

**HERNANDO COUNTY  
FERTILIZER APPLICATION ORDINANCE  
Homeowner Guidance Sheet**

Effective: November 14, 2013

The Hernando County Board of County Commissioners amended Chapter 28 and created article XII (Fertilizer Application Ordinance) to regulate the use of fertilizers containing nitrogen and/or phosphorus on turf and/or landscape plants within Hernando County. The selected guidelines below were compiled to help homeowners understand the new rules.

- **General Prohibited Fertilizer Application Periods:**
  - When the National Weather Service has a flood, tropical storm or hurricane watch or warning in effect.
  - When heavy rain is occurring, imminent or forecast by the National Weather Service.
  - Prior to seeding or sodding a site and for the first 30 days after.
  
- **Plant Dormancy Season Fertilizing Prohibition: January 1 through March 31**
  - Only professional applicators who are trained, certified and registered according to the terms of the ordinance shall apply fertilizer during this period and only slow- or controlled-release fertilizer shall be applied.
  - Professional applicators must be registered with the county by June 1, 2014.
  - The applicator shall maintain verification of the product used and must provide verification upon request.
  
- **Creation of Fertilizer-Free Zones:**
  - No fertilizer shall be applied within 10 feet of the top of bank of any spring, pond, stream, watercourse, lake, canal or wetland.
  - No fertilizer shall be applied within a minimum of three feet from the top of a seawall unless one of the following is used: deflector shield, drop spreader or liquid applicator with a visible and sharply defined edge.
  - Fertilization may be applied on new plant or turf materials in this zone once beginning 30 days after planting, if it is needed to establish the plants.
  - No mowed or cut plant material may be deposited on or left remaining in this zone or deposited in the water.
  
- **Follow the University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Recommendations:**
  - For information on fertilization of turf, landscape plants, vegetable gardens, fruit trees and shrubs or to order a soil test to determine soil deficiencies, contact the Hernando County UF Extension office at (352) 754-4433 or visit: <http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/>.
  - Spreader deflector shields are required when using a rotary (broadcast) spreader to deflect fertilizer away from all impervious surfaces, Fertilizer-Free Zones and water bodies, including wetlands.
  - Care must be taken so no fertilizer is applied, spilled or in anyway deposited on any impervious surfaces. If such spillage occurs, intentionally or accidentally, as much as possible shall be immediately removed and re-containerized or applied to turf.
  - No fertilizer, grass clippings, vegetative material, and/or vegetative debris shall be washed, swept or blown off impervious surfaces into stormwater drains, ditches, conveyances, or water bodies, wetlands, sidewalks or roadways.
  - Fertilizer shall not be applied to saturated soils or in saturated soil conditions.