Monroe County Board of County Commissioners recently passed a fertilizer ordinance with the intent of limiting nutrient applications to turf and landscape plants, such as phosphorus and nitrogen, since those nutrients have the potential to contribute to water pollution through surface water runoff. The ordinance titled, Monroe County Ordinance for Florida-Friendly Fertilizer Use on Urban Landscapes, is contained within Chapter 12, Article 2 of the Code of Ordinances, and spells out certain restrictions, requires the use of best management practices, and requires proper training by commercial applicators and landscape maintenance companies.

The new fertilizer rule would only affect unincorporated areas of Monroe County and would not apply to the City of Key West, Village of Islamorada, City of Marathon, City of Key Colony Beach, and City of Layton. However, the Village of Islamorada is currently reviewing their local fertilizer ordinance to adopt the language contained within the county ordinance. Additionally, it should be noted, section 12-27 states, “......to the extent of any conflict within sections within this Article, the more restrictive is deemed to be controlling.”

Restrictions. No landscape or turf fertilizers are to be applied May 15th through October 31st. This coincides with our rainy season, where the potential for nutrients, from surface water runoff, being deposited into our waterways could be increased. Additionally, no fertilizers are to be applied during a flood watch, flood...Continued on page 3
Shelly and Michelle continue to work on composting sargassum and were invited to collaborate with University of Miami scientist Dr. Helena Solo-Gabrielle on their technical awareness group and the Monroe County Sargassum Management working group.

Shelly and Mimi Stafford hosted a group of international sponge scientists to collect samples for an EPA-funded project for sponge restoration aquaculture.

Shelly recently accomplished the following activities:


- Shelly is secretary of the FKNMS Ecosystem Connectivity Working group, which provides recommendations to the FKNMS Advisory Council. They passed a unanimous resolution regarding the Lake Okeechobee System Operating Manual (LOSOM) to increase freshwater flows to Florida Bay as part of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan.

Michelle recently accomplished the following activities:

- Michelle and Shelly continue to work on composting sargassum and were invited to be a part of the Monroe County Sargassum Management working group.

- Michelle submitted three abstracts to the Florida State Horticultural Society for their annual conference that will be held in Daytona Beach this September.

- The educational signs for the demonstration garden in Key West were installed. These signs will help inform residents about the benefits of insects, the threatened and endangered plants in the Florida Keys and components of a butterfly garden. This content is part of a larger educational component and directs residents to our website for additional resources.

- Michelle wrote a letter of support for the Key West Botanical Garden Society application to the Endangered and Threatened Plant Conservation Grants Program. Our horticulture program has partnered with KWBGS to inform and engage residents about the rare plants in the Keys and their role in the environment. As part of this collaboration, KWBGS donated plants to include in our demonstration garden in Key West; we have developed several fact sheets, and created signage highlighting these plants in the garden.
Alicia recently accomplished the following activities:

- Alicia taught the Fraud Protection Program both in person at the Big Pine Key Library and online. Participants were very surprised at the variety and volume of fraud techniques.

- Alicia co-taught the Lunch Bites program to 22 Extension professionals. This program uses community development concepts, participation and discussion to guide capacity building within Extension.

- Alicia mentored two new community development faculty members. Helping them to develop needs assessments, programming and evaluation in their communities.

- Alicia developed a 15-page 5-part evaluation tool to examine short- and long-term changes in knowledge, behaviors and impacts of a new national Extension leadership training program.

- Alicia is part of a national team of climate stakeholders including Extension Foundation, USDA Climate Hubs, NOAA and NIFA who have been organizing a plan to apply for support for the new NOAA Climate Smart Communities grant.

- Alicia spoke on the radio about the importance of having a digital hurricane kit, info can be found at wwwblogs.ifas.ufl.

---

In the event of a fertilizer spill, those materials should be immediately picked up or removed and applied to the landscape or put back into the appropriate container. It is prohibited to wash, sweep, or blow fertilizer into any surface water, stormwater drain, or fertilizer-free zone.

**Exceptions.** Golf courses and high impact areas in public parks and public athletic fields are exempt from this fertilizer ordinance since they are already governed by a set of specific Best Management Practices guidelines that are referenced in Florida Administrative Code 5E-1.003. Fertilization of fruit trees and shrubs are not to exceed University of Florida, IFAS maximum recommendations. Organic material that is intended to improve the physical condition of the soil are exempt such as yard waste compost, mulches, and other similar material. Lastly, tree trunk injections performed by a certified arborist are exempt from this ordinance.

This ordinance also expressly states that all commercial and institutional applicators shall obtain the Limited Urban Commercial Fertilizer Certification as directed in Chapter 482.1562 of the Florida Statutes. To obtain the limited certification, attend the Green Industry Best Management Practices training. These classes are offered by Monroe County Extension Service, UF/IFAS, and individuals need to get certified or renew their certification can contact Monroe County Extension Services for upcoming training dates.
UF/IFAS/MCES QUARTERLY CONTACTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>May</th>
<th>June</th>
<th>July</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phone calls</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office visitors</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email Consultations</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning events</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>683</td>
<td>689</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>1,798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media submissions</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publications distributed</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>698</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL contacts</strong></td>
<td>1,221</td>
<td>1,166</td>
<td>912</td>
<td>3,299</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Monroe County Environmental Horticulture Agent, Michelle Mularz and Master Gardener volunteers completed the installation of several educational signs in the wildflower demonstration garden located at the Gato Building in Key West.