

The Florida Agricultural 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 U.S. 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, including those discussed in this handbook. These laws include RCRA (regulating the disposal of solid and hazardous waste), CERCLA (providing for the cleanup of sites that pose a threat to human health and the environment), FIFRA (regulating the use and disposal of pesticides), EPCRA (regulating planning for spills), ODA (regulating disposal into U.S. oceans and territorial waters), CAA (regulating release of pollutants into the atmosphere), and CWA (regulating disposal into U.S. 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 promoted 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 disposal of waste into the ocean and other bodies of water; use, application, and disposal of pesticides; or the disposal of hazardous wastes (see [FE786](#) 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 U.S. military which serves and protects America's coastlines and waterways. In concert with EPA, the USCG is responsible for enforcing the Ocean Dumping Act (ODA) and the Clean Water Act (CWA). Anyone found in violation of these statutes by the 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) investigates, develops, and maintains America's water and related environmental resources. The USACE is responsible for dredge-and-fill permitting pursuant to the Clean Water Act (CWA). EPA has the authority to veto any dredge-and-fill permits. The USACE is primarily responsible to the Secretary of the Army.

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](#) for contact information).