

# ALACHUA COUNTY COMMISSION EMAILS

4/4/2019

Good Afternoon –

Do we treat all drivers like drunk drivers? Of course not. Policy making entails establishing an evidence-based process of regulating the Bad Guys and respects the rights and professional behavior of the Good Guys who do things right.

Your proposed ordinance as drafted is a one-size-fits-all model. It punishes the innocent and promotes more of the bad behavior from the bad actors it cannot possibly control (i.e. overfertilization in the “open” months).

**The proposed ordinance treats both of the following groups exactly the same:**

<b>THE BAD GUYS</b>	<b>LICENSED PROS (THE GOOD GUYS)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Believe that if one bag of fertilizer is good, two must be better.</li><li>• Fertilizer their sidewalks and driveways.</li><li>• Use the wrong formulations and ingredients for the intended landscape need.</li><li>• Blow their grass clippings and debris into the storm sewer.</li><li>• Fertilize too frequently.</li><li>• Fertilizer in response to non-nutrient problems.</li><li>• Couldn't care less about your nutrient loading problem.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Follow the strict regional guidelines on application rates provided for in Florida Statute through the Urban Turf Rule.</li><li>• Utilize their professional training and resources to identify the right materials for the intended landscape need.</li><li>• Follow the GI-BMP's extensive guidance on buffer strips, no-mow strips, fertilizer spreader shields, weather-related limitations, etc.</li><li>• Share helpful water conservation and landscape care tips with their customers.</li><li>• Promote and support natural resource protection through their affiliated trade organizations.</li><li>• Serve their communities as the first line of defense in responsible nutrient use and landscape practices.</li></ul>

At the recent University of Florida Urban Landscape Summit, Ms. Greco was asked about the possibility of providing an exemption to your draft ordinance's summertime blackout for licensed professionals. **The essence of her response at**

**the summit was that the training supported by the FDEP's Green Industries Best Management Practices program and the licensing received by applicators, along with the diligence, experience and professionalism they bring to their chosen work, is inadequate – i.e. no better than the behavior of the Bad Guys and deserving of no difference in treatment under the ordinance.**

Whether intended or not, such a statement marginalizes the trained, experienced and responsible professionals in your community and what they do. We strongly urge YOU to make a distinction and demonstrate that you acknowledge the obvious differences between these two extremes – **by including a professional exemption in the ordinance.** Local professionals will be present at your hearing, and you will have the opportunity to clarify this matter to them in-person for the record.

You would have excellent Company passing an ordinance with a professional exemption. Citrus County, Orange County, the City of Sanford, the Town of Jupiter all passed ordinances with a professional exemption. They all have a lot at stake as well. We encourage you to reach out to them and talk about their decision and their willingness to acknowledge the distinctions earned by licensed lawn-care professionals.

Thank you.