

## Pond Businesses Need to Follow the Minimum Advertised Pricing System

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The economic crisis has taken a toll on all businesses. While it's no secret that the pond and water garden work was lacking this year, another hardship came from the manufacturing and distribution side.

Minimum Advertised Pricing, also known as MAP, offers protection for any industry. The pond and water garden world needs a MAP structure to level the playing field and make it fair and equitable to stay in the pond and water garden business.

MAP provides a great way to keep things fair, but with the advent of the Internet, MAP seems to have been thrown to the wind. Just search the Internet for any given pond and water garden item, and you will find a plethora of products available for less than the cost to contractors.

Why can a homeowner buy pond and water garden products cheaper than a contractor can buy them? Simply put, not honoring the MAP enables distributors to sell at extremely reduced prices.

Is this fair? Is it right? I say, "no."

Why would any business choose to lower prices so much that it doesn't make any money? Things are tight and we all are fighting for survival, but is giving products away really the answer?

No! Not following MAP helps put pond and water garden companies out of business because many consumers only buy from the cheapest source, leaving other sources to dry up.

Is there a way to enforce MAP? Yes, there is. Pond and water garden product manufacturers are in the best position to tell customers that they must follow MAP or they won't sell to them.

What do you think about MAP? Should manufacturers force their customers to follow the MAP system?