

The Structure, Responsibilities & Programs of

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS



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Bureau of Air Quality (BAQ)

BAQ develops and implements strategies to maintain the quality of South Carolina's air.

BAQ provides the following services including:

- reviewing permit applications and issuing air quality construction and operating permits to industrial, commercial and institutional facilities that emit regulated air pollutants that have the highest levels of potential harm to human health or the environment;
- supporting permitting through modeling, technical assistance and daily ozone forecasts;
- implementing federal and state air toxics programs by offering technical and compliance assistance to staff and industry;
- conducting compliance assistance and assurance through routine monitoring, review of operational and emissions reports, periodic inspections, implementation of the state's asbestos program and enforcement actions; and
- educating South Carolinians on air quality issues.



Bureau of Environmental Health Services (BEHS)

BEHS supports DHEC's air, land and water programs through regional offices and a central laboratory.

- Regional Offices and laboratories offer the following services including:
- inspecting permitted facilities;
- conducting ambient monitoring;
- providing compliance assistance;
- issuing food and septic tank permits;
- responding to foodborne outbreak investigations;
- monitoring shellfish harvesting areas;
- investigating animal bites;
- responding to citizen complaints about any actual or potential release of pollutants into the air, land or water
- conducting environmental surveillance activities;
- conducting monitoring, sample analysis and data management;
- providing validated data for environmental decision-making;
- certifying public and private environmental laboratories; and
- are responsible for DHEC's Quality Management Program.

BEHS also is responsible for emergency response including:

- responding to chemical and oil spills, fish kills and open burning of items such as tires, plastic, copper wire and asbestos covered materials; and
- providing radiological technical assistance, emergency planning and advice to the Governor's Office and the S.C. Emergency Management Division.

Bureau of Land & Waste Management (BLWM)

BLWM coordinates mining and waste-related activities and implements assessment and corrective actions for contaminated sites.

BLWM provides the following services including:

- providing technical assistance for the proper management of solid and hazardous waste, technical review of sampling protocols and analytical data. It also coordinates sampling activities;
- issuing permits for solid waste and mining activities as well as underground storage tanks;
- promoting waste reduction and recycling through technical assistance and education/awareness programs to local governments, schools, businesses and the public;
- compiling data of waste that is recycled, disposed of and incinerated and the progress toward meeting the state's recycling and disposal goals;
- overseeing the investigation, remediation and clean up of contamination from Superfund, dry-cleaning, above-ground storage tanks and brownfield sites;
- coordinating activities related to assessment, risk evaluation and remediation of underground storage tank (UST) releases; and
- administering the state's State Underground Petroleum Environmental Response Bank (SUPERB) Account and the SUPERB Financial Responsibility Fund that serve as partial financial responsibility mechanisms for qualified UST owners and operators.

Learn more about *Environmental Affairs* online ...



Bureau of Water (BOW)

BOW helps ensure that South Carolina's waters are drinkable, swimmable and fishable through regulatory and voluntary programs to control point and nonpoint sources of pollution.

BOW provides the following services including:

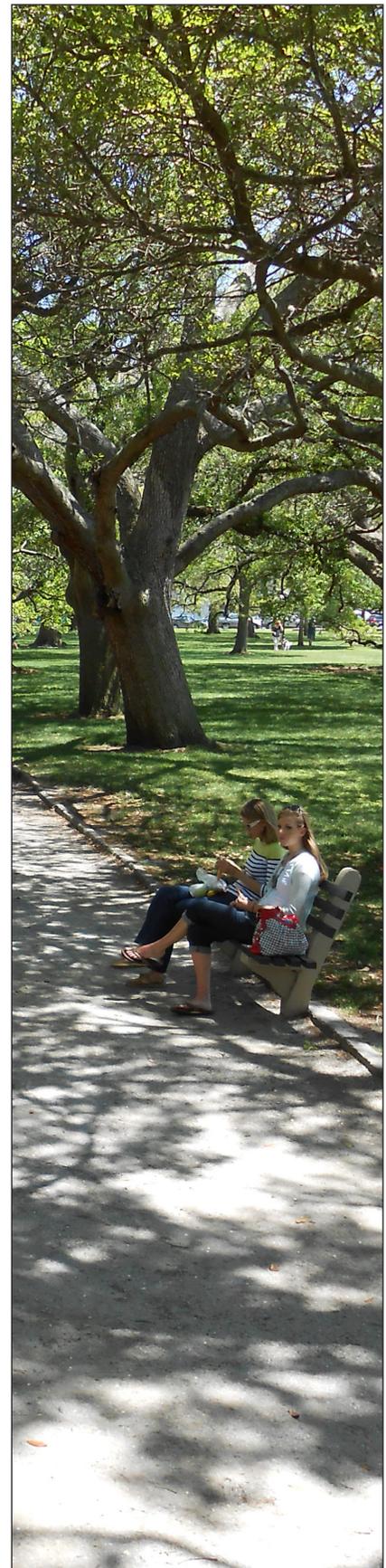
- permitting wastewater discharges from industrial and domestic sources and as well as on-site wastewater systems (septic tanks);
- implementing the state revolving fund program;
- issuing stormwater permits through the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System for construction sites, municipal systems and industrial sites;
- developing state water quality standards, issuing the bi-annual list of the state's polluted waters and developing corrective action plans for those waters and controlling nonpoint sources of pollution through grants, voluntary measures and technical assistance;
- issuing water quality certifications for discharge activities requiring a Federal 401 or 404 permit;
- implementing private well regulations;
- issuing water quantity permits, implementing groundwater protection programs; and
- conducting water quality monitoring and modeling to support permitting and nonpoint source remediation activities and implements the Federal shellfish sanitation program.

Office of Ocean & Coastal Resource Management (OCRM)

OCRM preserves sensitive and fragile areas while promoting responsible development in the eight coastal counties of South Carolina.

OCRM offers the following services including:

- implementing the Coastal Zone Management Program to manage wetland alterations, stormwater and land disturbance activities, certify all federal and state permits and direct federal actions and all alterations of tidally influenced critical area lands, waters and beaches;
- preserving sensitive natural, historic and cultural resources through regulatory oversight and guidance;
- providing technical expertise to resolve complex coastal management issues; and
- encouraging low impact and alternative development to preserve water quality and environmental integrity.



KEY ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS

Accidental Release Prevention Program implements the Clean Air Act Section 112(r), conducts site inspections and audits to determine compliance with the risk management program requirements.

Air Permitting issues construction and operating permits to industrial sources that use or store a material with a potential to emit air pollutants into the air we breathe.

Ambient Air Monitoring Network has developed a Web application to assist the public in understanding air quality monitoring issues. This tool shows the location of air quality monitoring stations in South Carolina, the parameters measured and historical graphs of the concentrations of major pollutants.

Asbestos Program issues asbestos permits for regulated renovation and demolition activities. It also licenses all involved in either the inspection, design, air monitoring, in-place management, removal, cleanup or other handling of regulated asbestos-containing materials.

Beach Monitoring Program – in accordance with federal U.S. EPA standards – routinely collects water samples at over 120 locations on South Carolina’s beaches. Advisories are issued if high bacteria levels are found.

Brownfields/Voluntary Cleanup Program allows a responsible or non-responsible party (RP or NRP) to cleanup or acquire a contaminated property with certain liability protections from State Superfund for existing contamination by agreeing to perform environmental assessment and/or remediation. This program facilitates redevelopment of properties by NRPs and encourages RPs to voluntarily remediate their sites.

Drinking Water Program ensures safe public drinking water through strategies including source water protection, operator certification for water treatment plants, permitting, routine sanitary surveys, monitoring, treatment design and plan review.

Dry Cleaning Restoration Program is responsible for administering

South Carolina’s Drycleaning Facility Restoration Trust Fund by using funds to assess, prioritize and clean up registered dry-cleaning sites that are polluted within the state.

Hazardous Waste Program permits active hazardous waste treatment, storage and disposal facilities, guides clean-up actions for thousands of waste management units, maintains registration of hazardous waste generators in South Carolina and issues transporter permits for hazardous waste transported within the state.

Infectious Waste Program regulates infectious waste treatment facilities as well as generators and transporters of infectious waste in the state. Any person or company that generates or transports infectious waste in South Carolina must be registered.

Non-Point Source (NPS) Pollution Program coordinates regulatory and voluntary programs to reduce pollution from nonpoint sources. The program also issues grants to local organizations to conduct watershed planning and NPS pollution reduction measures.

Ozone Forecasting Program forecasts ozone concentrations to warn the public and encourage people to avoid exposure to unhealthy air.

Radioactive Waste Program regulates the transportation of radioactive waste into and within South Carolina and licenses facilities that process and transport radioactive waste. The program also regulates the Barnwell low-level radioactive waste disposal facility (also known as the Chem-Nuclear Site.)

Recreational Waters Program performs routine inspections and provides technical assistance to public swimming facilities located throughout the state. This includes swimming pools and spas, as well as natural swimming areas.

Septic Tanks Program inspects and permits septic tanks for new construction and licenses professionals who install, clean or repair septic tanks or haul septage.

Shellfish Sanitation Program ensures that shellfish (oysters, clams and

mussels) and the areas from which they are harvested meet the health and environmental quality standards provided by federal guidelines and state regulations.

Solid Waste Permitting Program regulates the disposal of solid waste including tires, used motor oil, land-clearing debris, construction and demolition debris, municipal and industrial solid waste. The program also regulates landfills, chipping and composting facilities, solid waste processing facilities, solid waste transfer facilities, solid waste incineration facilities and others.

State Revolving Loan Fund provides low-interest rate loans for building or repair of wastewater, drinking water and stormwater systems. The fund is run by DHEC and the S.C. Budget and Control Board.

Stormwater Program manages stormwater runoff by permitting discharges from construction and industrial sites and municipal storm sewer systems.

Superfund is the federal government’s program to clean up the nation’s uncontrolled hazardous waste sites. The program is committed to ensuring that remaining National Priorities List (NPL) hazardous waste sites are cleaned up to protect the environment and the health of all Americans. South Carolina also has a state version that works on sites that are important to the state, but doesn’t rise to the federal NPL level.

Underground Storage Tank Program regulates underground storage tanks (USTs) for the entire life of a tank system. This includes the planning, compliance, permitting, enforcement and remediation efforts of petroleum underground storage tanks throughout the state. We provide technical oversight on all releases that occur from USTs as well as a Site Rehabilitation Contractor Certification Program.

Wastewater Permitting Program issues permits for discharges from point sources including municipal and industrial wastewater treatment systems.