A. Using Lawn and Landscape Best Management Practices Training to Improve Water Quality

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The objectives of this project were to reduce the amount of nitrogen and other pollutants entering waterways, and to improve knowledge of sound horticultural practices for healthier landscapes. This was accomplished by teaching landscape best management practices to the landscape maintenance industry. A 2-hour class was developed. Power-Point modules taught proper landscape practices, equipment maintenance, and storage procedures to reduce or prevent non-point source pollution during landscape maintenance activities. Pre- and post-tests were administered using TurningPoint Technology and there were 20 multiple choice questions. Vehicle decals were given to those passing the exam. Decal holders committing violations are given an automatic fine without warning. Six classes have been taught with 213 attendees. Passing rate (must obtain 75% correct) was 98%. Passing rate of 98% shows they have gained the knowledge to prevent or reduce pollutants entering waterways by using sound horticultural practices and proper equipment maintenance and storage.

B. Using TurningPoint Technology to Train and Evaluate Limited Commercial Landscape Maintenance Participants

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The objectives of this project were to use technology to record and tabulate pre- and post-test results and a class evaluation; and to reduce staff time needed for tabulation. TurningPoint Technology was used to develop pre- and post-tests and a class evaluation in a PowerPoint format. Class participants were given a transponder to use for recording their answers electronically. Using this technology the agent was able to gather and tabulate test answers and class evaluations automatically. It worked significantly better than paper tests that were frequently lacking information. Considerable staff time was saved because the system performed all of the calculations automatically. A "results by question" report was generated, which tabulated the percent correct and incorrect for each question asked. Knowledge gain from the pre- to the post-test was an average of 29%. Knowledge gain per question varied from 9% to 59%. This pre- and post-test information was helpful in modifying the tests, allowing staff to delete questions where knowledge was already very high. Using this technology saved time and obtained better results than using a paper system for testing.

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