

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to golf course best management
3 practices certification; transferring, renumbering,
4 and amending s. 403.9339, F.S.; providing a short
5 title; providing legislative findings and intent
6 regarding golf course best management practices
7 certification; defining the term "department";
8 conforming cross-references; providing for a type two
9 transfer of the Golf Course Best Management Practices
10 Certification program in the Department of
11 Environmental Protection to the Department of
12 Agriculture and Consumer Services; providing an
13 effective date.

14
15 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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17 **Section 1. Section 403.9339, Florida Statutes, is**
18 **transferred, renumbered as section 604.75, Florida Statutes, and**
19 **amended to read:**

20 604.75 ~~403.9339~~ Golf course best management practices
21 certification.—

22 (1) SHORT TITLE.—This section shall be known and may be
23 cited as the "Golf Course Best Management Practices
24 Certification Act."

25 (2) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.—The Legislature finds

26 that, due to the foundational agricultural nature of golf
27 courses and since the Department of Agriculture and Consumer
28 Services oversees best management practices programs for sod
29 growing operations and for the green industry, it is appropriate
30 for the department to oversee golf course best management
31 practices certification. Certified participants must abide by
32 the best management practices governing the application of
33 fertilizer on sod.

34 (3) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section, the term
35 "department" means the Department of Agriculture and Consumer
36 Services.

37 (4)~~(1)~~ To provide a means of documenting and ensuring
38 compliance with best management practices for fertilizer
39 application to golf courses, the turfgrass science program at
40 the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural
41 Sciences, in coordination with the department, shall administer
42 a certification for golf course best management practices.

43 (5)~~(2)~~ The turfgrass science program, in cooperation with
44 the department, shall:

45 (a) Provide training and testing programs in golf course
46 best management practices and may issue certificates
47 demonstrating satisfactory completion of the training.

48 (b) Approve training and testing programs in golf course
49 best management practices that are equivalent to or more
50 comprehensive than the programs provided by the turfgrass

51 science program under this subsection ~~paragraph (a)~~. Such
52 programs must be reviewed and reapproved by the turfgrass
53 science program if significant changes are made.

54 (6)~~(3)~~ To obtain a golf course best management practices
55 certification, an applicant must submit to the turfgrass science
56 program a copy of the training certificate issued under
57 subsection (5) ~~subsection (2)~~.

58 (7)~~(4)~~ A golf course best management practices
59 certification issued under this section expires 4 years after
60 the date of issuance. Upon expiration of the certification, or
61 after a grace period of not more than 30 days after the
62 expiration date, a recertification may be issued.

63 (8)~~(5)~~ To obtain a golf course best management practices
64 recertification, an applicant must submit to the turfgrass
65 science program proof of having completed 8 classroom hours of
66 continuing education, of which at least 2 hours must address
67 fertilizer best management practices.

68 (9)~~(6)~~ A person certified under this section is exempt
69 from:

70 (a) Additional local training.

71 (b) Local ordinances relating to water and fertilizer use
72 blackout periods or restrictions, unless a state of emergency is
73 declared. The certified person must continue to coordinate with
74 the local government to ensure that he or she adheres to the
75 comprehensive best management practices for that specific

76 community.

77 ~~(10)(7)~~ This section does not exempt a person certified
78 under this section from complying with the rules and
79 requirements for basin management action plans set forth in s.
80 403.067(7) if the golf course is located in an area within a
81 basin management action plan.

82 ~~(11)(a)(8)(a)~~ The turfgrass science program may provide
83 the certification status of persons certified under this section
84 to local and state governmental entities.

85 (b) The turfgrass science program is encouraged to create
86 a registry of persons certified under this section on its
87 website.

88 **Section 2.** Type two transfer from the Department of
89 Environmental Protection.—

90 (1) All powers, duties, functions, records, offices,
91 personnel, associated administrative support positions,
92 property, pending issues, existing contracts, administrative
93 authority, administrative rules, and unexpended balances of
94 appropriations, allocations, and other funds relating to the
95 Golf Course Best Management Practices Certification program
96 within the Department of Environmental Protection are
97 transferred by a type two transfer, as defined in s. 20.06(2),
98 Florida Statutes, to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer
99 Services.

100 (2) Any binding contract or interagency agreement existing

101 before July 1, 2026, between the Department of Environmental
102 Protection, or an entity or agent of the department, and any
103 other agency, entity, or person relating to the Golf Course Best
104 Management Practices Certification program shall continue as a
105 binding contract or agreement for the remainder of the term of
106 such contract or agreement on the successor entity responsible
107 for the program, activity, or functions relative to the contract
108 or agreement.

109 **Section 3.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.