

Senate Bill 393

By: Senators Dixon of the 45th, Walker III of the 20th, Lucas of the 26th and Summers of the 13th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 3 of Title 31 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to county
2 boards of health, so as to change the necessary experience requirements to qualify as a soil
3 classifier to conduct soil investigations and prepare soil reports for an on-site sewage
4 management system; to revise the definition of "soil classifier"; to provide for related
5 matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 Chapter 3 of Title 31 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to county boards
9 of health, is amended by revising subsection (d) of Code Section 31-3-5, relating to functions
10 of county boards of health, as follows:

11 "(d)(1) Any person may register with the department to conduct soil investigations and
12 prepare soil reports of a site within the state for an on-site sewage management system
13 who meets any one of the following criteria:

14 (A) Qualifies as a soil classifier as defined in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (3) of this
15 subsection;

16 (B) Holds a valid certificate of registration as a professional engineer issued pursuant
17 to Chapter 15 of Title 43 and is practicing within his or her area of engineering
18 competency;

19 (C) Holds a valid certificate of registration as a registered geologist issued pursuant to
20 Chapter 19 of Title 43 and is practicing within his or her area of geologic competency;
21 or

22 (D) Is a soil and water conservation technician as defined in subparagraph (A) of
23 paragraph (3) of this subsection.

24 (2) Upon the submission of an evaluation of the suitability of a site within the state for
25 an on-site sewage management system by such a person who is registered with the
26 department, the county board of health shall be required to accept the evaluation unless
27 such evaluation is found by the county board of health to be deficient or questionable.
28 If the county board of health finds such evaluation to be deficient or questionable, the
29 board shall, within three working days of making such finding, issue a written
30 determination stating all deficiencies and all measures needed to correct the deficiencies.
31 A copy of this determination shall be provided to the state director of environmental
32 health.

33 (3) As used in this subsection, the term:

34 (A) 'Soil and water conservation technician' means a person employed as a soil and
35 water conservation technician by a soil and water conservation district provided for in
36 Article 2 of Chapter 6 of Title 2.

37 (B) 'Soil classifier' means a person who:

38 (i) Holds at least a bachelor of science degree from an accredited college or
39 university with a major in soil science or a related field of science. This degree shall
40 include 30 semester credit hours or equivalent quarter credit hours in the biological,
41 physical, chemical, and earth sciences with a minimum of 15 semester credit hours
42 or equivalent quarter hours in soil science courses meeting the following distribution:

- 43 (I) A minimum of one course in soil classification, morphology, genesis, and
44 mapping; and
- 45 (II) The remaining soil science credits must be in at least three of the following
46 eight categories: introductory soil science; soil fertility; soil microbiology; soil
47 chemistry; soil physics; soil management, soils and land use, or soils and the
48 environment; soil mineralogy; or a three credit maximum in independent study,
49 geology, or hydrology; and
- 50 (ii) Has at least four years of verifiable full-time or equivalent part-time experience,
51 Two years of such experience, as determined by the department's soil classifiers
52 advisory committee, must have been obtained after meeting all the educational
53 requirements of division (I) of this subparagraph under the supervision of a soil
54 classifier who has met the education and experience requirements provided in this
55 subparagraph. ~~Such experience must be obtained after meeting all educational~~
56 ~~requirements defined in this subparagraph~~ and must have been spent actively
57 mapping, identifying, and classifying soil features and interpreting the influence of
58 soil features on soil uses, including, but not limited to, conducting soil investigations
59 for determining the suitability of sites for on-site sewage management systems as
60 approved by the department's soil classifiers advisory committee. The remaining two
61 years of such experience, as determined by the department's soil classifiers advisory
62 committee, must have occurred either prior to, during, or after meeting all the
63 educational requirements of division (I) of this subparagraph and must have included
64 the utilization of soil science concepts and techniques in mapping, identifying, and
65 classifying soil features and interpreting the influence of soil features on soil uses,
66 including, but not limited to, conducting soil investigations for determining the
67 suitability of sites for on-site sewage management systems as approved by the
68 department's soil classifiers advisory committee; and

69 (iii) Has successfully passed a written examination pertaining to site investigations
70 for on-site sewage management systems administered or approved by the department."

71 **SECTION 2.**

72 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.