



# ENVIRONMENTAL SPECIFICATION GUIDANCE FOR LANDSCAPING SERVICES

The District of Columbia is committed to procuring quality goods and services in a timely manner and reasonable cost that support the District in meeting its sustainability goals. Compliance with specification guidance is sufficient to meet PPRA Section 1101(a) environmentally preferable procurement requirements. To access solicitation documents with full contract language, click [here](#).



## BENEFITS

Native plants are adapted to local conditions and **require less pesticides, fertilizer, and water**, which saves money and minimizes the introduction of harmful chemicals into the environment. Native plants also require less maintenance, which saves money and reduces fossil fuels use and air pollution.

IPM can **reduce the use of pesticides** while reducing pest management costs and maintaining plant health.

### SOURCES

[www.epa.gov/greatlakes/greenacres/](http://www.epa.gov/greatlakes/greenacres/)  
Agricultural Pesticides: Management Improvements needed to Further Promote Integrated Pest Management.  
U.S. General Accounting Office.  
[www.gao.gov/assets/240/232048.pdf](http://www.gao.gov/assets/240/232048.pdf)

## Scope

This specification addresses maintenance landscaping services, including (but not limited to) pest control, fertilizer application, mulching, planting, gardening, trimming, and removal of debris. These activities may be applicable to any of the following landscape types and projects:

1. Restoration areas (wetlands, woodlands, meadows, and low-impact development such as rain gardens and bioretention cells)
2. Planted beds and other landscaped areas around public buildings and in park areas.
3. Turf fields (stand-alone and in park areas)
4. Roadway tree space and trees in park areas

## Specification Language

Landscaping services purchased by the District of Columbia shall meet the environmental criteria defined below.

### Plant Material

1. All plant species shall be approved by the District prior to purchase and installation.
2. The Contractor shall comply with District native plant and cultivar requirements for various landscape types which are detailed in the Landscaping Services Statement of Work Environmental Specification Guidance.
3. Annuals, perennials, shrubs, and trees purchased for installation on District property shall be grown from locally sourced seeds or plant material. Annuals, perennials, and shrubs shall be locally grown. Trees shall be locally grown wherever practical. Local is defined as DC, PA, OH, MD, VA, WV, DE, or NJ.
4. The Contractor shall not purchase or install invasive plants listed in the U.S Fish & Wildlife Service's Plant Invaders of Mid-Atlantic Natural Areas or on other lists of invasive plants provided by the designated District point of contact.

### Fertilizing

Contractors shall fully comply with the requirements of Section 203 of the Anacostia River Clean Up and Protection Fertilizer Act of 2012, a subtitle of the Sustainable DC Amendment Act of 2012.



## Specification Language (continued)

### Removal of Debris

The Contractor shall dispose of grass clippings, and other plant waste as appropriate, through composting or other forms of recycling rather than delivery to a landfill. This provision shall only be required if the District is able to provide the Contractor with a suitable location for the delivery of plant waste for recycling. The Contractor shall dispose of all debris in accordance with local, state, and federal regulations.

### Integrated Pest Management

1. Consistent with the Pesticide Education and Control Amendment Act of 2012 and Pesticide Operation Regulations, all pesticide management and/or application shall be conducted in accordance with the contracting agency's Integrated Pest Management (IPM) policy.
2. Consistent with the Pesticide Education and Control Amendment Act of 2012 and Pesticide Operation Regulations, no person shall apply any pesticide to public rights-of-way, parks, District-occupied buildings, other District property, or child-occupied facilities if the location does not have an IPM program approved by the District Department of the Environment.
3. The Contractor shall ensure that all staff applying pesticides in buildings or on grounds shall be licensed to apply pesticides and trained and knowledgeable in the principles and practices of IPM.
4. The Contractor shall provide copies of the company pest control license and dated pesticide applicator certificates for every employee who will be performing on-site services under this contract.
5. The pesticides used by the Contractor shall be registered with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (E.P.A.) and the District of Columbia.
6. The Contractor and staff shall follow Pesticide Operation Regulations and label precautions and shall comply with the IPM Program when utilizing pesticides in fulfillment of this contract.
7. The Contractor shall develop an IPM Plan that aligns with the requirements outlined in the contract and the District's IPM policy that addresses the following:
  - a. *Structural or Operational Changes*: The Contractor shall describe site specific solutions for eliminating pest access, food, water, and harborage.
  - b. *Monitoring*: The Contractor shall describe the products and procedures used for identification of pest presence, access and harborage locations.
  - c. *Materials and Equipment*: The Contractor shall provide labels and Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for all pesticide products to be used. In addition, brand names shall be provided for all application equipment, rodent bait boxes, monitoring and trapping devices, and any other control equipment that may be used to provide service.
  - d. *Service Schedule*: The Contractor shall provide service schedules that include the frequency of Contractor visits.
8. The Contractor's staff shall develop an IPM Service Report to be submitted to the Building Manager and Contract Administrator at the frequency specified in the agency's Integrated Pest Management policy. The IPM Service Report shall contain a record of inspections and what was checked, what was found, and what nonchemical and chemical control actions implemented by the IPM Technician, description of any pesticides applied, a detailed description of the treatment, the site, the application rate, and the amount applied.



#### Engine Idling

In the course of providing services in fulfillment of this contract, the Contractor shall comply with DCMR 20-900 which prohibits motor vehicle engines from idling for three minutes or more when a vehicle is parked, stopped, or standing, notwithstanding the exceptions detailed in DCMR 20-900.

#### Landscaping Personnel and Administrative Requirements

1. All employees performing ornamental landscaping shall have one or more of the following certifications or have a certification or experience deemed to be equivalent by the designated District point of contact: State of Maryland Certified Professional Horticulturist, State of Virginia Certified Horticulturalist, or Landscape Contractors Association MD, DC, VA Certified Landscape Technician.
2. All employees performing tree and shrub pruning shall be an International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist or have certification or experience deemed to be equivalent by the designated District point of contact.

#### Reporting

The Contractor shall document that the products and services supplied under this contract comply with key environmental criteria noted above. The contractor shall submit the following information to the designated District point of contact.

1. Plant Material Report – To be provided annually or as requested in Excel and delivered via email. The report shall include:
  - a. Date of purchase
  - b. Name of company from which plant species were sourced
  - c. Plant species purchased
  - d. Quantity purchased
  - e. State from which plant was sourced
  - f. State of origin for seeds or plant material from which plant was grown
  - g. Indicate whether the plant species is in compliance with the solicitation's native plant requirement
  - h. Indicate whether the plant species purchased is in compliance with the solicitation's invasive plant requirement
  - i. Price per unit
  - j. Total spend on purchased plants
2. Integrated Pest Management Plan - To be provided within 30 days of signing the contract, and annually thereafter or whenever changes have been made. The plan shall be provided in Word, Excel or PDF and delivered via email. The plan shall address the Integrated Pest Management Plan requirements outlined in the requirements section of the solicitation.
3. Integrated Pest Management Service Report - To be provided at the frequency specified in the agency's Integrated Pest Management Plan and submitted to the specified District point of contact. The plan shall be provided in Word, or Excel and delivered via email. The plan shall address the Integrated Pest Management Plan requirements outlined in the requirements section of the solicitation.
4. Integrated Pest Management and Pesticide Licensing and Training Documentation - To be provided upon contract signing and annually thereafter in Word, Excel, or PDF and delivered via email. The report shall include:
  - a. Company pesticide application license
  - b. A listing of all pesticide applicators providing pesticide services in fulfillment of the contract, and a copy of each applicator's up-to-date license
  - c. IPM training records for employees



5. Annual Fertilizer Application Report – To be provided on March 1 of each calendar year in Excel and delivered via email to the contract administrator, and the designated contact at the District Department of Environment’s Watershed Protection Division. The report shall include:
  - a. Contractor name
  - b. Contract award number
  - c. PO No.
  - d. Acres fertilized
  - e. Amount of fertilizer applied (in pounds)
  - f. Percent of nitrogen and phosphorous by weight in fertilizer applied
  - g. Application rate of applied fertilizer
  - h. Acres fertilized
  - i. Amount of fertilizer applied (in pounds)
  - j. Percent of nitrogen and phosphorous by weight in fertilizer applied
  - k. Application rate of applied fertilizer
6. Landscaping Personnel and Administrative Requirements Report – To be provided upon contract signing and on an annual basis in Word, PDF, or Excel via email. The Report shall include:
  - a. Names of personnel performing ornamental landscaping and pruning services
  - b. Certifications received
  - c. Certification expiration date

## Background Information

**Native plants** are plant species that occur naturally in a particular region, are adapted to local conditions and require less pesticides, fertilizers, and water than non-native plants. Areas that are landscaped with native plants benefit other wildlife, and improves retention of stormwater, thereby reducing pollutants entering local rivers and the Chesapeake Bay. The Cooperative Plant Management Task Force (“Task Force”), established by the 2013 Sustainable DC Mayor’s Order 2013-209, issued the Cooperative Plant Management Task Force Final Report which includes standards for identifying, planting, and cultivating native plants on District government properties. The native plant requirements included in the specification language are based on the report’s recommendations. Native plant lists utilized in the specification language vary depending on the type of habitat where service is provided and are detailed in the Landscaping Services Statement of Work Environmental Guidance. Reference texts cited in the requirements for one or more landscaping types include: Native Plants for Wildlife Habitat and Conservation Landscaping Chesapeake Bay Watershed, Prince George’s

County Bioretention Manual or indicated as being native in the Department of Transportation’s Green Infrastructure Standards.

**Invasive plants** are non-native plants that cause economic harm, environmental harm, or harm to human health. Invasive plants often have traits such as high seed production, rapid growth, and the ability to thrive in disturbed areas. With these advantages invasive species out-compete native plants and negatively affect native plants and wildlife. For the purposes of the District’s environmental specification guidance, invasive plants include any plant species that appears in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Plant Invaders of Mid-Atlantic Natural Areas, and/or any other plant species that the District deems invasive. This specification language is based upon recommendations included in the Cooperative Plant Management Task Force Final Report completed in December 2014.



## Background Information (continued)

The **Anacostia River Clean Up and Protection Fertilizer Act of 2012** is a subtitle of the Sustainable DC Amendment Act of 2012. It is intended to reduce fertilizer runoff and subsequent harm to aquatic ecosystems, fisheries, and water quality. Section 203 of the Act outlines the fertilizer application requirements reproduced in this specification. The Act is a legal requirement that applies to all individuals and entities paid to apply fertilizer in the District. The Act is available at [dcclims1.dccouncil.us/images/00001/20130124112432.pdf](http://dcclims1.dccouncil.us/images/00001/20130124112432.pdf).

**Integrated Pest Management (IPM)** is a method of managing pests that minimizes harm to the environment by using comprehensive information on the life cycle of pests and their interaction with the environment. IPM considers a range of pest control methods, including cultural, mechanical, and biological practices, as well as judicious use of chemical pesticides. As part of the **Pesticide Education and Control Amendment Act of 2012 (PECA)**, District agencies are required to implement an IPM policy which has been approved by the District Department of Environment. The text of the PECA is available at : [dcclims1.dccouncil.us/images/00001/20120801151713.pdf](http://dcclims1.dccouncil.us/images/00001/20120801151713.pdf).

**Locally sourced seeds or plant material** refers to the origins of the seeds or plant material for a grown plant being purchased. The location of the source of seeds or plant material may differ from the location of the grown tree that is procured. This is particularly true for trees. For this specification, locally sourced seeds or plant material is defined as any plant material grown from plant or seeds sourced from DC, PA., OH, MD, VA, WV, DE, or NJ. Specifying plants, which includes trees, grown from **locally-sourced seeds and plant material** ensures plants are adapted to the local climate, making them hardier and creating better habitat for local wildlife. The locally grown plant specification language is based upon recommendations included in the Cooperative Plant Management Task Force Final Report completed in December 2014. For more information on the habitat and conservation benefits of planting plants grown from locally sourced seeds or plant material, please see Native Plants for Wildlife Habitat and Conservation Landscaping Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

**Locally grown plants** refers to plants sourced or purchased from nurseries in DC, PA, OH, MD, VA, WV, DE, or NJ. Sourcing plants helps keep pests from other parts of the country from coming to the region and reduces the environmental impact associated with long distance shipping. The locally grown plant specification language is based upon recommendations included in the Cooperative Plant Management Task Force Final Report completed in December 2014.

Environmental Hotspots	The most important environmental benefits associated with this specification
<b>ENERGY CONSUMPTION</b>	Locally grown plants dramatically reduce energy consumption and resulting greenhouse gas emissions associated with long distance shipping. Native plants require less mechanical maintenance than non-native plants, therefore requiring less energy.
<b>WATER CONSUMPTION</b>	Native plants are adapted to local climate and require less water than non-native plants.
<b>POLLUTANTS/TOXICITY/ HEAVY METALS</b>	Integrated pest management reduces the use of pesticides. Fertilizer requirements ensure fertilizer is applied in ways that reduce runoff and limit the use of phosphorous- and nitrogen-containing fertilizers that pollute waterways.
<b>END-OF-LIFE DISPOSAL</b>	This specification requires plant waste to be composted, so long as the District can provide a compost location. Composting reduces the amount of material that ends up in landfills and produces a usable end product.



## Significance to the District

**SUSTAINABLE DC PLAN** This specification includes native plant requirements which supports meeting Sustainable DC Plan Nature Action 2.5: Stipulate native plant varieties for District government plantings and landscaping; and Transportation Action 4.1 Strictly limit idling engines.

**LEGISLATION** Pesticide Education and Control Amendment Act of 2012  
Anacostia River Clean Up and Protection Fertilizer Act of 2012  
Engine Idling, DCMR 20-900  
Sustainable Solid Waste Management Amendment Act of 2014

**LEED FOR EXISTING BUILDINGS: O&M** This specification meets a number of the requirements of LEED v4.

- The Sustainable Sites “Site management policy” prerequisite requires the creation and implementation of a policy to reduce chemicals, pollution, and waste. This policy should address a number of areas, including organic waste management, invasive and exotic plant species management, and fertilizer use. Organic waste should be returned to the site or diverted from landfills, invasive and exotic plant species should be managed through monitoring and education, and soils should be tested before using fertilizer to prevent over-application of nutrients.
- The Sustainable Sites: “Site development – protect or restore habitat” credit requires either native or adapted vegetation on 20% of the site area (with a minimum of 5,000 square feet), or financial support to a land trust or conservation organization equivalent to at least \$0.05 per square foot of the site area. This credit is worth two points.
- The Indoor Environmental Quality: “Integrated pest management” credit requires an IPM plan meeting a list of specific criteria to be in place for the building and grounds. The plan must be evaluated annually. This credit is worth two points.

This specification *varies* from LEED’s requirements on fertilizers. The Sustainable Sites “Site management” credit prohibits ammonia-based fertilizers, biosolid-based fertilizers (for continuous application), synthetic quick-release fertilizers, or “weed and feed” formulations.

*For more information about sustainable specification guidance or the District’s Sustainable Purchasing Program, please visit: <http://ocp.dc.gov/page/sustainable-purchasing>, call the OCP Customer Contact Center at: [202.724.4477](tel:202.724.4477) , or email [sppdc@dc.gov](mailto:sppdc@dc.gov)*