



Green Shield Certified for Landscapes

The Sustainable Standard for Premium Pest Protection

Green Shield Certified (GSC) for Landscapes

is a national, non-profit certification program that promotes effective, prevention-based pest control while minimizing the need to use pesticides. GSC for Landscapes participants include landscape management providers that demonstrate proficiency in Integrated Pest Management (IPM), sustainable landscaping or organic landscaping to the independent, third-party evaluator IPM Institute of North America.



GSC for Landscapes participants benefit their communities by creating:

- 1 **Safer greenspaces** for people, pets and pollinators by avoiding synthetic pesticides and fertilizers that scientific research suggests adversely impacts environmental health and biodiversity.
- 2 **Healthier soils** through soil testing, aeration, compost topdressing, organic fertilization and much more. This soil health improvement nourishes vegetation and captures more rainfall, airborne pollution and atmospheric carbon.
- 3 **Effective pest and weed management** by disrupting life cycles and eliminating favorable conditions such as compacted soil, unbalanced pH and nutrient levels and poor drainage.

GSC for Landscapes participants are:

- 1 **Verified** providers of effective pest and weed control methods. Each GSC company or program must pass a rigorous on-site evaluation every three years to remain certified.
- 2 **Leaders** in the green and sustainability service industries. Associations and organizations such as the Natural Resources Defense Council, Professional Grounds Management Society, USGBC and more recognize GSC as the gold standard for sustainable landscaping.
- 3 **Experts** in soil and plant health best practices required to maintain lawns, natural areas, gardens, swales, forests and more with limited inputs of pesticides, fertilizers and water.



How to identify a GSC for Landscapes provider, service or landscape?

- ▶ **This flyer!**
- ▶ **GSC logo on our website**
- ▶ **Listed on GSC's "Find A Provider" page at bit.ly/GSCproviders**

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Pest management plans certified or developed under Green Shield principles may adhere to [WELL v2 Feature X10: Pest Management and Pesticide Use](#). This [WELL](#) feature requires using Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for pest control to reduce the application of pesticides.

Green Shield Certified is a certification program of the 501(c)3 non-profit IPM Institute of North America, headquartered in Madison, WI. Learn more about GSC on our social accounts.

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GSC vs. Conventional Landscaping Services



Children: Pound-for-pound, children consume more food and water and inhale more air compared to adults, which increases their relative exposure to pesticides and to health consequences such as difficulties concentrating, higher levels of ADHD, asthma and certain cancers. GSC for Landscapes providers can only apply weed and pest control products scientifically proven to have limited health risks to children.



Water Quality: GSC's sustainable landscaping approach increases the water- and nutrient-holding capacity of soils, while eliminating the need to apply synthetic pesticides and fertilizers that threaten the watersheds we depend upon for cleaning, consumption and recreation.



Pollinators: Habitat destruction and over-use of pesticides has triggered an unsustainable population decrease of pollinators which collectively contribute \$24 billion to the US economy.¹ GSC for Landscapes providers reintroduce native plants to attract pollinators and/or avoid products that imperil pollinators such as neonicotinoid insecticides.



Pets: Multiple peer-reviewed studies have measured higher canine malignant lymphoma risk in dogs exposed to lawns treated with 2,4-D, the active ingredient in many commercially available lawn herbicides.^{2,3} GSC providers cannot use 2,4-D and other chemicals known to harm pets to retain certification.



Soil: Conventional landscaping can degrade the quality of soil over time by killing or harming beneficial microbes and detritivores, like earthworms. GSC's sustainable landscaping approach harnesses nature's bounty of grass clippings, leaf litter and compost to feed and benefit the soil ecosystem.



Climate Change: Converting hydrogen and nitrogen to ammonia found in most synthetic fertilizers accounts for nearly 1% of global annual CO₂ emissions.⁴ GSC for Landscapes approved fertilizer and pesticide products mostly derive from animal or plant ingredients resulting in a lower carbon footprint compared to synthetic products dependent on fossil-fuel extraction and industrial processing.

¹ White House Blog: New Steps to Protect Pollinators, Critical Contributors to Our Nation's Economy
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2014/06/20/new-steps-protect-pollinators-critical-contributors-our-nation-s-economy>.

² Takashima-Uebelhoefer, B. et al. 2012. Household chemical exposures and the risk of canine malignant lymphoma, a model for human non-hodkin's lymphoma. *Environmental Restoration* 112: 171-176.

³ Hayes, H. et al. 1991. Case-control study of canine malignant lymphoma: positive association with dog owner's use of 2, 4-dichlorophenoxyacetic acid herbicides. *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* 83, 17: 1226-1231

⁴ Krietsch Boerner, L. June 15, 2019. Industrial ammonia production emits more CO₂ than any other chemical-making reaction. Chemists want to change that. *Chemical & Engineering News* 97: 24.