plant fertilizing. Training of landscape maintenance technicians applying fertilizer and pesticides was mandated with the ordinance. In anticipation of this ordinance, in 2005-2006 UF/IFAS Extension staff (Doug Caldwell, Carolyn Cochran and Cathy Feser) worked with an ad hoc committee, a local group called Project Greenscapes and Dr. Laurie Trenholm to develop a curriculum for the City of Naples training, utilizing the GI-BMP (Green Industries Best Management Practices) for Protection of Water Resources in Florida manual. The six hour class covers: turf management, plant selection and fertilizing, pesticide management and safety, irrigation practices and local estuary history and characteristics.

The GI-BMP training program is overseen by FDEP (Florida Department of Environmental Protection) Nonpoint Source Management Section and Rookery Bay

National Estuarine Research Coastal Training Program and UF/IFAS. The 2nd edition of the GI-BMP(68 pp) manual is at:

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

Classes were initiated in March 2006. As of February 2009, a grand total of 837 participants have gone through the training in about 18 classes. Attendees were city Parks and Recreation employees and technicians from 187 landscape maintenance companies.

Impacts: Eighty-nine percent (89%) of these landscape workers passed the certification test at the end of the six hour class. The average on the pre-class test was 55%. The post-class test average was 83%. In the post-class survey, approximately 69% stated that they would adjust the way that they apply fertilizers; 51% will adjust the way they apply pesticides; and more revealing, perhaps, is that 90% marked the “yes” box, indicating they would recommend this class to other professionals.

This training program is an on-going collaborative effort with the Department of Environmental Protection, Rookery Bay Coastal Training Program, the City of Naples Natural Resource Division, South Florida Water Management and UF/IFAS Extension.