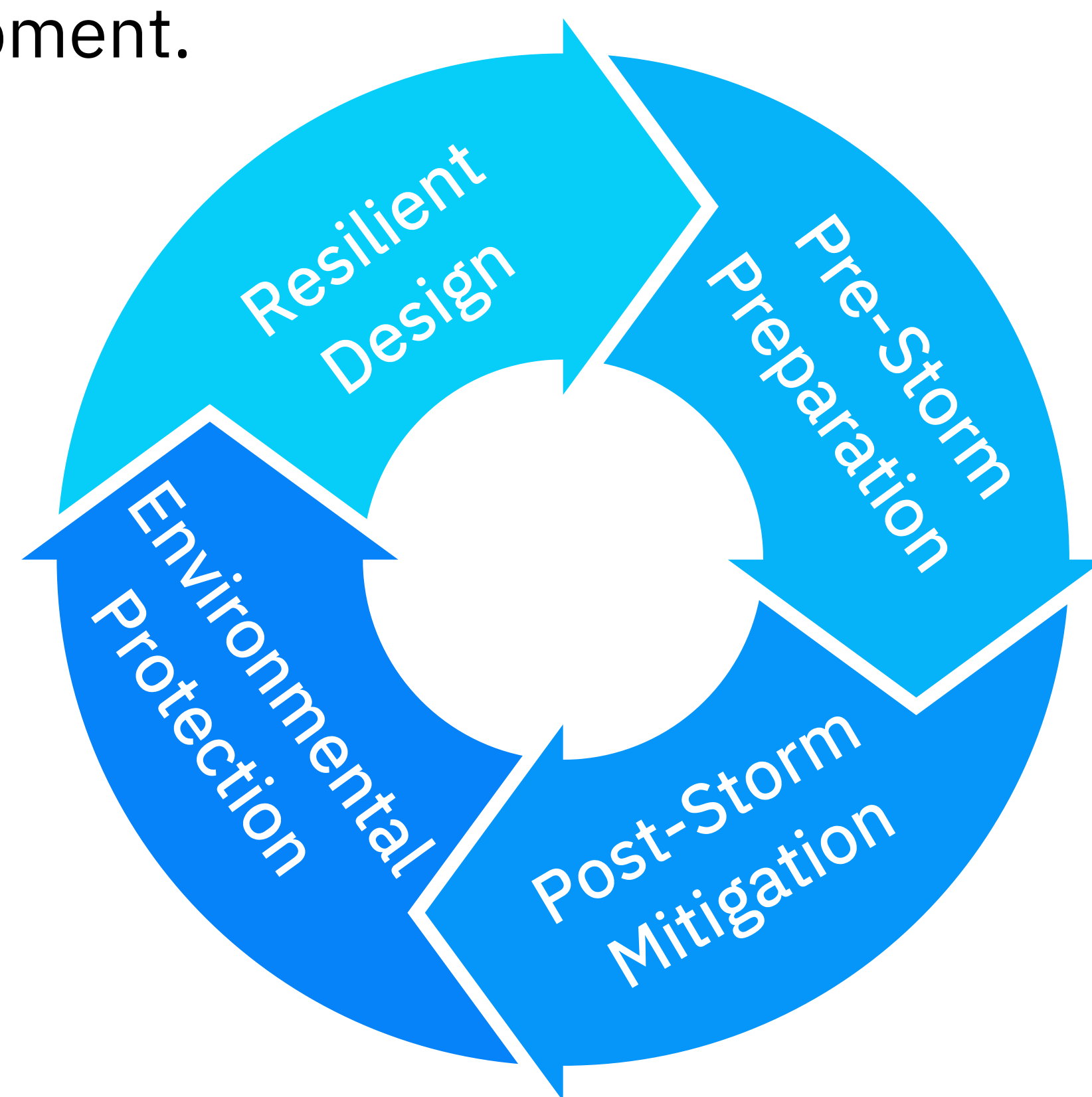


StormSmart Landscaping

Extension Education for Coastal Resilience and Resource Protection

Introduction

As extreme weather events increasingly impact coastal regions, Extension plays a vital role in equipping communities with research-based, practical strategies to protect landscapes, natural resources, and built environments. This poster describes an Extension program that helps coastal communities prepare for and recover from extreme weather by promoting storm-smart landscaping. The program educates homeowners, green industry professionals, and community partners on resilient landscape design, storm preparedness, post-storm recovery, and best practices for protecting equipment, fuels, and chemicals to preserve urban landscapes, the environment, and water resources from wind and flooding damage. Using a diverse outreach approach—including in-person and virtual programs, checklists, digital media, and podcasts—the program delivers accessible, research-based guidance and serves as a scalable model for public education and workforce development.



Program Goals

- Improved resilient landscape designs
- Adoption of pre-storm preparedness actions
- Protection of water resources and infrastructure
- Reduced post-storm accidents and environmental risks
- Supports workforce development

Why StormSmart Landscaping Matters

- Increasing frequency of extreme weather events in coastal regions
- Increasing population in coastal regions
- Landscape damage contributes to economic loss and environmental contamination
- Homeowners and professionals often lack science-based preparedness and recovery guidance



Multipronged Outreach Strategy

Multiple formats reinforce learning and improve access

- In-person workshops
- Virtual presentations
- Fact sheets and printable checklists
- Social media and blogs
- Podcasts

Core Focus Areas

Resilient landscape design

- Plant and tree selection
- Design for wind tolerance
- Root stability and pruning practices
- Proper drainage and soil considerations

Storm preparedness

- Protecting ornamental plant beds, trees, palms, pots, outdoor furniture, and structures
- Protecting pets and wildlife
- Irrigation system shutdown protocols
- Storing and securing landscape equipment
- Fuel and chemical storage protection

Post-storm mitigation

- Safety and hazard detection
- Mosquito and sun protection
- Safe debris management
- Assessing plant recovery
- Tree and palm specific tasks
- Preventing runoff contamination

Accessing resources

- Small Business Administration
- Small Business Development Center
- Florida Nursery Grower Landscape Association

Program contacts

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