

2010 Blue Thumb Standards Manual and Partners' Agreement

Updated June, 2009

Please note!

The enrollment/membership renewal period for 2010 is Dec. 1-31, 2009.

Materials orders (such as bookmarks and brochures) for 2010 are also due between Dec. 1-31, 2009.



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The Blue Thumb
Logo



The Blue Thumb
Primary Signature
Logo + Tagline



Primary Signature

The Blue Thumb logo is a visual expression of the program and what it represents. When used consistently, it will build recognition and awareness of the program.

The primary signature includes the Blue Thumb logo and the tagline “Planting for Clean Water”, set in the typeface Tarzana Narrow. To properly position the program in the mind of the public, the tagline should be used in conjunction with the logo at least once in all program communications.

It has been created specifically for Rice Creek Watershed District and must never be recreated or modified in any way.

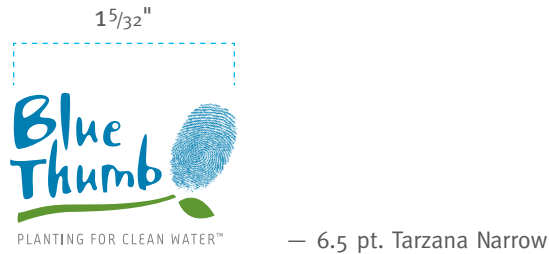
Basic Guidelines:

The Logo + Tagline should be used at least once in any communications piece, whether printed or electronic. If the name of the program is used with the tagline, a trademark symbol (“™”) should be used. However, if just referring to the Blue Thumb program, no trademark symbol should be used.

All versions of the logo must be reproduced without alteration from approved electronic artwork files, provided by Rice Creek Watershed District.

Artwork shown in this manual is for illustration purposes only. To acquire approved logo files, login to the partner portal then click on “Blue Thumb files” under “Organizational Information.” Then click on “Fonts and Logos” to download the fonts and logos.

Primary Signature Minimum Size



Primary Signature



Logo



Signature Sizing & Minimum Sizing

To ensure legibility of the Blue Thumb Logo + Tagline, the signature should never be used smaller than 1⁵/₃₂" (measured from the left edge of the "B" to the right edge of the thumbprint in the logo). The "Planting for Clean Water" tagline must be no smaller than 6.5 pt. in the Tarzana Narrow typeface.

For formats that won't accommodate the Primary Signature at this minimum size, the Logo alone may be used close to a text reference stating the full program name, "Blue Thumb, Planting for Clean Water™".

Clear Space

To ensure visual impact and legibility of the Primary Signature, a minimum clear space must be preserved around the mark as shown in the diagrams to the left. When possible, additional clear space is preferred.

The size of the space is based on the height of the capital letter "B" in the logo. Typography and other design elements should not be positioned within the clear space.

Three-color: Blue, Green and Dark Gray



Two-color: Blue and Green



One-color: Blue or Black on light background



Reversed White on dark or black backgrounds



Signature Colors

The Blue Thumb signature colors are Blue Thumb Blue, Blue Thumb Green and Blue Thumb Dark Gray.

The Primary Signature should appear in all three PMS colors whenever possible.

When not printing with three colors, preferred two- and one-color versions appear at left.

When used with a dark color, the logo should be reversed to white as shown.

Blue Thumb Signature Colors:

Blue Thumb Blue
 Pantone coated 7468
 Pantone uncoated 7468
 CMYK: C-94, M-16, Y-7, K-28
 RGB: R-0, G-117, B-154
 Websafe color: #006699

Blue Thumb Green
 Pantone coated 370
 Pantone uncoated 370
 CMYK: C-64, M-5, Y-100, K-24
 RGB: R-91, G-143, B-34
 Websafe color: #669900

Blue Thumb Dark Gray
 Pantone coated Cool Gray 10
 Pantone uncoated Cool Gray 11
 CMYK: C-38, M-29, Y-20, K-58
 RGB: R-97, G-99, B-101
 Websafe color: #666666

Typography/Font Usage

Celestia Antiqua Regular

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz1234567890

Celestia Antiqua Italic

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz1234567890

Celestia Antiqua Semibold

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz1234567890

Celestia Antiqua Caps

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz1234567890

Meta Normal

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz1234567890

Meta Medium

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz1234567890

Meta Bold

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz1234567890

Consistent use of type is a key element in creating a cohesive look across all Blue Thumb communications. At all times use of the following typefaces is recommended:

The primary typeface for all Blue Thumb materials is Celestia Antiqua. This font should be used for large amounts of body copy.

The secondary typeface is Meta, used for headlines, subheads, minimal copy and whenever a distinct contrast to Celestia Antiqua is desired.

To acquire approved fonts, login to the partner portal then click on "Blue Thumb files" under "Organizational Information." Then click on "Fonts and Logos" to download the fonts.

Blue Thumb Program Overview

The Blue Thumb program was created to encourage homeowners to use native plants in gardens, plant raingardens, and stabilize shoreline property with native plants to improve water quality. The Blue Thumb program does not encompass all best management practices (BMPs) such as pervious and porous pavers, rain barrels, etc.

Although the program was created by Rice Creek Watershed District, it is intended for use throughout the Midwest. A steering committee, consisting of representatives from various Blue Thumb partner organizations, sets program goals and determines the strategic plan for the program.

Main Components of the Blue Thumb program:

- I. User-friendly website BlueThumb.org
 - A. Partners of the Blue Thumb – Planting for Clean Water™ program will be on the Blue Thumb website on all applicable pages, i.e. partners, stores, grants, news stories.

- II. Collaborating on Educational and Outreach Efforts
 - A. *Partnerships*

The Blue Thumb program strengthens educational efforts in both the public and private sectors through the collaboration of local governmental units (watershed districts, conservation districts, cities, counties), non-profits, private sector nurseries, garden centers, landscapers, contractors and consultants.

Benefits to partners include networking and continuing education opportunities, being listed on the website, credibility, job leads, combining resources and reducing duplication of outreach efforts.

 - B. *Educational and promotional materials available for purchase.*

Current materials include brochures, bookmarks, stickers and table-top kiosks and garden art signs. Login to the partners' portal page to download the order form (pdf document) and then fax it in to Dawn Pape (763-398-3088). We are seeking to continually develop promotional materials partners will find useful. Please let a member of the steering committee know if you have an idea for a useful promotional material. **All orders for 2010 are due by December 31, 2009.**

To purchase raingarden guides, visit the raingarden page on Blue Thumb website to find out where you purchase these locally or online.

Terminology

When discussing the three areas of the Blue Thumb program, they should be listed either from least to greatest direct impact on water quality (native gardens, raingardens and shoreline stabilization) or from greatest to least impact on water quality (shoreline stabilization, raingardens and native gardens).

Sample Descriptions of the Program Areas

I. Design Native Gardens

They are beautiful, cost less and require less maintenance than a lawn. Once established, native plantings need little weeding, watering, mulching or mowing.

II. Create a Raingarden

Filter dirty stormwater from streets and rooftops before it enters our lakes and rivers. The main purpose of a raingarden is to absorb stormwater runoff. Therefore, both natives and non-natives are acceptable in raingarden plantings.

III. Stabilize Shorelines

Roots of native plants are long so they anchor the soil and filter out pollutants as well as discourage geese from congregating. In stabilizing shorelines with plants, native plants must be used.

To avoid confusion with other programs, it is important to keep terminology consistent. When covering the three main areas of this program, only use "acceptable terminology":

Acceptable Terms to Describe the Blue Thumb Program Areas

- Native Gardens
- Native Plantings
- Raingardens (**one word**)
- Stabilize shorelines/lakeshores
- Shoreline/lakeshore stabilization
- Stabilize shorelines/lakeshores with plants or plantings
- Stabilize shorelines/lakeshores with native plants or native plantings
- Shoreline/lakeshores stabilization with/using plants/native plants/vegetation

Terminology to be Avoided in Describing the Blue Thumb Program Areas

- Natural plantings
- Rain gardens (two words), rainwater gardens, water garden
- Vegetated buffer, lakescaping, aquascaping, shoreline buffer, buffer zone.

Definitions

Background

Better landscapes result from a **balanced mix** of turf grass lawns and/or other traditionally manicured portions with areas that can use plants that require less maintenance. How the balance is made depends on what is appropriate for the overall situation. Also, what is appropriate for one part of a yard may be completely inappropriate in another part. Many factors should be considered in making planning decisions for any landscape project. Some of these are:

- **site conditions** such as soil type and shade;
- **functional or use requirements** such as play areas and structures;
- **surroundings** such as shorelines, wetlands and/or neighborhood culture and environment;
- **personal tastes** and interests of the land owner(s);
- **local codes**, association covenants and other requirements placed by government agencies.

Some places that are good candidates for using lower maintenance plantings are shorelines and wetland buffers. There are various options for landscaping these areas. One very desirable and increasingly popular option is to use native plants. Native plants are important to use because of their low maintenance, soil stabilizing, stormwater retention abilities, and wildlife attracting characteristics. It is also very important to help reintroduce the hundreds of wonderful plant species that were “here first”.

What is a “Native Plant”?

Generally speaking, all species are native to someplace. But, people have taken many plants with them as they have emigrated around the world. In landscaping terms, “native” refers to a plant species that is used in a location or region where it grew before people began moving plants around. In the US, this means before the time of settlement by Europeans around 1850.

Many species are known to occur across relatively wide ranges of geography, climate and environmental conditions. It is commonly understood that sub-groups of these species became adapted to various local conditions within these wider ranges. These are called “local ecotypes”. It is desirable to use the best adapted plants for a landscape project. **Local ecotype native plants are clearly well adapted to local conditions. Therefore, Blue Thumb projects using native plants require local ecotype native plants. This means plant material propagated from original sources no farther than 200 miles (300 miles for trees and shrubs) from the project.** Certain projects, such as ecological restorations, may require sources closer than this.

What's the difference between a native plant and a “cultivar”?

Many kinds of garden plants result from a breeding program or a deliberate process to select for certain desirable characteristics such as flower color. These plants are called “cultivars”. The word is derived from the words “cultivated” and “variety”. They are usually given a unique name. Most turf grasses as well as annual and perennial bedding plants are cultivars. There are cultivars that have been selected and bred from species native to the U.S. too. Their genetic make-up is considered to be somewhat narrowed and altered from the original source material. **Therefore, cultivars may only be used in those Blue Thumb projects that specifically allow them.** Native gardens are encouraged to be native, but not required to be. Cultivar use is allowed in raingardens. Shoreline stabilization plantings, however,

must use only local ecotype native plants. Regardless of their origin, cultivars and non-native plants should not be introduced to the shoreland because they may invade existing native plant communities, their root systems may not adequately protect the shoreline from erosion, and they may not provide shelter and food for native animals.

Why are distinctive regional landscapes important?

An intriguing aspect of landscaping and gardening is that you have to work with what you have. For the most part, soils and climate conditions are givens. This means that a yard in Minnesota is fundamentally different from one in Arizona, or even Iowa. It should look like it too! However, the cultural forces of uniformity that give us identical big box stores and fast food restaurants across the land also tend to create a bland sameness in the style of our landscapes. While mass producers and marketers lower costs and broadens availability, it also turns something special into a bland commodity. Lowest possible up-front cost and standardization is fine for cars and electronic toys. It is questionable for food, a big threat for native plants and a disaster for regionally distinct, environmentally beneficial landscapes.

One size definitely does not fit all and lowest price is not always best. Time and money invested into **a quality landscape that promotes clean water benefits everyone**. It's a lot less expensive to keep pollution out of our lakes and rivers by planting for clean water than it is to clean our waters up later.

drafted by Blue Thumb Partner, Karl Ruser
Landscape Alternatives, Inc.

Blue Thumb Program Goals & Strategies

Program Goal

The Blue Thumb program was created to improve water quality and habitat. The program will promote the use of plants, primarily through retailers, to reduce stormwater runoff and as a method for stabilizing shorelines.

Strategies to Be Implemented in 2010 to Reach Program Goal

- I. Outreach and Education on Native Gardens, Raingardens and Lakeshore Stabilization using Native Plants
 - a. Promote Blue Thumb via website
 - b. Promote Blue Thumb via a minimum of 50 workshops and presentations to residents and stakeholder groups in 2010
 - c. Implement a “train the trainer” program on giving presentations
 - d. Promote Blue Thumb via a minimum of 100 press releases
 - e. Promote Blue Thumb via a minimum of 30 newsletter articles
 - f. Promote Blue Thumb at a minimum of 60 events (e.g. State Fair, county fairs, “green” fairs, lawn and garden shows, etc.)
 - g. Promote Blue Thumb in libraries, city halls, yard signs, Blue Sky Guide, media campaign, 2010 calendar
- II. Private Industry
 - a. Collaborate to effectively promote native plantings and raingardens
 - b. Develop various display and promotional methods that fit the needs of private industry partners
 - c. With retailers, monitor marketing techniques and adapt accordingly
 - d. Collaborate to identify methods that make it easy for residents to purchase plants (e.g. plant drop-offs, plant sales etc.)
 - e. Incorporate Blue Thumb plantings in public spaces (with signage from the private company as well as Blue Thumb) - schools, city halls, libraries, parks, shops...
 - f. Have the “The Blue Thumb Guide to Raingardens” and garden art signs available for retail
- III. Work with other agencies to expand the Blue Thumb program:
 - a. Give presentation(s) to other agencies to introduce concept
 - b. Have cities and other MS4s use the Blue Thumb program to help satisfy their federal Clean Water Act mandates (SWPPP requirements).
- IV. Website Development
 - a. Create a new online video for the “how-to’s” of native gardens and lakeshore stabilization a. Create a virtual tour of the Blue Thumb projects (completed in 2009)
 - b. Create a calendar of “Action Hour Opportunities” (completed in 2009)
 - c. Create an online display check-out (completed in 2009)
 - d. Feedback from residents on website (completed in 2009)

2010 Partners' Agreement

1. Blue Thumb Logo:

The Blue Thumb – Planting for Clean Water™ logo was created to be an attractive, visible, and memorable component of the Blue Thumb program. Promotional materials used for the Blue Thumb program all bear the logo and the same signature colors, look and style as outlined previously in this document.

2. Keeping Up-To-Date with Blue Thumb News:

It is your responsibility to make sure you are receiving the monthly Blue Thumb email updates. If you fail to receive them, contact Dawn Pape to make sure your email address is correct on the distribution list. Also, if you miss a general meeting, it is your responsibility to read the meeting minutes.

3. Sharing Materials:

A courtesy copy of all Blue Thumb promotional materials created by partners shall be shared so we create a collection of materials for all partners to utilize.

Soon you will be able to upload your materials to the Blue thumb partners' page by logging in. Until the website is complete, however, please follow the ftp directions for sharing large files that cannot be emailed.

Go to <ftp://data.ricecreek.org>

Type in username: rcwd_ftp and password: ricecreek

Put the materials you are sharing with the Blue Thumb logo on it in the Blue Thumb Share folder within the "upload" directory. They will then appear at <http://data.ricecreek.org/upload>

Email Dawn at dpape@ricecreek.org when you're done uploading so she knows it's there and she can transfer it to the "partner portal."

4. Definitions and Terminology:

It is important that we are all giving a consistent message to the public. Therefore, the definitions and terminology outlined in this Blue Thumb Standards Manual must be adhered to in order to be a Blue Thumb partner in good standing.

5. Continuing Education:

Partners will be expected to continue their own education on their honor about native plants, raingardens and shoreline stabilization by attending trainings or workshops held by Blue Thumb partners or other experts.

6. Program Support:

To ensure that the Blue Thumb program keeps moving forward and we achieve our goals for 2010 (outlined on page 9), partners will be expected to use their strengths to support the Blue Thumb program and incorporate Blue Thumb activities into their normal activities. Partners will need to complete a minimum of 30 volunteer action hours during 2010 or donate \$1,500 to the program. Any combination of hours or monetary contribution is acceptable, i.e. 15 hours and \$750. Each action hour is counted as a \$50 contribution.

"Volunteer action hours" are defined as any action that promotes or furthers the development of the Blue Thumb program. Partner volunteer action hours can be satisfied in a wide variety of ways such as, but not limited to: participating in Blue Thumb work groups, putting up a Blue Thumb sign at a project, promoting Blue Thumb in conjunction with your business'/organization's display, hosting or participating in Blue Thumb workshops, writing articles, press releases and/or advertisements that relate and/or promote Blue Thumb goals. **Your organization is responsible for entering their own contributions on the website by the end of each calendar year. If contributions are not completed and/or entered, you're partnership will automatically terminate.**

2010 Partners' Agreement

Partner Information

Company/Organization _____

Main Blue Thumb Contact Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Website _____

Email _____

Description of organization and logo to be included on the website. **Please email this section to dpape@ricecreek.org along with your logo.** _____



Partner Contributions

Please outline how your organization intends to fulfill the Blue Thumb partnership agreement. Attach additional sheets if necessary.

Activity	Approximate number of hours
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
Estimated Dollar Contribution	Approximate date of contribution
_____	_____

Website

In order to access the Blue Thumb website to log your partner contributions, post events, news articles, update the plant selector tool, obtain Blue Thumb logos and fonts, meeting agendas and minutes, etc, you will need a username and password for your organization. Please write your organization's username and password below. If you are a continuing Blue Thumb partner and already have a username and password, please use the same one.

User name _____ Password _____

