

## Turf SWAP Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



### 1. How does this program work?

- a. Visit [MyYardOurWater.org](http://MyYardOurWater.org) to see if you qualify for a 50% rebate up to \$1,500 for removing high volume irrigation, converting high volume to micro irrigation, making water saving retrofits to your system, or installing water saving technology
- b. Contact ACEPD staff at 352-264-6800 to ask questions
- c. Take a “Before” picture of the site where Turf SWAP work will be completed if installing Florida Friendly Landscaping
- d. Work with a Florida Water Star Accredited Professional/SWAP Shop (list is on website) to design your new landscape
- e. Get permission from your HOA (if applicable)
- f. Call 811 before digging up grass (or make sure your SWAP Shop does)
- g. SWAP Shop removes high volume irrigation (see below) and installs Florida Friendly Landscaping, if applicable
- h. Submit completed application form, completed W9 form, Before photo, and itemized invoice from SWAP Shop to EPD
- i. If you’ve added Florida Friendly plants, water every other day for the first two weeks (if it is not raining) or as recommended by your SWAP Shop. Water 2-3 times per week for the next month or so.
- j. The SWAP Team will meet with you to discuss your landscape or to just place your Turf SWAP sign in the yard and take a photo of the completed work.
- k. Sit back and enjoy your new Florida Friendly Landscaping and don’t bother with chemical fertilizer and irrigation once it is established!

**2. I do not have an in-ground irrigation system; may I still get a rebate?** No, the goal of this program is to permanently remove high volume irrigation, so we can save water immediately and into the future. We thank you for doing your part already!

**3. What is high volume irrigation?** Irrigation that puts out greater than 0.5 gallons per minute per each head; This includes most older irrigation systems and traditional rotors and sprayheads. Micro-irrigation or drip tubing is typically not considered high volume.

**4. May I use Micro irrigation in my SWAP area?** Yes. You may use drip tubing and low volume irrigation that emits less than 0.5 gal/minute. If this irrigation is connected to an automatic timer, it must be on its own zone. It is best to water establishing plants with a hose with a hand held shut off device. Once your plants are established, you can likely turn off the irrigation, or just run it occasionally.

**5. May I replace an existing mulched area that currently does not look good?** If you are removing high volume irrigation lines in this area, the work in this area may still be eligible. Please confirm with EPD staff. Just adding plants to an existing mulched area is not covered.

6. **What is a SWAP Shop?** The SWAP Shop list of landscaping professionals on the MyYardOurWater.org website includes lawn care and irrigation professionals that have received Florida Water Star accreditation and have attended local Turf SWAP training. You must use one of these professionals for irrigation work and installation of FFL if you would like to receive the rebate.
7. **May I “SWAP” out some turf in my backyard?** Yes, you may make changes anywhere on your property, as long as you are removing high volume irrigation in those areas.
8. **Are there size requirements for the “SWAP” area?** No, you can do a small area or your whole yard! The rebate covers 50% of the applicable expenses and will max out at \$1,500 for each property.
9. **How do I work with my Homeowner Association (HOA)?** You will need to work with your Architecture Review Committee or Board. They will likely want a sketch of what you plan to do. Please get approval prior to making changes to your landscape. Most HOAs are on board as long as you get permission first.
10. **May I do any of the work myself?** Yes, you can remove the turf. However, a SWAP Shop professional must do all of the irrigation work and plantings. The invoice must reflect such.
11. **How do I choose plants?** The new plants must be on the most current Florida Friendly Landscaping list. There are many tools to help you select plants, including the SWAP Shop Professional you are hiring! Below are a few good online resources:  
Water Wise Plant Database: [FloridaWaterStar.com](http://FloridaWaterStar.com)  
Florida-Friendly Landscaping Plant Guide: <https://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/plants>  
Florida Friendly Plant Database: <http://floridayards.org/fyplants/>  
Florida Native Plant Society: <http://FNPS.org>  
Florida Friendly Landscaping, 9 Principles: [https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/homeowners/nine\\_principles.htm](https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/homeowners/nine_principles.htm)
12. **How do I kill the grass?** Check out the Turf SWAP website at MyYardOurWater.org for tips. The best way (if acceptable by your HOA) is to cover the area with two layers of cardboard for a few weeks to kill the grass. Next you can pull out the dead grass and start planting and mulching. Some people put soil and mulch directly on top of the cardboard for a more raised look. The plants will need some soil, as the mulch may be too loose for the roots. Another option is to directly remove the healthy grass, this can be a lot of work and you may want to consider asking your SWAP Shop to do such.
13. **Will I have to weed my new landscape?** Yes. The amount of weeding is dependent on what you have growing in your yard. Once the plants are established they will start to shade out weeds.
14. **Should I fertilize my new plants?** No, when the new plants are installed there is normally fertilizer in the pots. Florida Friendly plants should do well without supplemental fertilizer. If you do fertilize in the future, consider using organic fertilizers such as compost or manure.
15. **Why do I have to submit a W9 Form?** To issue a check the County needs a completed W9. Rebates are taxable income and you may receive a 1099 from the County verifying the income. There is a link to the W9 Form on the website.

For more information, call (352)-264-6800.