

The Florida Handbook of Solid and Hazardous Waste Regulation: Federal Agencies¹

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What is the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)?

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was established as an independent agency in the executive branch of the United States (US) government in 1970. EPA was created to regulate all aspects of the environment, especially pollution of our natural resources. EPA has been empowered to fulfill its purpose through many laws, such as the Resource and Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA); Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA); Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA); Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA); Ocean Dumping Act (ODA); Clean Air Act (CAA), and Clean Water Act (CWA). These environmental regulations are as follows: RCRA (regulates the disposal of solid and hazardous waste), CERCLA (regulates the cleanup of sites that pose a threat to human health and the environment), FIFRA (regulates the use and disposal of pesticides), EPCRA (regulates compliance and enforcement of hazardous waste and chemical spills), ODA (regulates disposal of wastes

into US oceans and territorial waters), CAA (regulates the release of pollutants into the atmosphere), and CWA (regulates disposal of wastes into US water bodies).

While many of these laws provide the foundation for EPA regulations, please be aware that EPA can also promote regulations on its own, as long as they are related to these laws. Therefore, even if an action is not against the letter of the law, it may be against a regulation promulgated by EPA to ensure compliance with the spirit of the law.

EPA has 10 regional offices located throughout the United States. Florida falls within the jurisdiction of the Region 4 Office, headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia. You may wish to contact this office about permitting for the disposal of waste into the ocean and other bodies of water; the use, application, and disposal of pesticides; or the disposal of hazardous wastes (see [FE786](#), Contact Agencies, for contact information).

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What is the United States Coast Guard (USCG)?

The United States Coast Guard (USCG) is a branch of the US military that serves and protects America's coastlines and waterways. In concert with EPA, USCG is responsible for enforcing the Ocean Dumping Act (ODA) and the Clean Water Act (CWA). Anyone found in violation of these statutes by USCG may be subject to severe penalties.

What is the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)?

The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), under the leadership of the Secretary of the Army, investigates, develops, and maintains America's infrastructure, including its water and related environmental resources. USACE is responsible for dredge-and-fill permitting pursuant to the Clean Water Act (CWA). Note: EPA has the authority to veto any dredge-and-fill permits.

What is the Department of Transportation (DOT)?

The Department of Transportation (DOT) regulates all aspects of transportation in the United States, including the transportation of hazardous wastes and materials. You should be very careful to comply with DOT regulations because the penalties may be severe. DOT and EPA work together to develop laws regulating the transportation of hazardous wastes. As a result, the rules of the two agencies often refer to each other. Violating the regulations of either agency may subject you to penalties from both (see [FE786](#), Contact Agencies, for contact information).

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