

TURTLE ROCK HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION
LAWN AND GARDEN CARE REQUIREMENTS FOR
ALL LAWCARE AND LANDSCAPE PROFESSIONALS

Turtle Rock Homeowners Association (“TR”) is undertaking a plan to protect the shoreline of its ponds. The protection is important because after 20 years TR’s pond shorelines are showing visible signs of erosion damage. Delay of erosion control could require costly engineered remediation causing hefty increases in association fees.

In addition, algae grows faster in ponds when fed with fertilizer runoff. Using herbicides and insecticides has damaging effects on beneficial plants and pond-dwellers. TR believes that natural shorelines will materially slow the erosion and control of fertilizer, insecticide and herbicide runoff will limit pond pollution and damage to beneficial plants and animals in the ponds. In addition, TR believes that wildlife and fish will benefit from a more natural shoreline and cleaner water.

Consequently TR requests that all Lawncare and Landscape organizations (“Landscapers”) partner with TR to realize these goals and implement TR’s natural shoreline plan.

All Landscapers providing services in TR are requested to use best ecological and environmental practice with respect to the services provided. As a part of those practices, **all Landscapers will adopt and implement the following practices:**

1. Landscaper will establish and maintain a two-foot wide Low Maintenance Zone (LMZ) on all pond shorelines adjacent to homes. Once established, the Landscaper will maintain the LMZ at a height of approximately eight (8) inches. Mid-2021 Turtle Rock will begin its contract with a vendor to trim the LMZ for all homeowners.
 - a. TR requires the LMZ in order to keep damage-causing mowing equipment off shorelines and reduce shoreline erosion and water runoff.
 - b. Trimming the LMZ shall only be done using an extension hedge trimmer head or similar sickle head that allows trimmings to fall directly into the LMZ and not into the adjacent pond. String trimmers shall not be used. Unless requested by the homeowner, the Landscaper is not required to remove natural growth from the grass provided the natural growth is not invasive into the yard or pond.
 - c. The Landscaper will use only herbicides or insecticides on the lawn that will not damage fish or aquatic plants. The herbicides and insecticides should be labeled for aquatic use. Use no herbicides and minimal insecticides on the LMZ.
 - d. If any homeowner refuses to allow an LMZ as described above, we ask the Landscaper to explain the reasoning for the buffer and the requirement imposed by TR. If the homeowner still objects Landscaper shall report the non-compliance to the TR Management Office. If the homeowner refuses to allow an LMZ then the Landscaper shall not mow the last two feet abutting the pond with heavy equipment (e.g. a riding mower).

2. Landscaper shall not blow or otherwise put lawn clippings into any pond or blow the lawn clippings into any street drains (all of which flow into the ponds). Lawn clippings shall either be blown back into the yard or picked up by the Landscaper for proper off-premises disposal.
3. Landscaper shall adapt best practices to limit fertilizer runoff (including runoff from lawns and gardens that the Landscaper services that are not adjacent to TR ponds).
 - a. Landscaper shall at a minimum follow Sarasota County Fertilizer Management guidelines regarding the application of fertilizer to lawns and gardens in Turtle Rock. See the Sarasota County website at:
<https://www.scgov.net/government/public-works/water-quality-for-bays-estuaries/fertilizer-management#:~:text=Sarasota%20County%20prohibits%20the%20use%20of%20any%20fertilizer%20containing%20nitrogen,keep%20lawns%20green%20through%20summer.>
 - b. Landscaper shall not apply nitrogen or phosphorus from June 1 through September 30.
 - c. From October 1 through May 31,
 - i. Landscaper shall apply only slow release nitrogen. Preferably, the Landscaper will determine the availability of nitrogen from recycled water being applied to the lawn and from other sources before determining the nitrogen needs of any lawn.
 - ii. To the extent practicable, Landscaper shall not apply phosphorus unless soil testing indicates a shortage of required phosphorus in the soil where it will be applied.
 - iii. Landscaper will take steps to assure that fertilizer placement is only where it is needed and will not apply fertilizer directly to the LMZ.
 - d. Landscaper is encouraged to test soil for nutrient needs at least annually to determine that his or her applications are necessary for the health of the lawn and garden being serviced.
4. Accompanying these rules for reference is a copy of the current TR Ponds Management Program. This flyer has been distributed or otherwise made available to all TR Homeowners.

We appreciate your cooperation in implementing these requirements and suggestions. In the event any of you have suggestions that will better accomplish the goals of Turtle Rock, we would like to hear them. Please submit your suggestions (preferably in writing) to the Turtle Rock Property Management Office.