

By Senator Gruters

23-01142-22

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1                   A bill to be entitled  
2       An act relating to golf course best management  
3       practices certification; creating s. 403.9339, F.S.;  
4       directing the Department of Environmental Protection  
5       to work and cooperate with the turfgrass science  
6       program at the University of Florida Institute of Food  
7       and Agricultural Sciences to administer a  
8       certification for golf course best management  
9       practices and provide and approve certification  
10      training and testing programs; providing certification  
11      and recertification requirements; providing that such  
12      certification exempts persons from certain local  
13      testing and local ordinance regulations; providing an  
14      exception; authorizing the department to share  
15      certification information with local and state  
16      governmental entities; encouraging the department to  
17      create an online certification registry; directing the  
18      department to adopt rules; providing an effective  
19      date.

20  
21 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

22  
23       Section 1. Section 403.9339, Florida Statutes, is created  
24 to read:

25       403.9339 Golf course best management practices  
26 certification.—

27       (1) To provide a means of documenting and ensuring  
28 compliance with best management practices for fertilizer  
29 application to golf courses, the department shall work with the

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30 turfgrass science program at the University of Florida Institute  
31 of Food and Agricultural Sciences to administer a certification  
32 for golf course best management practices.

33 (2) The department, in cooperation with the turfgrass  
34 science program at the University of Florida Institute of Food  
35 and Agricultural Sciences, shall:

36 (a) Provide training and testing programs in golf course  
37 best management practices and may issue certificates  
38 demonstrating satisfactory completion of the training.

39 (b) Approve training and testing programs in golf course  
40 best management practices that are equivalent to or more  
41 comprehensive than the programs provided by the department under  
42 paragraph (a). Such programs must be reviewed and reapproved by  
43 the department if significant changes are made.

44 (3) To obtain a golf course best management practices  
45 certification, an applicant must submit to the department:

46 (a) A copy of the training certificate issued by the  
47 department under subsection (2).

48 (b) A certification fee of at least \$50 but not more than  
49 \$100. Until the fee is set by department rule, the fee for  
50 certification is \$50.

51 (4) (a) A golf course best management practices  
52 certification issued under this section expires 4 years after  
53 the date of issuance. Upon expiration of the certification, or  
54 after a grace period of not more than 30 days after the  
55 expiration date, a recertification may be issued.

56 (b) Before applying for recertification, an applicant must  
57 complete 8 classroom hours of acceptable continuing education,  
58 of which at least 2 hours must address fertilizer best

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59 management practices.

60 (5) To obtain a golf course best management practices  
61 recertification, an applicant must submit to the department:

62 (a) Proof of having completed the 8 classroom hours of  
63 continuing education pursuant to subsection (4).

64 (b) A recertification fee of at least \$50 but not more than  
65 \$100. Until the fee is set by department rule, the  
66 recertification fee is \$50.

67 (6) A person certified under this section is exempt from:

68 (a) Additional local testing.

69 (b) Local ordinances relating to water and fertilizer use  
70 blackout periods or restrictions, unless a state of emergency is  
71 declared.

72 (7) (a) The department may provide the certification status  
73 of persons certified under this section to local and state  
74 governmental entities.

75 (b) The department is encouraged to create a registry of  
76 persons certified under this section on its website.

77 (8) The department shall adopt rules to administer this  
78 section.

79 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2022.