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Sierra Club Fights Florida Fertilizer Laws

The environmental group displayed photos to reveal that preemption supporter claims may be false.

By [Rachel Jolley](#) | [Email the author](#) | 5:00 pm



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Cris Costello talks to media and supporters on Friday morning at Vinoy Park. Credit: [Rachel Jolley](#)

With rainy season around the corner, the Sierra Club is concerned about the possibility of local urban fertilizing bans being overturned. The group met at Vinoy Park on Friday morning to protest two proposed state laws that would limit the impact of local fertilizer ordinances.

Almost 50 ordinances up and down the gulf coast would be affected by the passing of Senate Bill 604 and House Bill 421.

Coordinator of the Sierra Club's Water Quality Campaign, Cris Costello, says that the only beneficiaries would be the pest control and fertilizer companies. The negatively affected population would be "everyone else", according to Costello.

To regulate water pollution, pest control and fertilizer companies are not allowed to distribute services when it rains. If the current bills are passed (SB 604 and HB 421), companies would be given the OK to fertilize during what is now known as the "summer rainy season ban."

"The rainy season ban is the backbone of meaningful fertilizer management," Costello said at Friday morning's gathering. "The fact is that local ordinances become close to meaningless without the rainy season band."

The bills have already been passed through several committees and will make their way to Tallahassee on Monday for final review.

Commercial applicators that work for the pest control and fertilizer companies undergo a 70-minute training that allows them to self-regulate when it comes to the pollution of local waterways.

"They claim that all they need is their own best management practices," said Costello. "But the evidence provided today proves otherwise."

Handwritten signs and enlarged, time stamped photos were scattered around Costello as she spoke on Friday morning. The time stamped photos read "1/27/2012." A series of photos reveals multiple vehicles distributing lawn care during a rain storm last Friday.

Massey Services was one of the company vehicles on display in the time stamped photographs. When approached for comment by phone, Massey Services declined.

Costello says that fertilizer companies will turn a large profit by charging consumers for wasted products and services.

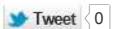
"This is far more than simply a matter of an esthetic," said Florida native George Root. "This is a matter of jobs, this is a matter of our future and this is a matter of preserving that which is valuable to us as a state."

The Sierra Club is urging citizens to call local legislators and use their voice, before they meet on Monday in Tallahassee.

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Budget Ad: An orange and white advertisement for Budget car rentals. It features a silver Ford Taurus car. The text reads: "Non-Residents SAVE 10% OR MORE on Budget rentals in the US or Canada". Below the car is the Budget logo and a "GET THIS DEAL" button.

Avis Ad: A red and white advertisement for Avis car rentals. It features a silver Pontiac Vibe car. The text reads: "ÉCONOMISEZ JUSQU'À 20% LORSQUE VOUS LOUEZ AUX ÉTATS-UNIS OU AU CANADA.". Below the car is the Avis logo and a "RÉSERVER MAINTENANT >>" button.

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