

St. Lucie County Environmental Resources Department
Beach Dune Trimming Guidelines
Effective July 1, 2008

- 1) Dead leaves and limbs should not be removed unless they are creating a safety hazard. They protect sensitive understory plants and new growth from salt spray.
- 2) No more than one-third of the height of any plant may be removed in a single year and no more than one-third of the total leaf surface area of a plant may be removed in a single pruning event or in a single year.
- 3) No plant less than six feet (6') shall be trimmed and no plant shall be cut to a height less than six feet (6').
- 4) Trimming shall be done once per trimming season, between March 1st and October 1st, to prevent plant vulnerability to disease and weakness during winter months.
- 5) Trimming of dune vegetation shall not be performed in such a manner that will adversely affect the lighting conditions with regards to the SLC Sea Turtle Protection Regulations. Potential for disorientation and subsequent injury or mortality of hatchling marine turtles exists due to increase illumination of the nesting beach as a result of over pruning. Marine turtle mortality resulting from increased illumination may be considered a violation of Chapter 370.12 FS, and the Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973. Such a violation could subject the responsible party to prosecution by both the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with fines up to \$10,000.
- 6) Florida Department of Environmental Protection permitting requirements must also be satisfied.