

Many golfers in The Villages may have been approached by an Ambassador about not entering an Environmentally Sensitive Area to retrieve or play their golf ball. Though these areas have become more common on some of the newer golf courses, there is still some confusion on what to do when a ball enters these areas. Additionally, many of you may have seen the following local rule on some of the championship scorecards.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas are marked as water or lateral water hazards and are identified by “Green-Topped” stakes. Golfers are not allowed to enter these areas for any reason including playing or retrieving their golf ball, and must proceed with the options available under rule 26-1. In addition, you may not stand inside the margins of the environmental areas to play a ball lying outside the area. You must take free and complete relief from the environmental area in this instance as outlined in Appendix 1 Part B.

This local rule applies to areas on championship courses as well as some executive courses throughout The Villages. Most golfers are familiar with yellow stakes for water hazards, and red stakes for lateral water hazards, but many residents are not familiar with the “Green-Topped” stakes seen below. These stakes are different in that they are designed to help the golfer identify the Environmentally Sensitive Areas that are protected by the state of Florida.



Any ball that comes to rest in one of these Environmentally Sensitive Areas cannot be retrieved in anyway. These areas are not be disturbed by golfers or by golf maintenance companies. Periodically a company will be given permission to enter these areas for the purpose of cleaning up debris that may have blown into these areas over time.

When your ball does come to rest in an Environmentally Sensitive Area please do not spend time looking for the ball, rather determine where the ball crossed the margin of the hazard and proceed under Rule 26-1 as referenced in the above Local Rule. This will help greatly with the pace of play on the golf course and eliminate any unnecessary searching for a golf ball that is unable to be retrieved.

Below is the list of courses and holes with these Environmentally Sensitive Areas to help you recognize and be aware of prior to playing the course. Additionally, the starters and Ambassadors are here to help remind the golfers as to what holes have this restricted entry.

As always, please feel free to see any staff member at the respective golf course to further answer any questions you may have regarding these Environmentally Sensitive Areas.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Tierra De Sol	Pelican
Holes	Holes
10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17 & 18	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 & 9
Palmer Legends	Evans Prairie
Holes	Holes
Laurel Valley 8&9	Osprey 1&2
Riley Grove 1, 2, 3 & 5	Killdeer 4, 5, 8 & 9
Cane Garden	Heron
Holes	Holes
Hibiscus 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7	5, 8 & 9
Mallory Hill	Amberwood
Holes	Hole #6
Caroline 3 & 7	
Bonifay	
Hole Destin #5	