

Sustainable Equestrian Facility Program FAQ's

Q. Do you have to have all of the requirements met in order to join the program?

A. No. Part of the benefit of joining the Audubon Lifestyles Program is the assistance that your facility will receive from Audubon Lifestyles staff as you work through the requirements of certification. Among other things this includes assistance with filling out the Program Audit, producing a Sustainability Charter, and developing a Nutrient Management Plan.

Q. How difficult is the program?

A. The program was developed in such a way as to be achievable yet comprehensive to every equestrian facility. However, facilities that achieve a higher standard in sustainability are rewarded through a series of recognition and branding opportunities.

Q. I see a number of organizations and individuals associated with the creation of the program. Who should I turn to if I need assistance?

A. The program is administered in its entirety by Audubon Lifestyles, Inc. a non-profit organization dedicated to advancing the principles of sustainability to individuals, businesses, municipalities and organizations around the world. If you need any assistance whatsoever you should call 727-733-0762 or email info@audubonlifestyles.org.

Q. What are the costs associated with the Program?

A. There is a one-time registering fee of \$500 to join the program. After which the facility must maintain an annual \$100 membership fee to retain any designations earned through the program, and to remain in the program. All Equestrian Facility Program members are Audubon Lifestyles Platinum Level Members regardless of any program specific designation earned or the length of time that the facility has participated in the program.

Q. When I join the program do I get anything right from the start that I can use for branding/marketing?

A. Immediately upon joining you have the right use the Audubon Lifestyles Standard organization logo, the International Sustainability Council Standard organization logo, and the Audubon Lifestyles Platinum Member Logo. These logos can be used on marketing materials, on the web or even on signs at the facility itself. In addition, a profile page and web link to your facility will be added to the Audubon Network and viewable to any website visitor.

Q. When can I use the ISC Charter Member Logo?

A. Immediately after you post the Sustainability Charter on your website or in a publicly viewable location at your facility you earn the right to use the ISC Charter Member Logo, and will be listed on the ISC website as an ISC Charter Member.

Audubon Lifestyles

At its core, Audubon Lifestyles is an organization based in the Principles for Sustainability. We believe that the most natural way to achieve success and to foster sustainability is by working to balance the triple bottom line of people, profit, and planet. We operate with the main purpose of benefiting society, while offering professional and sustainably based programs, products and services.

Our Mission

Audubon Lifestyles assists people in how they live, work, play, stay and learn to promote sustainable living and lifestyles.

Our Vision

To be a sustainable leader assisting people who are looking for sustainable solutions for life and business that are reliable, practical, and efficient.

Q. So what is a Sustainability Charter, and how difficult is it for me to create one?

A. A Sustainability Charter is a public declaration of specific actions that your equestrian facility pledges to take to be more sustainable. A Sustainability Charter is an adaptation and adoption of the International Sustainability Council's Principles for Sustainability. When you join the Audubon Lifestyles Equestrian Facility Program we provide your facility with a Sustainability Charter template that makes creating your own Charter a very simple, educational, and easy step in the process.

Q. Is an on-site visit required to verify the Audit?

A. Although we highly encourage an on-site verification visit from an Audubon Lifestyles representative, it is not a requirement. One of the challenges that face equestrian facilities everywhere is lack of financial support. In many cases it may be impossible for a facilities to cover the costs associated with an on-site visit, and therefore it is not required.

Q. What are the costs associated with an on-site verification visit, how long should I plan ahead, and how long will a visit take?

A. An on-site visit typically lasts 4 hours, and would consist of a site tour, and an audit interview process. A site visit fee of \$500 per day, and all travel related expenses would be billed to the equestrian facility. To keep travel expenses at a minimum it is advised to plan at least a month in advance, although a site-visit may occur quicker if we are available.

Q. What are the benefits of having an on-site verification visit?

A. We award higher points for similar criteria for facilities that have an on-site visit from an Audubon Lifestyles representative, thus making earning a higher rating possible. It has been set up this way as a means to encourage and incentivize facilities that have an Audubon Lifestyles representative visit property first hand. Visiting a property first-hand allows our staff to fully visualize the facility, and therefore we are better able to educate facility managers and owners about sustainability, and the specific aspects of the facility that could be improved to increase you overall audit score. Additionally, because we are physically there on-site, the time, burden, and cost of providing all the other forms of verification (photos, documents, maps, brochures etc.) via email/postal is greatly reduced.

Q. If we choose to not have an on-site audit how do we verify aspects of the audit?

A. Specific line items in the Audit have a number of different options for verification. Higher points are generally granted for "better" forms of verification. In order to earn points associated with a specific item you need to provide one method of verification. Photos, images, documents, and maps can be sent via email or in hardcopy format. Verbal verifications are conducted during a phone interview process after the audit has been submitted to Audubon Lifestyles.

Q. Does providing multiple forms of verification increase our point's total?

A. No. The facility can only earn point(s) for one verification method for any given line item in the audit. Verification points do not accumulate for the same line item.

Q. How long does a phone interview process typically take?

A. It depends on how many verbal verification points are being sought after, but generally the exit interview process should take about an hour.

Q. After we've been awarded a score, and earned specific designations from Audubon Lifestyles, can our facility increase our score and raise to a higher "star" rating next year?

A. Absolutely. The program has been set up as a means to assist, and encourage facilities to do just that. Anytime your facility is ready to "raise the bar" we are ready too!

For More Information

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