



SC DEPARTMENT *of*  
**ENVIRONMENTAL  
SERVICES**

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SC DEPARTMENT of  
**ENVIRONMENTAL  
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SC DEPARTMENT of  
**ENVIRONMENTAL  
SERVICES**

## SCDES Overview

The **South Carolina Department of Environmental Services (SCDES)** is a state cabinet agency established by South Carolina law on July 1, 2024, with specific mandates for ensuring the protection and preservation of the environment for the benefit of all South Carolinians.

SCDES has offices throughout the state, with more than 1,200 team members providing environmental oversight and essential services impacting the quality of life of our residents while supporting our vibrant business community. The agency is comprised of environmental experts who use science and data to drive decisions and actions for protecting South Carolina's air, land, water and coast for generations to come. SCDES supports sustainable growth of our flourishing state to ensure economic development with sensible environmental stewardship. Through community partnerships and stakeholder engagement, we use collaboration as our greatest tool for addressing environmental challenges and supporting communities across the state.

SCDES has five environmental bureaus:

- Bureau of Water
- Bureau of Air Quality
- Bureau of Land and Waste Management
- Bureau of Coastal Management
- Bureau of Regional and Laboratory Services

These five environmental bureaus are assisted by several essential support teams, including Human Resources, Finance and Operations, Office of Technology, Communications, Collaborative Partnerships and Strategic Initiatives, Legislative Affairs, General Counsel, Constituent Services and others.

The agency's staff are more than engineers, scientists and inspectors – they are collaborators, educators, advisors and public servants, who work to ensure South Carolinians thrive in a healthy and sustainable environment. SCDES is committed to solutions to environmental challenges that enhance the environment and the wellbeing of all South Carolinians. The agency's mission seeks to ensure South Carolina's air, land, water and coast are protected and preserved for generations to come.



## **Programmatic Overview**

The **Bureau of Water (BOW)** protects and preserves the state's water resources for drinking, swimming, fishing and other uses that benefit South Carolinians. BOW develops and enforces state water quality standards, regulates drinking water providers, issues water quantity permits, implements groundwater protection programs, establishes private well regulations, and issues permits for wastewater discharges from industrial and domestic sources.

Staff conduct water quality monitoring at beaches, lakes and rivers; perform routine inspections of drinking water and wastewater facilities; and issues stormwater permits through the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System for construction sites, municipal systems and industrial sites. Also, as part of the restructuring, the South Carolina Department of Natural Resource's Hydrology and Aquatic Nuisance species programs are now part of BOW.

BOW also oversees the state's Shellfish program, manages the Dam Safety program, and leads the agency's ongoing assessment of the impacts of PFAS and other emerging contaminants in South Carolina's water resources. Program areas within BOW include Drinking Water, Non-Point Source Pollution, Recreational Waters, State Revolving Fund, Stormwater, Wastewater Permitting, Water Quality Certification, Private Wells and the Office of Rural Water.

Through partnerships and community engagement, BOW promotes the state's Adopt-A-Stream volunteer program and encourages hands-on environmental learning at schools through the Champions of the Environment grant opportunity.

The **Bureau of Air Quality (BAQ)** protects the air we breathe by ensuring regulated industries comply with state and federal laws and regulations establishing air quality standards. BAQ also implements strategies that help maintain the quality of South Carolina's air and works with partners on air quality awareness efforts.

BAQ issues air quality construction and operating permits to industrial, commercial and institutional facilities that emit regulated air pollutants; implements federal and state air toxics programs; performs routine inspections and monitoring of facilities to ensure compliance with air permits and regulations; and oversees the state and federal asbestos program. Programs within BAQ include Air Permitting, Asbestos, Ambient Air Monitoring Network, Diesel Emissions Reduction Act grants, and Ozone Forecasting.

BAQ also helps educate South Carolinians about ways to reduce air pollution, offers free radon test kits to residents, and issues air quality forecasts and alerts so residents can take precautions on days with expected increased concentrations in ozone or other airborne contaminants.

The **Bureau of Land and Waste Management (BLWM)** provides critical oversight to protect our state's land resources. BLWM regulates mining and solid waste-related activities, oversees the redevelopment of contaminated industrial sites (called "brownfields"), supports statewide recycling and food waste reduction goals, and helps ensure the proper handling of solid and hazardous waste.

Additionally, BLWM issues permits for underground storage tanks; regulates the use of ionizing radiation; licenses the use of radioactive materials; and oversees the investigation, remediation and cleanup of contaminated soil at Superfund, dry-cleaning, above-ground storage tank, and permitted hazardous waste facility locations. BLWM coordinates activities for remediating chemical releases from underground storage tanks. Staff work closely with local governments, schools, businesses and the public to promote waste reduction and recycling.

Programs within BLWM include Brownfields/Voluntary Cleanup, Dry Cleaning Restoration, Hazardous Waste, Infectious Waste, Radioactive Waste, Solid Waste Permitting, Superfund, Radioactive Materials, X-ray, and Underground Storage.

The **Bureau of Coastal Management (BCM)** helps ensure the appropriate use, development and conservation of coastal resources in South Carolina. BCM oversees the direct permitting of activities that take place within the state's critical areas (coastal waters, tidelands, beaches and the beach/dune system) and uses regulatory management to preserve the state's natural, historic and cultural coastal resources. BCM is committed to maintaining a sustainable South Carolina coast by ensuring development and growth are carefully aligned with the policies and regulations designed to preserve the state's coastal resources.

BCM provides stakeholders with technical, planning and educational resources to aid in the understanding and management of coastal issues and encourages cooperative efforts among state agencies, local governments, community groups and stakeholders for addressing environmental concerns along the coast.

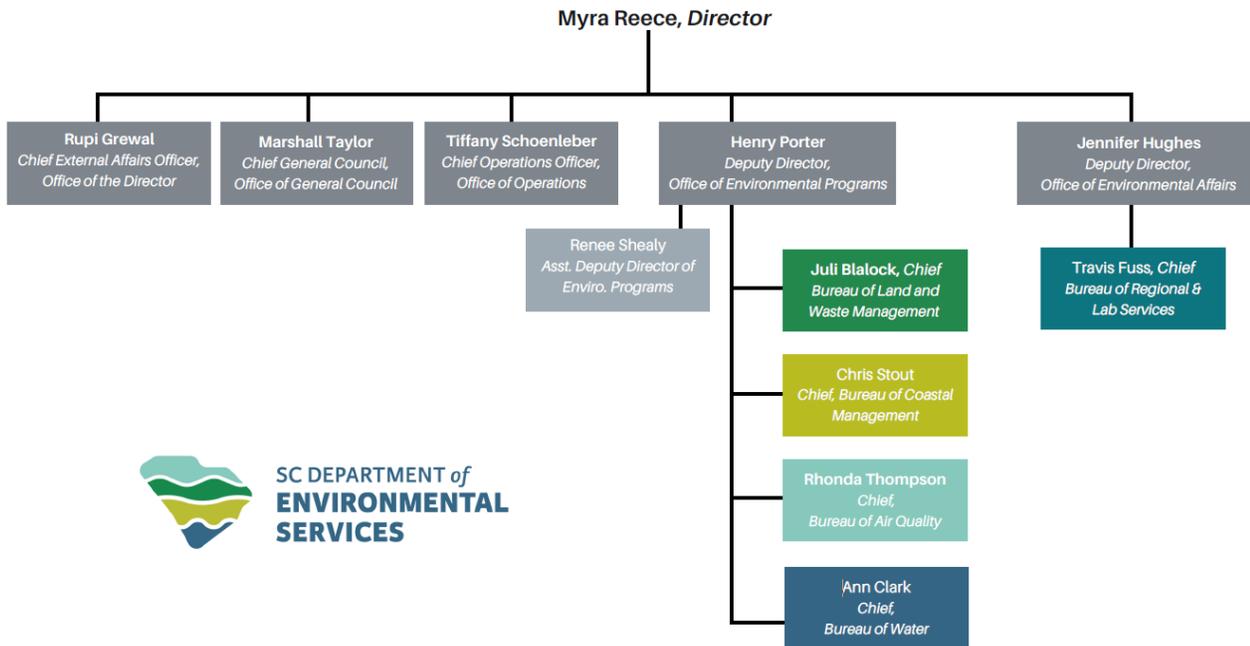
BCM supports initiatives such as Adopt-A-Beach, living shorelines, "Keep Off the Dunes," and the Abandoned and Derelict Vessel Working Group that helps keep abandoned boats from becoming marine hazards.

The **Bureau of Regional and Laboratory Services (BRLS)** supports our environment by responding to chemical spills and releases, issuing permits for septic system installations, sampling and monitoring air and water, and investigating environmental concerns received from the public.

BRLS performs inspections across South Carolina to ensure environmental standards are met and regulated facilities operate in compliance with their permits. BRLS has roles with the public pools we swim in, the landfills we take our trash to, the underground storage tanks that store gasoline, the wastewater plants that treat sewage, the drinking water systems that make our water safe, and the manufacturing facilities that are part of the state's economy.

BRLS also oversees environmental laboratory certification in the state to ensure valid, quality data are used to determine compliance with state regulations. Additionally, BRLS operates a primary central environmental laboratory in Columbia and seven regional environmental laboratories around the state

**Agency Director Direct Reports  
& Environmental Bureau Chiefs**



SC DEPARTMENT of  
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# SC Department of Environmental Services (SCDES)

## SFY27 Budget Request Summary \*previous request | {} non-recurring funding request | () earned authority



Priority Order	Request Title	Amount	New FTE	FTE Conv
<b>Retaining Experienced &amp; Credentialed Workforce</b> \$2.9M				
1	*Retention of Credentialed Workforce	\$2,884,866	-	TBD
<b>Investment in Modern/AI Technology</b> \$2.55M				
2	Modernizing Permit Review Processes with AI Skilled Staff and Technologies	\$2,545,756	4	-
<b>SC's Water Quality</b> \$5.5M {\$179,923}				
3	Sustaining SC's <b>Recreational Waters Program</b> for Environmental and Economic Success	\$806,246	-	6.47
4	Sustaining SC's <b>Aquatic Science and Resource Management Programs</b> for Environmental and Economic Success	\$996,893	4	-
5	*Sustainable Funding for the <b>Clean-up of Uncontrolled Hazardous Waste Sites</b>	\$3,500,000	-	-
6	*Sustaining SC's <b>LABORATORY CERTIFICATION</b> Program to Maintain Delegation	\$213,924	-	1.97
9	Sustaining SC's <b>Aquatic Science and Resource Management Programs</b> for Environmental and Economic Success	{\$179,923}	-	-
<b>Implementation of Statutory Changes</b> \$150K				
7	Supporting the Prevention and Removal of <b>Abandoned &amp; Derelict Vessels (ADV)</b>	\$150,000	-	-
<b>Replacing SCDES's Fleet Vehicles</b> {\$3.0M}				
8	Replacing SCDES's <b>Fleet Vehicles and Replacements</b>	{\$3,000,000}	-	-
<b>STATE REQUEST TOTALS: \$13,130,049</b>		<b>\$11,097,685</b> <b>{\$3,179,923}</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8.44</b>
<b>Earned Authority to Support Operations</b> \$5.0M				
10	Earned Authority request to support ongoing operations	(\$5,000,000 authority only)		

## **SCDES FY27 Budget Request Summary**

### **Priority 1: Recruitment and Retention of Credentialed Workforce**

**Request: \$2,884,866 | 0 New FTEs**

To address significant staff retention needs and upcoming retirements, over 20% of the workforce, SCDES seeks funding to retain and recruit a highly skilled workforce. This includes merit-based performance increases for high-performing staff and innovative recruitment strategies such as internships, third-party staffing, and partnerships with programs like the STAYS program to attract veterans. These efforts are critical to maintaining agency capacity and ensuring continuity in protecting South Carolina's and environment.

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### **Priority 2: Modernizing Permit Review and FOIA Processes with AI Skilled Staff and Technologies**

**Request: \$2,545,756 | 4 FTEs**

To meet customers' needs and expectations, and to improve operational efficiency and increase effectiveness, SCDES requests funding to modernize its permit review and FOIA processes through AI technologies and skilled personnel. This includes hiring four FTEs with AI expertise, implementing ePermitting and electronic document management systems, and acquiring AI tools like Copilot and Copilot Studio. These investments will streamline workflows, reduce administrative burdens, improve data accuracy, and enhance transparency. Without this funding, critical system upgrades and staffing will be delayed, impacting service delivery and economic development.

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### **Priority 3: Sustaining SC's Recreational Waters Program**

**Request: \$806,246 | 0 New FTEs**

To maintain timely permitting and oversight of South Carolina's 7,600+ public swimming pools, SCDES requests funding to convert 6.47 existing fee-funded FTEs to state-funded positions. Increased pool construction and complex designs have outpaced the current fee structures, straining the Recreational Waters Fee Fund, which is projected to be unsustainable by FY27. Without this funding, the agency risks delays in permitting, reduced service levels, and potential impacts on public health and regulatory compliance.

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### **Priority 4: Sustaining Aquatic Science and Resource Management Programs**

**Request: \$996,893 | 4 New FTEs**

SCDES requests funding to support and enhance two critical aquatic science programs: Harmful Algal Bloom Monitoring and Aquatic Invasive Plant Control. These programs are essential for protecting water quality, native ecosystems, and recreational waterways that support South Carolina's economy. The funding will add four Environmental Health Manager I positions and bolster operations to meet growing environmental challenges. Without this support, program capacity will remain limited, risking delayed responses to toxic algal blooms and the spread of invasive aquatic vegetation.

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**Priority 5: Sustainable Funding for Hazardous Waste Site Cleanup**

**Request: \$3,500,000 | 0 New FTEs**

SCDES requests recurring funding to sustain and accelerate cleanup efforts at uncontrolled hazardous waste sites across South Carolina. Current funding sources are insufficient to meet \$4.5M in annual liabilities, including ongoing remediation, EPA cost-share obligations, and assessments of 150 additional sites. Without this support, the program will be unable to continue operations beyond FY28, risking environmental contamination and delaying redevelopment of impacted properties. The requested funds will ensure continued protection of public health and support economic revitalization.

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**Priority 6: Sustaining SC's Laboratory Certification Program**

**Request: \$213,924 | 0 New FTEs**

To maintain South Carolina's delegation (primacy) under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act, SCDES must ensure the quality of laboratory data by either performing this analysis in a SCDES laboratory or certifying commercial laboratories to perform the analysis. This data is required for regulatory decisions and to demonstrate compliance with federal requirements. The Environmental Laboratory Certification Program helps to ensure adequate laboratory capacity and to provide cost effective options for drinking water systems by certifying commercial laboratories. The requested funding will be used to convert 1.97 fee-funded FTEs to state-funded positions. Without this funding, the agency risks falling short of federal and state requirements, compromising enforcement authority and timely certification of over 500 laboratories.

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**Priority 7: Supporting Abandoned & Derelict Vessel (ADV) Prevention and Removal**

**Request: \$150,000 | 0 New FTEs**

To implement Act No. 22 (2025), SCDES requests funding to expand and maintain a statewide database for abandoned and derelict vessels (ADV), building on the existing MyCoast platform. The funds will support coordination with law enforcement, long-term system maintenance, and expansion to inland waterways. Additionally, funding will support the cost-effective Vessel Turn-In Program (VTIP), which prevents ADVs by allowing owners to surrender unwanted vessels before abandonment. Without this support, statewide implementation and sustained prevention efforts will be hindered.

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**Priority 8: Fleet Vehicle Replacement (Non-Recurring Request)**

**Request: \$3,000,000**

SCDES requests one-time funding to replace approximately 75 aging fleet vehicles that have exceeded State Fleet Management's replacement criteria. These vehicles are critical for statewide inspections, investigations, monitoring, and emergency response. Replacing them will improve reliability, reduce maintenance costs, enhance staff safety, and support environmental sustainability goals. Without this investment, operational efficiency and regulatory responsiveness will be compromised.

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**Priority 9: Aquatic Science Program Equipment (Non-Recurring Request)**

**Request: \$179,923**

SCDES requests one-time funding to for boats, truck and equipment for the four new Aquatic Science Division positions and expand two key programs: Harmful Algal Bloom Monitoring and Aquatic Invasive Plant Control. These funds will support equipment and supplies needed to enhance surveillance and treatment capacity across critical waterways. Without this investment, program expansion and modernization will be limited, impacting water quality, permitting decisions, and economic activity tied to South Carolina's aquatic resources.

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**Priority 10: Other Funds Authority to Support Ongoing Operations**

**Request: \$5,000,000**

SCDES requests increased authority to access \$5 million in existing program revenue to support core operations. Many permitting programs are funded through fees, but current limitations prevent the agency from fully utilizing these funds. Granting this authority will allow SCDES to reinvest collected fees into their respective programs, improving permitting efficiency and reducing reliance on state and federal funds. Without approval, program capacity may be reduced, delaying services and straining other agency resources.

## **SCDES FY27 Proviso Summary**

### **Priority 1**

**Proviso: State Water Planning Fund Flexibility**

**Request: New Proviso**

This new proviso would allow SCDES to utilize previously allocated funds for statewide water planning and implementation activities, regardless of the fiscal year or original basin-specific designation. It ensures that funds from prior appropriations (FY15–FY25) can be used in the order received to support the continued development and implementation of the South Carolina State Water Plan. This flexibility is needed following the transfer of the Hydrology program from SCDNR to SCDES under Act 60 of 2023 and will help streamline water resource planning across the state.

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### **Priority 2**

**Proviso: 55.24 – York Water Filtration Fund**

**Request: Delete Existing Proviso**

This proviso directed the transfer of remaining funds from a 2022 appropriation for the York Water Filtration Plant to the Lincoln Road Sidewalk Project. The transfer was completed in FY22, and no further action is required by SCDES. The deletion request removes obsolete language and reflects the completion of the directive.

## Agency Budget v Actual as of 1/23/26

Fund Type	Funded Program - Bud - Funded Program - Bud (Text)	FY Budget	Expended	Committed	Remaining
State	ADMINISTRATION	18,693,039	6,783,985	4,689,440	7,219,614
	AIR QUALITY IMPROVE	8,181,464	4,143,997	3,176,800	860,667
	COASTAL RESOURCE IMP	2,863,233	1,309,440	1,271,790	282,002
	LABORATORY MGMT	5,834,475	2,780,321	1,798,130	1,256,024
	LAND & WASTE MANAGE	13,820,782	9,558,548	2,653,800	1,608,434
	ONSITE WASTEWATER	10,035,158	5,423,933	3,761,534	849,691
	WATER MANAGEMENT	20,792,500	10,278,369	8,403,248	2,110,882
	STATE EMPLOYER CONTR	20,732,967	10,709,882	8,646,563	1,376,522
<b>State</b>	<b>Sum:</b>	<b>100,953,618</b>	<b>50,988,476</b>	<b>34,401,307</b>	<b>15,563,835</b>

Fund Type	Funded Program - Bud - Funded Program - Bud (Text)	FY Budget	Expended	Committed	Remaining
Other	ADMINISTRATION	9,642,622	7,816,042	2,117,554	-290,973
	AIR QUALITY IMPROVE	3,711,337	2,187,131	1,541,837	-17,631
	COASTAL RESOURCE IMP	219,332	102,894	192,525	-76,088
	LABORATORY MGMT	2,743,481	1,457,847	715,095	570,539
	LAND & WASTE MANAGE	15,677,117	7,074,889	6,929,001	1,673,227
	ONSITE WASTEWATER	1,416,087	896,206	677,365	-157,484
	WATER MANAGEMENT	8,416,087	3,964,671	3,550,585	900,831
	STATE EMPLOYER CONTR	8,635,837	4,788,678	3,730,012	117,146
<b>Other</b>	<b>Sum:</b>	<b>50,461,900</b>	<b>28,288,358</b>	<b>19,453,975</b>	<b>2,719,567</b>

Fund Type	Funded Program - Bud - Funded Program - Bud (Text)	FY Budget	Expended	Committed	Remaining
Federal	ADMINISTRATION	341,379	130,678	152,201	58,500
	AIR QUALITY IMPROVE	1,217,017	593,450	353,985	269,582
	COASTAL RESOURCE IMP	3,150,887	1,249,978	850,973	1,049,937
	LABORATORY MGMT	3,156,304	1,944,042	989,186	223,076
	LAND & WASTE MANAGE	17,538,685	6,156,049	6,006,392	5,376,244
	WATER MANAGEMENT	18,994,105	7,653,096	7,422,393	3,918,616
	STATE EMPLOYER CONTR	7,421,384	4,013,864	2,807,011	600,508
<b>Federal</b>	<b>Sum:</b>	<b>51,819,760</b>	<b>21,741,157</b>	<b>18,582,140</b>	<b>11,496,463</b>

	<b>Sum:</b>	<b>203,235,278</b>	<b>101,017,991</b>	<b>72,437,422</b>	<b>29,779,865</b>
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\*Excludes special items

\*\*Includes Projected Personnel Costs

\*\*\*Total Budget = Appropriations Act (205,243,392) + Allocations (1,491,886) - Recurring Special Items (3,500,000) = 203,235,278

## Agency Budget v Actual as of Prior Year

Fund Type	Funded Program - Bud - Funded Program - Bud (Text)	FY Budget	Expended	Committed	Remaining
State	ADMINISTRATION	13,418,176	13,418,176	0	0
	AIR QUALITY IMPROVE	5,912,843	5,912,843	0	0
	COASTAL RESOURCE IMP	2,384,656	2,384,656	0	0
	LABORATORY MGMT	3,143,090	3,143,090	0	0
	LAND & WASTE MANAGE	12,463,119	12,463,119	0	0
	ONSITE WASTEWATER	8,416,852	8,416,852	0	0
	STATE EMPLOYER CONTR	15,081,004	15,081,004	0	0
	WATER MANAGEMENT	15,487,745	15,487,745	0	0
<b>State</b>	<b>Sum:</b>	<b>76,307,484</b>	<b>76,307,484</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Fund Type	Funded Program - Bud - Funded Program - Bud (Text)	FY Budget	Expended	Committed	Remaining
Other	ADMINISTRATION	14,377,736	11,782,395	0	2,595,341
	AIR QUALITY IMPROVE	4,642,565	4,567,113	0	75,452
	COASTAL RESOURCE IMP	229,959	61,413	0	168,545
	LABORATORY MGMT	3,631,787	3,042,597	0	589,190
	LAND & WASTE MANAGE	13,315,164	10,088,868	0	3,226,297
	ONSITE WASTEWATER	1,725,541	1,681,731	0	43,811
	STATE EMPLOYER CONTR	9,562,102	9,452,294	0	109,808
	WATER MANAGEMENT	18,592,328	9,183,803	0	9,408,525
<b>Other</b>	<b>Sum:</b>	<b>66,077,182</b>	<b>49,860,214</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16,216,968</b>

Fund Type	Funded Program - Bud - Funded Program - Bud (Text)	FY Budget	Expended	Committed	Remaining
Federal	ADMINISTRATION	2,993	2,993	0	0
	AIR QUALITY IMPROVE	1,140,289	1,140,289	0	0
	COASTAL RESOURCE IMP	2,263,923	2,263,923	0	0
	LABORATORY MGMT	2,064,312	2,063,912	0	400
	LAND & WASTE MANAGE	10,914,654	10,886,484	0	28,170
	STATE EMPLOYER CONTR	6,614,739	6,602,378	0	12,361
	WATER MANAGEMENT	28,818,850	11,797,374	0	17,021,476
<b>Federal</b>	<b>Sum:</b>	<b>51,819,760</b>	<b>34,757,352</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17,062,408</b>

	<b>Sum:</b>	<b>194,204,426</b>	<b>160,925,050</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>33,279,376</b>
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\*Excludes special items

\*\*Total Budget = Appropriations Act (200,310,049) + Allocations (1,395,179) - Recurring Special Items (3,500,000) - State CF (4,000,802) = 194,204,426

\*\*\*Remaining Other and Federal Authority would have been committed with PO/FR obligations prior to FY rollover

Carryforward items as of 1/23/26

Fund	CF Type	Purpose	FY Budget	Expended	Committed	Remaining	Intended Use
10010021	General	General	4,000,802	795,878	557,876	2,647,048	General one-time operations. This funding will be used to support one-time costs including deferred maintenance, vehicle purchases, IT development costs, and other one-time agencywide initiatives.
10010021	Special	State Water Planning	1,519,691	96,007	299,686	1,123,998	State Water Planning was obligated through proviso and initiatives are ongoing and funding is used to support these efforts.
10010021	Special	Surface Water Modeli	223,168	0	0	223,168	State Water Planning was obligated through proviso and initiatives are ongoing and funding is used to support these efforts.
10010021	Special	System Upgrades	3,000,000	0	0	3,000,000	Systems Upgrade funds are allocated by proviso to support the Dam Repair Assistanace grant program and is designed to support infrastructure improvements for high and significant hazard dams within the state.
10010021	Special	Water Study - Outrea	13,855	0	0	13,855	State Water Planning was obligated through proviso and initiatives are ongoing and funding is used to support these efforts.
10050023	Special	E-Permitting Proviso	1,573,919	1,031,462	542,457	0	Funding allocated by proviso to support development, implementation, and migration efforts from legacy permitting systems to ePermitting. This supports annual licensing costs and enhancements.
10050023	Special	State Water Planning	1,801,564	111,738	267,368	1,422,457	State Water Planning was obligated through proviso and initiatives are ongoing and funding is used to support these efforts.
10050024	Special	State Water Planning	2,659,488	529,270	165,714	1,964,504	State Water Planning was obligated through proviso and initiatives are ongoing and funding is used to support these efforts.
10050025	Special	IT INFRASTRCTR MAINT	1,977,443	0	0	1,977,443	Funding allocated by proviso to support modernization of IT applications. Funding has been used to support an application roadmap and will support ongoing development, implementation, and application modernization.
10050025	Special	PFAS PILOT PROGRAM	900,000	900,000	0	0	Funding allocated by proviso to support a PFAS mitigation and cleanup project.
10050025	Special	Restructuring-IT	5,793,448	195,494	676,130	4,921,824	Funding allocated by proviso to support modernization of IT applications. Funding has been used to support an application roadmap and will support ongoing development, implementation, and application modernization.
10050025	Special	TRANSFER-STATE WATER	2,789,250	6,221	10,964	2,772,064	State Water Planning was obligated through proviso and initiatives are ongoing and funding is used to support these efforts.



# Permitting Update

South Carolina Department of Environmental Services • [des.sc.gov](https://des.sc.gov)

## July 1 through December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025 Summary

Proviso 55.26 of the 2025 General Appropriations bill requires the Department of Environmental Services (SCDES) to issue decisions on completed permitting applications, excluding energy infrastructure projects, no later than ninety days from receipt. The requirement allows for preapplication meetings to establish milestones within the review period and, if mutually agreed upon by SCDES and the applicant, an extension of the review period. SCDES had been implementing process improvements prior to Proviso 55.26 taking effect and conducted outreach efforts and workshops to maximize efficiency and certainty in environmental permitting. These initiatives have yielded positive results, as evidenced by processing time improvements and overall compliance with the proviso's requirements.

### Overall Numbers

The enclosed data tables show average permitting times by bureau for FY26 through December 15, 2025, along with summary graphs showing average times for SCDES's commonly issued permits.

From the beginning of FY26 through December 15, 2025, SCDES has received 19,468 permit applications and issued 17,475 permits. Of these, 17,301 permits were issued in ninety days or less. This is marked improvement from the first half of FY25, where 71% of permits were issued in ninety days or less. SCDES has also entered mutually agreed upon Project Timeline Agreements beyond ninety days for 63 applications. Project Timeline Agreements are sometimes executed for complex projects. Changes in project timelines, incomplete information, requests for public notice, and applicant resources are factors that contribute to processing milestones extending beyond ninety days. These agreements, along with required preapplication meetings, are also executed for permit types that inherently require more than ninety days to process. Landfill, Individual Mines, Hazardous Waste Treatment & Storage, and Industrial Wastewater Discharge are examples of such permit types.

### Process Improvements

SCDES has been engaging ongoing process improvement efforts to optimize permitting review and issuance. In early 2024, prior to becoming a standalone agency, the deputy area then known

as Environmental Affairs engaged a third-party consultant to conduct a Lean/Six Sigma process analysis of permitting programs, beginning with the Septic Tank program. The resulting report directly informed strategic decision-making and funding requests aimed at improving permitting timeframes. As a result, SCDES has achieved a 78% reduction in Septic Tank permit processing times to date. Building on this success, the agency has launched a comprehensive review of additional permitting programs. This has entailed evaluation of four other high-volume programs thus far, with an additional three program evaluations forthcoming. The data-driven insights from these analyses have guided ongoing improvements across all permitting timeframes, with the goal of enhancing efficiencies of processes, certainty for applicants, and overall services for our stakeholders.

In addition to internal processes, application submission continues to be a major focus for the agency with respect to permitting improvements. ePermitting serves as the agency's foundational tool for application submittals and data centralization. Environmental Affairs began phased implementation of permitting programs within the ePermitting system in 2016. Thirty SCDES programs have been fully incorporated into ePermitting, with the final five programs projected to be incorporated into ePermitting by Spring 2026.

As SCDES's comprehensive online platform, ePermitting is designed to enable customers to conduct business with the agency through a single, user-friendly portal and supports the full regulatory lifecycle. ePermitting also enables the agency to closely track applications and processing times. Overall, ePermitting continues to be a vital factor in the agency's efforts to enhance efficiency and provide applicant certainty.

## **Outreach**

Applicants themselves play a substantial role in promoting efficiency and certainty in permitting. Permit applications must be complete and sufficiently detailed for quality decisions to be rendered by SCDES technical reviewers. Applicants must be responsive to questions and comments by SCDES technical staff and provide complete information in a timely manner. Applicants must also engage ePermitting in the required manner for application review. Since the agency began its operation in July 2024, SCDES has placed considerable effort in stakeholder outreach to ensure applicants are doing their part to optimize permitting processes.

Formalized outreach efforts began in August 2024 with the Coastal Permit Central Workshop in Summerville. The agency conducted additional permitting workshops in Horry, Greenville, Lexington, and York counties from October 2024 to October 2025. SCDES also participated in meetings with the SC Homebuilders Association to collaborate with local developers, home builders, and local government representatives on identifying stormwater permitting challenges in different areas of the state. These meetings were held in Bluffton, Charleston, and Greer earlier this year. The agency conducted its Environmental Assistance Conference in November 2025, which engaged attendees on priorities, compliance assistance tools, and permitting efficiencies. More than 400 people attended this conference in Columbia.

Overall, the agency has taken a multifaceted approach for improving permitting certainty and efficiency. This has yielded positive results for applicants as they plan for and work through projects throughout the state.

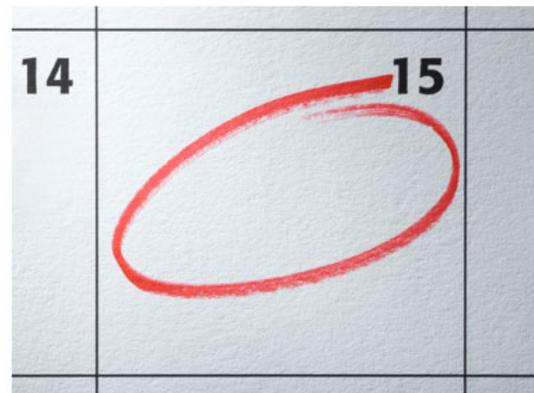


# SCDES Permitting Update

December 2025

## Enhancements to Permitting

- Goal: Provide Certainty
- Ongoing Activities:
  - ePermitting Rollout
  - Lean/Six Sigma
  - Stakeholder Outreach



# Current State\*

\*Data pull from July 1, 2025– December 31, 2025

Total Applications Received: 20,820

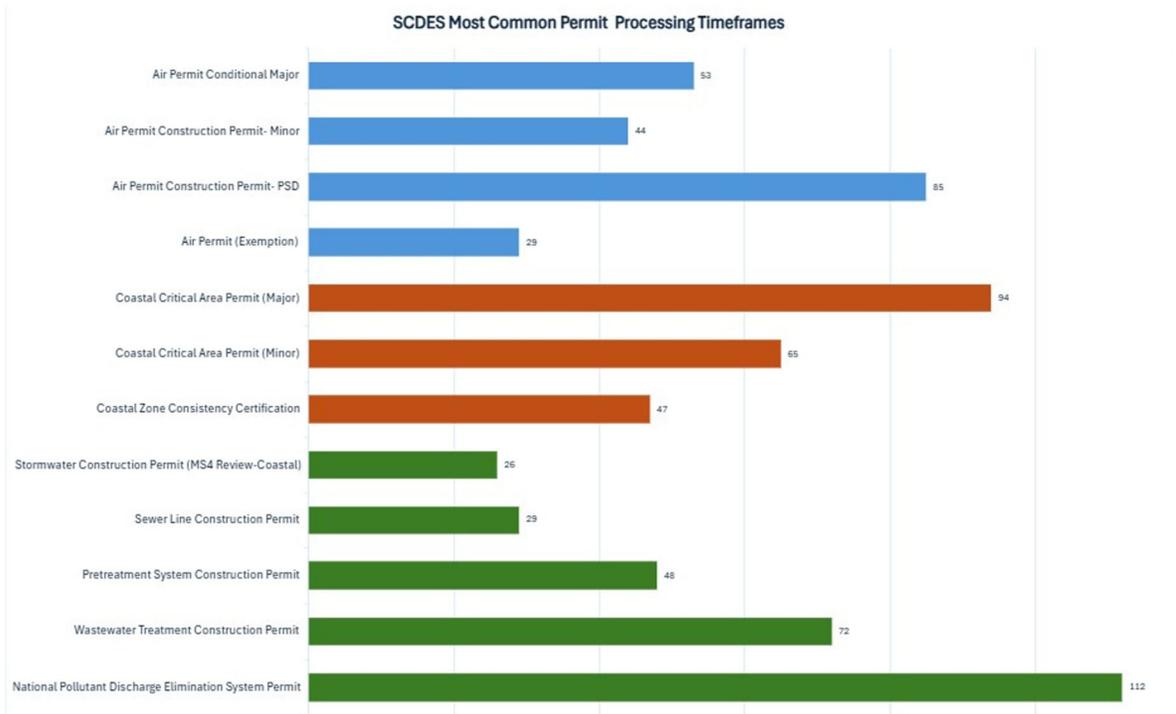
Permits Issued: 18,588

Permits Issued within 90 days: 18,159 (98%)

Timeline Agreements Executed: 66 (0.3%)

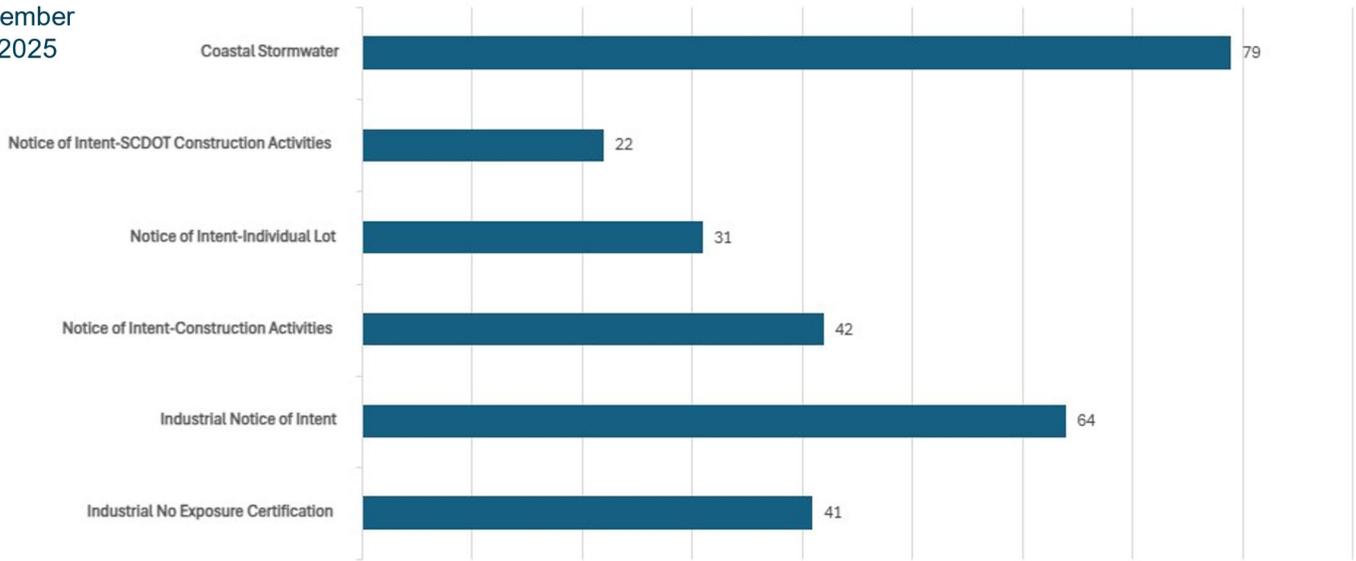


FY26  
through  
December  
31, 2025



FY26  
through  
December  
31, 2025

### Stormwater Permit Average Processing Days



(Pending stakeholder feedback)

SC DEPARTMENT of ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

**Filters**

Program Area  
Air

Permit Type  
Air- Construction Permit

Permit Category  
Air - Synthetic Minor

Clear all filters

### External Permitting Transparency Dashboard

South Carolina Department of Environmental Services





## Pre-application meetings and Timeline Agreements

- Certain permit types are inherently more complex and require more than 90 days
  - Permittee and SCDES sign Project Timeline Agreement during this meeting.
  - Examples: Landfills, Individual Mines, Haz. Waste Treatment & Storage, Industrial Wastewater Discharge
- Project specific items may also impact timelines
  - Client project timelines change
  - Information needed not provided
  - Public Notice is required/requested
  - Internal Resources

# Stormwater Strategy

- Strategy 1: Reduce Permit Review times
  - Outsource Permit Reviews
  - Streamline Internal SOPs
  - External training and outreach
- Strategy 2: Increase Program Capacity
  - Fill Key Vacancies
  - Develop streamlined onboarding program and reduce vacancy rate
- Strategy 3: ePermitting Online Platform
  - ePermitting Workshops to inform workflow improvements
  - Data Quality QA for better decision making

# Process Improvements and Outreach

## Completed

- Lean/Six Sigma:
  - Septic Tanks
  - CZC
  - Coastal Stormwater
  - NPDES
- 3 HBA Stormwater Workshops
- 4 Permitting Workshops
- Environmental Assistance Conference
- 30 Programs in ePermitting

## Upcoming Projects

- Mining
- Recreational Waters
- Internal Permit Coordination
- 5 Final ePermitting Program Implementations

# FY26 Budget and Permitting FTEs

8 FTEs for permitting operations:

- 6 FTEs for Energy Team (all filled)
- 2 FTEs for Air Quality: 1 engineer (filled), 1 attorney

6 IT FTEs for ePermitting migration and agency system modernization (5 filled)



SC DEPARTMENT of ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

## SC Department of Environmental Services Energy Team

**Jill Stewart**  
Director, Office of Permitting Support



Jill Stewart is a licensed Professional Engineer and has worked for SCDES for nearly 22 years as a permitting engineer, program manager and director of the Dam Safety & Stormwater Permitting Division.

A graduate of the University of South Carolina with a Bachelor of Science degree in civil engineering, she earned a Master of Environmental Management degree from Duke University through the Nicholas School of the Environment's Duke Environmental Leadership – Master of Environmental Management Program.

**Jim Myers**  
Air Permitting Bureau of Air Quality



Jim Myers serves as a permit writer for Energy Infrastructure Projects requiring a permit from the Bureau of Air Quality (BAQ). Jim has considerable knowledge of state and federal air permitting requirements and the regulations affecting the utility sector.

Jim has worked for the Permitting Division of BAQ for more than 19 years and has been permitting utility projects for seven years. He also serves on the BAQ Utility Workgroup, supporting other permitting activity that concerns utility projects. Before working for South Carolina, he was an air permit writer for the state of West Virginia, Division of Air Quality.

**Byron Amick**  
Wastewater Permitting Bureau of Water



Byron Amick has worked in the Bureau of Water's Industrial Wastewater Permitting Section since September 1990. Byron began his career in the Federal, Energy, and Pretreatment Permitting Section, which was merged with the Industrial Permitting Section and became the Industrial Wastewater Permitting Section.

He graduated from the University of South Carolina in 1990 with a bachelor's of science degree in Mechanical Engineering.

**Morgan Amedee**  
401 Water Quality & Navigable Waters Bureau of Water



Morgan Amedee has served in the Water Quality Division for five years as a project manager in the Water Quality Certification section. In addition to her knowledge and years of experience, Morgan's keen attention to detail and organization throughout the permitting process benefit those she works with in her position as Energy Project Liaison.

Morgan is a Columbia native, and graduate of the University of South Carolina. She holds a bachelor's degree in Geological Sciences.

**James White**  
Coastal Zone Consistency & Critical Area Permitting Bureau of Coastal Management



James White has more than 13 years of experience in serving the public's environmental interests. His background includes project management across multiple program areas related to groundwater protection as well as coastal resources management within the Coastal Zone Consistency Section of the Bureau of Coastal Management. This broad scope of work supports his role as Energy Project Liaison.

James is a native of Columbia and longtime resident of Charleston. He is a graduate of the University of South Carolina with a master's degree in Earth Resources Management.

**Ethan Barela**  
Stormwater Permitting Bureau of Water



Ethan Barela joined the Stormwater Permitting Team in July 2019 and has become a valuable asset to the section performing technical reviews for both Construction and Industrial Stormwater Permitting activities. He received his bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of South Carolina and started a permitting position with the former DHEC in 2016.

Ethan is excited to transfer his skills and expertise to the Energy Act Initiative projects.



SC DEPARTMENT of ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

# Stakeholder Feedback

*"Economic development is a team sport, and the Department of Environmental Services plays an important role in helping South Carolina remain competitive for prospective and existing industry."*  
- Secretary of Commerce Harry M. Lightsey III

*"For a project of our scale, the air permit is often the greatest challenge, but SC Department of Environmental Services' proactive engagement and efficient process turned it into a clear, predictable milestone for the company. Their ability to move at the 'speed of business' while upholding environmental standards, community engagement, and best practices is highly commendable."*  
- Gregg Robinson, CEO, Florence County Economic Development Partnership



## Permitting Times by Bureau

### Bureau of Water

Permit Type	Average Processing Time	# of Submissions in Process
WTR - Underground Injection Construction	22	3
WTR - Underground Injection Operating	18	0
WTR-Agricultural Applier/Broker	18	0
WTR-Agricultural Facility (Non-Swine)	21	0
WTR-Agricultural Waste Handling	26	1
WTR-Dams and Reservoirs Safety	0	0
WTR-Groundwater Withdrawal Capacity Use Area Permit	49	1
WTR-Groundwater Withdrawal Permit	0	0
WTR-Groundwater Withdrawal Registration	0	0
WTR-Groundwater Withdrawal Well Construction Permit	0	0
WTR-Navigable Waters GP authorization	14.69	3
WTR-Navigable Waters Individual	67	4
WTR-Navigable Waters/ Section 10	59	1
WTR-NPDES Stormwater NEC	41.37	13
WTR-NPDES Stormwater NOI - Industrial	64	9
WTR-Stormwater Individual Lot NOI	31	7
WTR-Stormwater NOI - Construction	42	120
WTR-Stormwater NOI - Construction SCDOT	22.34	1
WTR-Private Well	2.16	0
WTR-Surface Water Withdrawal Permit	46.5	1
WTR-Wastewater Construction Permit- Domestic	48	4

WTR-Wastewater Construction Permit- Industrial	72	0
WTR- Wastewater Construction Permit- Construction	29	16
WTR-Wastewater Construction Permit- SRF	55.88	5
WTR-NPDES General Permit	66	5
WTR-NPDES-Wastewater Individual Permit	112	0
WTR- Wastewater NOI NPDES General Construction for Wastewater Collection Sys.	1.21	0
Shellfish Permit	.6	0

## Bureau of Coastal Management

Permit Type	Average Processing Time	# of Submissions in Process
BCM Coastal Zone Consistency	47	127
BCM Critical Area Permit- Major	94	22
BCM Critical Area Permit- Minor	65	74
BCM Critical Area Permit- General	52	1

## Bureau of Land and Waste Management

Permit Type	Average Processing Time	# of Submissions in Process
LWM-Mine General Permit	66.35	5
LWM-Mine Operating Permit	88	11
LWM-SW Class 1 Landfill	172	0
LWM-SW Class 2 Landfill	36	1
LWM - UST - Application for Permit to Install (Master)	11.17	3
LWM - UST - Permit Modification (Add, Remove, Close Tanks and/or Change of Service)	29.02	7
LWM - UST - Permit to Operate (Master)	2.08	1

## Bureau of Regional and Laboratory Services

Permit Type	Average Processing Time	# of Submissions in Process
BEHS - OSWW Contractors	1.19	1
BEHS - OSWW Manufacturers	N/A	0
BEHS - OSWW Construction Permit	13.01	310
BEHS - OSWW Operating Permit	5.98	1

## Bureau of Air Quality

Permit Type	Average Processing Time	# of Submissions in Process
AIR-Conditional Major	53	0
AIR-Construction Permit- Minor	44	3
AIR- Construction Permit-PSD	85	0
AIR-General Construction Permit	14	0
AIR- Exemption	29	0
AIR-General State Operating Permit	67	1

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**Total Authorized FTEs as of 1/23/26**

<b>FTE Type</b>	<b>Authorized</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>Filled</b>	<b>Vacant</b>
<b>Federal</b>	215.72	215.72	0	205.11	10.61
<b>Other</b>	335.26	334.26	1	315.86	18.4
<b>State</b>	674.27	676.27	-2	628.78	47.49
<b>TOTAL</b>	1225.25	1226.25	-1	1149.75	76.5

**Vacancy Rate (out of authorized): 6.24%**

# Abandoned & Derelict Vessels (ADV) in South Carolina



SC DEPARTMENT of ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

## Overview and History

ADV's pose a chronic problem in our coastal environment. They harm coastal waters and marsh habitat, detract from the safe recreational use of waterways, and create an eyesore on the landscape. Since 2003, SCDES's Bureau of Coastal Management (BCM) has worked with partners on abandoned vessel removal projects across the coast. Vessel removals are often costly, and despite such efforts, ADVs continue to be a problem in coastal SC.



## PREVENTION STRATEGY 2024

### VESSEL TURN-IN PROGRAM (VTIP) PILOT

- BCM led a program for responsible, no-cost disposal option for end-of-life vessels.
- Provides pathway for boat owners.
- Prevents ADVs from ending up in waterways and marsh, protecting natural resources.
- Collaborative partnership established with SC Department of Natural Resources.

## VTIP BY THE NUMBERS (2024)

- **13 Boats and 3 Outboard Motors** Turned In
- **5,854 lbs** Metal Recycled
- **123 gallons** Fuel Safely Disposed
- **35,440 lbs** Material Safely Disposed

## VTIP COSTS INCLUDE:

- A laydown yard, vessel transport, containers, dismantling & material separation, landfill disposal of material, metal recycling.

### Removal Costs

In 2019, two ADV removal projects in the Charleston Area averaged **~\$10,500-13,000/boat**

### Prevention Costs

2024 BCM's VTIP Pilot Project averaged **~\$4,200/boat**

VTIP Pilot Project was **~60% lower cost** on average than ADV removal efforts

*Removal costs increase significantly when a vessel sinks*

## NEEDS

The VTIP Pilot Project was federally funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). To ensure future success, long-term state support and funding are needed.

*\*Financial assistance provided by the NOAA, Office for Coastal Management through grant/cooperative agreement number NA22NOS4190110.*

## FEEDBACK

“My experience with the SCDES vessel turn-in program was fantastic. This truly felt like a white glove service for a process that is typically burdensome.”

~ Boat owner Josh Labovitz.

# Abandoned & Derelict Vessels (ADV) in South Carolina



SC DEPARTMENT of  
**ENVIRONMENTAL  
SERVICES**

## Vessel Database

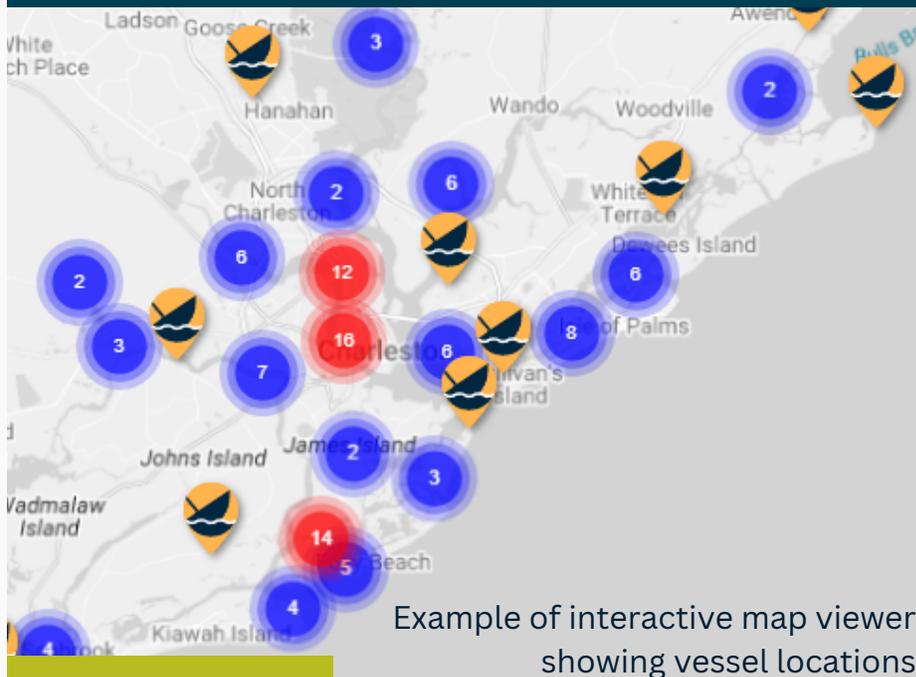
SCDES is developing a map viewer and database within the **MyCoast SC** Platform illustrating vessels in the SC Coastal Zone that are currently under investigation by the state. The map viewer will also highlight vessels that have been removed.

### GOALS:

- Improve management of vessel data
- Enhance coordination between agencies
- Increase communication with the public to highlight state-based efforts to address ADVs within the SC Coastal Zone

### HOW IT WILL WORK

- Vessels can be reported by the public using the Vessel Reporting Tool in the MyCoast application.
- Reports will automatically route to the key agency and law enforcement contacts.
- Vessels requiring investigation will be added to the database.
- Vessel information will be updated to reflect current status.



### NEEDS

Both the VTIP Pilot Project and ADV Database are funded by NOAA grants. To ensure future success, both projects need long-term state support and funding.

Visit our webpage for more info: [des.sc.gov/ADV](https://des.sc.gov/ADV)

**Current Status:** This product is currently undergoing beta testing and is expected in early 2026.

## 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.

**Ambient Air Monitoring Network** manages 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 individuals involved in either the inspection, design, air monitoring, in-place management, removal, cleanup or other handling of regulated asbestos-containing materials.

**Beach Monitoring Program** routinely collects water samples at more than 120 locations along South Carolina's beaches and analyzes those samples in accordance with federal EPA standards. Issues public advisories if high bacteria levels are identified.

**Brownfields/Voluntary Cleanup Program** allows a responsible or non-responsible party (RP or NRP) to clean up or acquire a contaminated property with certain liability protections from 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.

**Coastal Zone Management Program** protects and enhances the state's coastal resources by preserving sensitive and fragile areas while promoting responsible development in the eight coastal counties of South Carolina. The Coastal Program certifies federal and state permits and direct federal actions, and oversees alterations of tidally influenced critical areas, to include tidelands, coastal waters, beach/dune system and beaches.

**Dams and Reservoirs Safety Program** provides critical oversight of state-regulated dams to ensure dam owners keep their structures safe, strong and secure.

**Drinking Water Program** ensures safe public drinking water through 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 Dry Cleaning 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.

**Mining Program** issues permits for mining activities in the state, including reclamation standards, in accordance with the S.C. Mining Act.

**Non-Point Source (NPS) Pollution Program** coordinates 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 notify the public and encourage people to avoid exposure to unhealthy air.

**Recreational Waters Program** performs routine inspections and provides technical assistance to public swimming facilities, including swimming pools, spas, and 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 permits landfills, chipping and composting facilities, solid waste processing facilities, solid waste transfer facilities, solid waste incineration facilities and others.

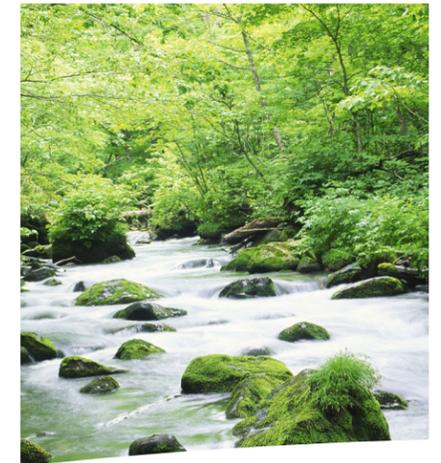
**State Revolving Loan Fund** provides low-interest rate loans for building or repair of wastewater, drinking water and stormwater systems.

**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 has a state-level version of this program that addresses sites in the state that don't rise to the federal NPL level.

**Underground Storage Tank Program** oversees underground storage tanks (USTs) for the entire life of the tank system. This includes the planning, compliance, permitting, enforcement and remediation efforts of petroleum underground storage tanks throughout the state. The program also provides technical oversight on releases that occur 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.



SC DEPARTMENT of  
**ENVIRONMENTAL  
SERVICES**

*The Structure, Responsibilities & Programs of*

# THE SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



**Myra Reece  
Interim Director**

**Bureau of Air Quality (BAQ)**

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

BAQ provides the following services:

- reviewing permit applications and issuing air quality construction and operating permits to industrial, commercial and institutional facilities that emit regulated air pollutants;
- 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 Coastal Management (BCM)**

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

BCM offers the following services:

- implementing the Coastal Zone Management Program to oversee wetland alterations and stormwater and land disturbance activities;
- certifying 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 permitting 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.

**Bureau of Land and Waste Management (BLWM)**

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

BLWM offers the following services:

- providing technical assistance for the proper management of solid and hazardous waste, as well as technical review of sampling protocols and analytical data;
- 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 and brownfield sites and above-ground storage tanks;
- coordinating activities related to assessment, risk evaluation and remediation of underground storage tank (UST) releases;
- providing technical assistance, emergency planning and support to the Governor's Office and the S.C. Emergency Management Division; 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.

**Bureau of Regional and Laboratory Services (BRLS)**

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

Local offices and laboratories offer the following services:

- inspecting permitted facilities;
- providing compliance assistance;
- issuing septic tank permits;
- responding to residents' concerns about possible releases of pollutants into the air, land or water;
- performing environmental surveillance activities;
- conducting monitoring, sample analysis and data management;
- providing validated data for environmental decision-making;
- certifying public and private environmental laboratories; and

During an emergency response, BRLS is responsible for:

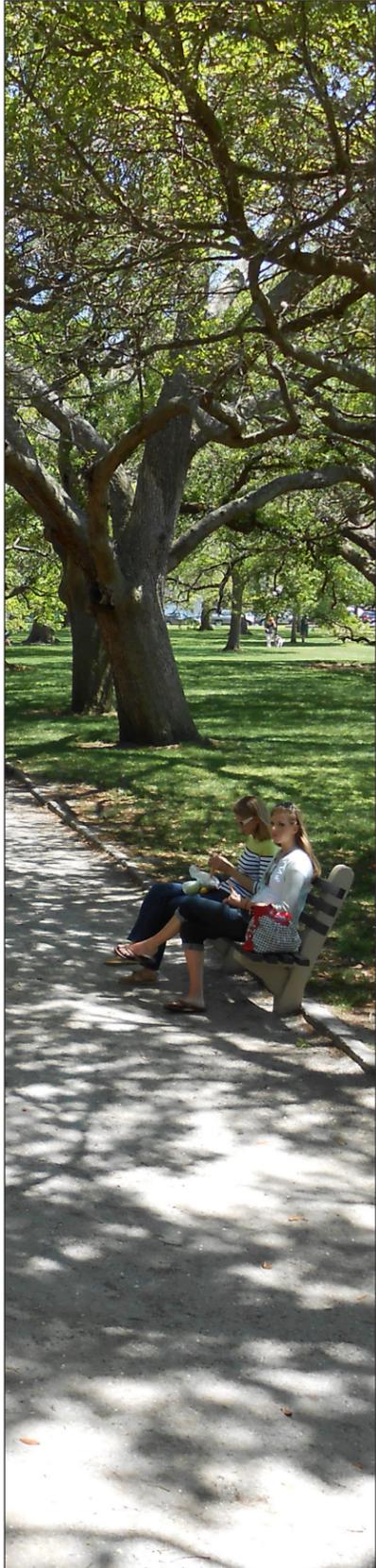
- responding to chemical and oil spills, fish kills and open burning of items such as tires, plastic, copper wire and asbestos-covered materials.

**Bureau of Water (BOW)**

BOW helps ensure South Carolina's waters are drinkable, swimmable and fishable through the implementation of programs that control sources of pollution.

BOW provides the following services:

- managing the state's Dams and Reservoirs Safety Program
- permitting wastewater discharges from industrial and domestic sources and as well as onsite wastewater systems (septic tanks);
- issuing stormwater permits through the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System for construction sites, municipal systems and industrial sites;
- issuing permits to commercial agriculture production facilities and the land application of manure
- developing state water quality standards;
- issuing a bi-annual list of polluted waters and developing corrective action plans for those waters;
- issuing water quality certifications for discharge activities requiring a federal 401 or 404 permit;
- implementing private well regulations and the State Revolving Fund program;
- managing invasive non-native aquatic plants that can interfere with flood control, irrigation, or otherwise adversely affect the environment;
- providing guidance, counsel, and data for the beneficial use and management of the state's water resources;
- issuing water quantity permits, implementing groundwater protection programs;
- conducting water quality monitoring and modeling to support permitting and nonpoint source remediation; and
- implementing the federal shellfish sanitation program.



# S.C. Department of Environmental Services Energy Team

On May 12, 2025, Governor McMaster signed into law the **South Carolina Energy Security Act**: an expansive bill seeking to establish a strategic and forward-thinking approach to developing new energy infrastructure capable of meeting the energy needs of South Carolina's residents and supporting the continued prosperity of the state.

The bill mandates expedited permitting timeframes of Energy Infrastructure Projects for SCDES, SCDNR, and local governments. SCDES's Energy Team is comprised of environmental permitting experts who will help lead the agency's Implementation of the South Carolina Energy Security Act.

**Jill Stewart**  
Director, Office of  
Permitting Support



Jill Stewart is a licensed Professional Engineer and has worked for the DHEC/SCDES Bureau of Water for 21 years as a permitting engineer, program manager and director of the Dam Safety & Stormwater Permitting Division.

A graduate of the University of South Carolina with a Bachelor of Science degree in civil engineering, she earned a Master of Environmental Management degree from Duke University through the Nicholas School of the Environment's Duke Environmental Leadership – Master of Environmental Management Program.

**Jim Myers**  
Air Permitting  
Bureau of Air Quality



Jim Myers serves as a permit writer for Energy Infrastructure Projects requiring a permit from the Bureau of Air Quality (BAQ). Jim has considerable knowledge of state and federal air permitting requirements and the regulations affecting the utility sector.

Jim has worked for the Permitting Division of BAQ for more than 19 years and has been permitting utility projects for seven years. He also serves on the BAQ Utility Workgroup, supporting other permitting activity that concerns utility projects. Before working for South Carolina, he was an air permit writer for the state of West Virginia, Division of Air Quality.

***Continued on back***

**Byron Amick**  
Wastewater Permitting  
Bureau of Water



Byron Amick has worked in the Bureau of Water's Industrial Wastewater Permitting Section since September 1990. Byron began his career in the Federal, Energy, and Pretreatment Permitting Section, which was merged with the Industrial Permitting Section and became the Industrial Wastewater Permitting Section.

He graduated from the University of South Carolina in 1990 with a bachelor's of science degree in Mechanical Engineering.

**Morgan Amedee**  
401 Water Quality  
& Navigable Waters  
Bureau of Water



Morgan Amedee has served in the Water Quality Division for five years as a project manager in the Water Quality Certification section. In addition to her knowledge and years of experience, Morgan's keen attention to detail and organization throughout the permitting process benefit those she works with in her position as Energy Project Liaison.

Morgan is a Columbia native, and graduate of the University of South Carolina. She holds a bachelor's degree in Geological Sciences.

**James White**  
Coastal Zone Consistency  
& Critical Area Permitting  
Bureau of Coastal Management



James White has more than 13 years of experience in serving the public's environmental interests. His background includes project management across multiple program areas related to groundwater protection as well as coastal resources management within the Coastal Zone Consistency Section of the Bureau of Coastal Management. This broad scope of work supports his role as Energy Project Liaison.

James is a native of Columbia and longtime resident of Charleston. He is a graduate of the University of South Carolina with a master's degree in Earth Resources Management.

**Ethan Barela**  
Stormwater Permitting  
Bureau of Water



Ethan Barela joined the Stormwater Permitting Team in July 2019 and has become a valuable asset to the section performing technical reviews for both Construction and Industrial Stormwater Permitting activities. He received his bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of South Carolina and started a permitting position with the former DHEC in 2016.

Ethan is excited to transfer his skills and expertise to the Energy Act Initiative projects.



# SC Department of Environmental Services

**FY 2026-2027  
House Budget Hearing  
January 29, 2026**



# Agency Attendees

- Myra Reece - Director
- Dr. Matthew Bauman – Director of Aquatic Science
- Sean Briggs – Chief Technology Officer
- Rupi Grewal - Chief External Affairs Officer
- Chris Wimberly – Chief Financial Officer
- Buck Graham – Legislative Liaison



# Return on Investment

- **Certainty in Permitting Timeframes**
- **Staff and Technology**
- **Compliance Assistance Office**



# Certainty in Permitting Timeframes

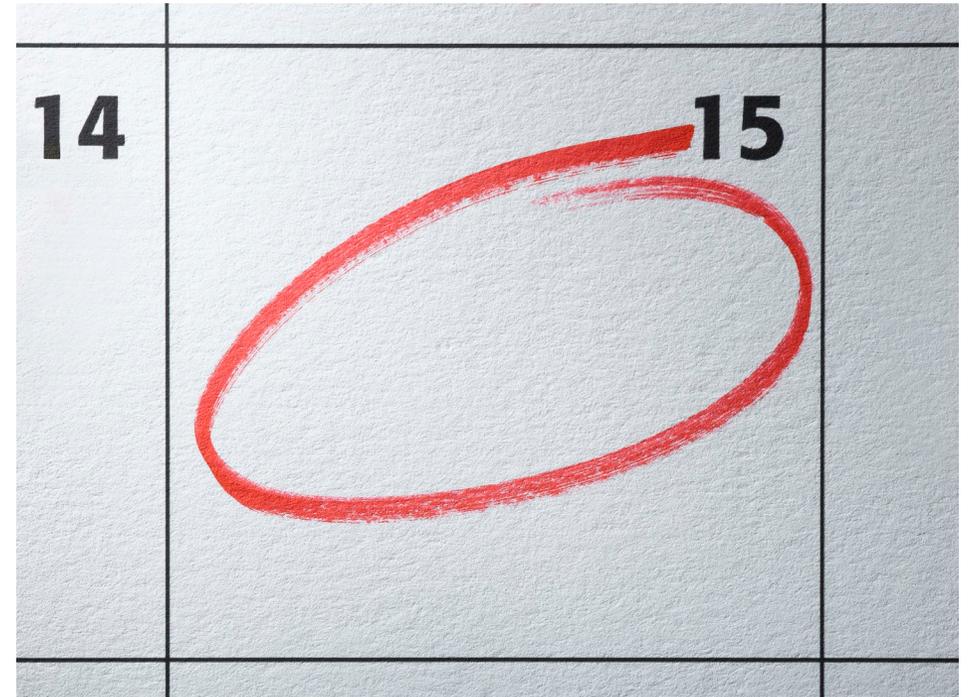
\*Data pull from July 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025

Total Applications Received: 20,820

Permits Issued: 18,588

Permits Issued within 90 days: 18,159 (98%)

Timeline Agreements Executed: 66 (0.3%)





SC DEPARTMENT of  
**ENVIRONMENTAL  
SERVICES**

### Filters

Program Area



Air



Permit Type



Air- Construction Permit



Permit Category



Air - Synthetic Minor



Clear all filters

## External Permitting Transparency Dashboard

South Carolina Department of Environmental Services



Submissions in House

5.0

Average Processing Days

55.89

DRAFT

# Energy Permits

Total Applications Received: 28

Permits Issued: 19

Permits Issued within 6 months: 19

Timeline Agreements Executed: 1



# Permitting is a Collaborative Process

## Completed

- **Process (Lean/Six Sigma):**
  - Septic Tanks
  - CZC
  - Coastal Stormwater
  - NPDES
- **Technology:**
  - 30 Programs in ePermitting
- **Partnerships and Support:**
  - 3 HBA Regional Stormwater Workshops
  - 4 Regional Permitting Workshops
  - Environmental Assistance Conference

## Upcoming Projects

- **Process:**
  - Lean/Six Sigma continues
  - External coordination
- **Technology**
  - Complete ePermitting implementation
  - Interactive AI Solutions
- **Partnerships and Support:**
  - Regional Government Economic Environmental Summits
  - Brownfields Conference
  - Continued Training/Stormwater

# Stakeholder Feedback

*"Economic development is a team sport, and the Department of Environmental Services plays an important role in helping South Carolina remain competitive for prospective and existing industry."*

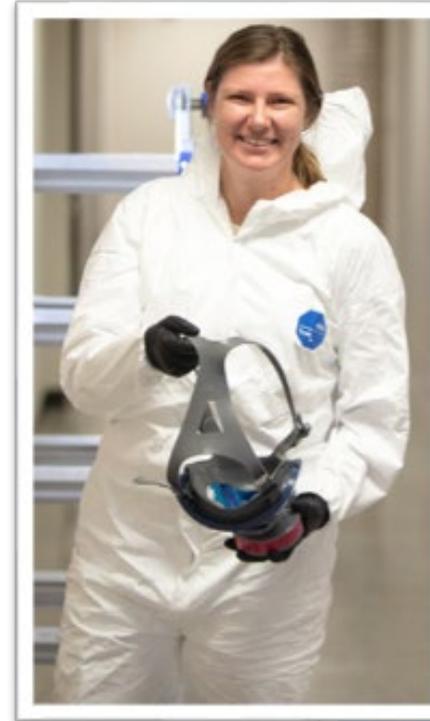
- Secretary of Commerce Harry M. Lightsey III

*"For a project of our scale, the air permit is often the greatest challenge, but SC Department of Environmental Services' proactive engagement and efficient process turned it into a clear, predictable milestone for the company. Their ability to move at the 'speed of business' while upholding environmental standards, community engagement, and best practices is highly commendable."*

- Gregg Robinson, CEO, Florence County Economic Development Partnership

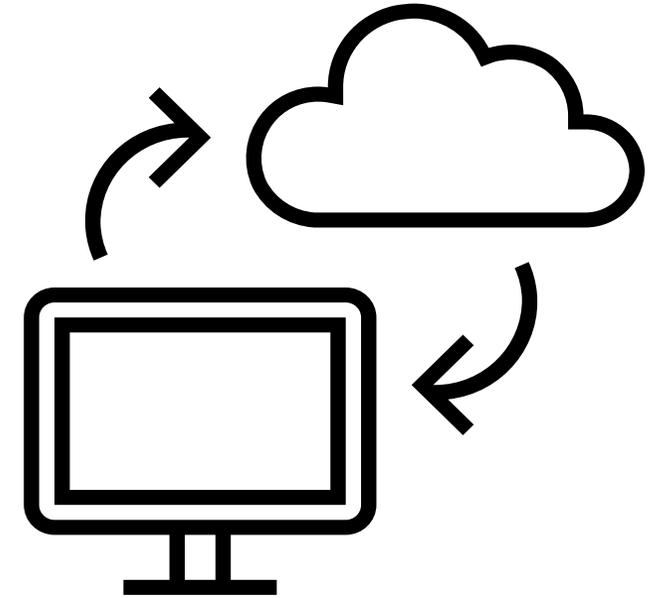
# Staff Investment

- Starting salaries are closer to market averages (Mercer Study)
  - Capacity Building
    - Leadership Training
    - Supervisory Development
    - Targeted incentives for Highly Specialized Staff
      - PEs/PGs/PHDs
      - Emergency Response
  - Vacancy Rate\*: 6.49%
  - Turnover Rate\*: 9.52%
- \*as of 1/20/2026



# Technology Investment

- Continued Investment into ePermitting System
  - Super Users
  - Dedicated Program Staff to support enhancements
  - Migration into cloud-based ePermitting application
  - Allows for modern accessibility and real-time data access for permit holders and users
  - Cost effective (50% less)
- Continued Support and Investment in Shared Services



# Compliance Assistance Investment

## New Office of Compliance Assistance

- Office established and providing compliance assistance services with experts dedicated to support small and large businesses
- Focusing on prevention of violations
- Compliance data informing strategies/priorities
- Launched Environmental Assistance Conference (November 2025)
- Positive feedback from regulated community



## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSISTANCE CONFERENCE

**November 3, 2025**

The S.C. Department of Environmental Services is excited for the 2025 Environmental Assistance Conference! Hear updates from Director Myra Reece and learn about agency priorities, compliance assistance tools, and permitting efficiencies. It's a great opportunity for local government officials, business and industry reps, and environmental consultants or compliance professionals to connect with agency leadership and staff!

Questions? Contact Rebecca Sproles at [rebecca.sproles@des.sc.gov](mailto:rebecca.sproles@des.sc.gov) or (803) 394-0465

Visit us on our website: [des.sc.gov/EAC](https://des.sc.gov/EAC)



**Scan for tickets!**

**Scan to submit conference ideas!**



CR-013599

# FY27 Budget Request

**7 Requests for Recurring State Funds of \$11,097,685**  
**2 Requests for Non-Recurring State Funds of \$3,179,923**

	Retaining Experienced & Credentialed Workforce	\$2,884,866 M	(Recurring)
	Investment in Modern/AI Technology	\$2,545,756 M	(Recurring)
	SC's Water Quality (Water, Hazardous Waste, Lab Certification)	\$5,517,063 M \$179,923 K	(Recurring) (Non-recurring)
	Implementation of Statutory Changes	\$150,000 K	(Recurring)
	Replacing SCDES's Fleet Vehicles	\$3,000,000 M	(Non-recurring)

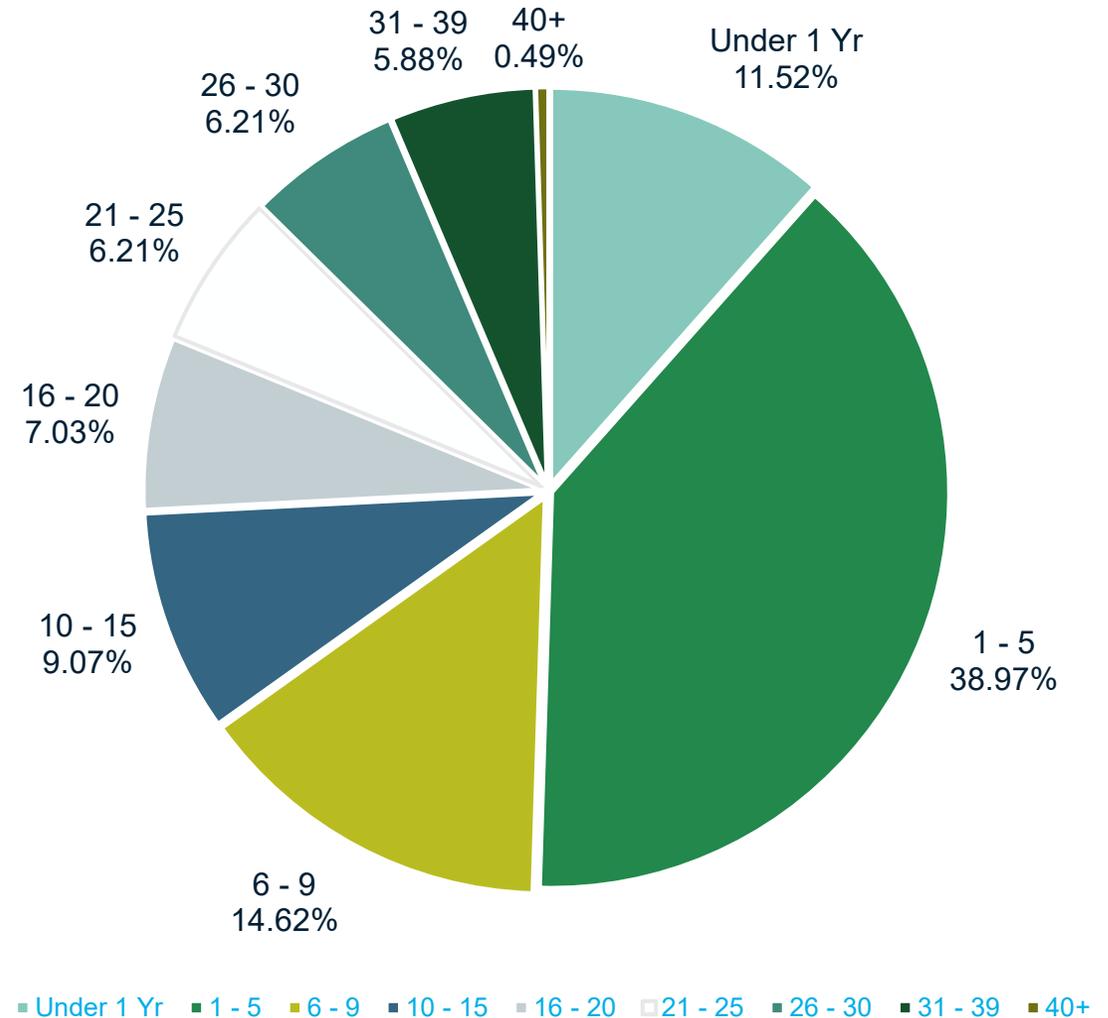
**Earned Authority to Support Operations of \$5,000,000 M**

# Priority 1

## Retaining Experienced and Credentialed Workforce

Recurring: \$2,884,866

### SCDES Staff Years of Experience



### Critical Need:

- Approximately 20% of experienced workforce could retire by July 2026.
- Over 50% of current workforce has 5 or less years of service.

### Solution:

- Identify skill gaps of current workforce and develop career plans.
- Funding would provide performance-based salary increases to current workforce for staff that reach career development goals.

# Staff Performance/Accountability



## OSWW Staff Evaluation Activities

Reset

**Date Activity Range**

1/17/2023  1/16/2026

---

**Date Activity Range**

Last  1  Select

No filters applied

---

**Staff Name**

All

---

**Activity Type**

All

### Staff Activity Numbers

Staff Name	OSWW Final Inspection	OSWW Follow-up Inspection	OSWW Initial Inspection	OSWW Pumper/Hauler Vehicle Inspection	OSWW Re-evaluation Inspection (Fee Required)	Total
	1	30	1			<b>32</b>
	23	2	83			<b>108</b>
	499	41	678		6	<b>1224</b>
	235	31	288		1	<b>555</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>25370</b>	<b>4160</b>	<b>21768</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>51484</b>

### Staff Activity Numbers by Month

Staff Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
	0	8	11	4	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	5	14	11	19	7	5	11	7	9	7	3	10
	103	112	121	115	135	109	93	137	89	90	69	51
	61	46	67	42	23	35	53	42	46	55	50	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>3807</b>	<b>4053</b>	<b>4040</b>	<b>4396</b>	<b>4085</b>	<b>4605</b>	<b>4682</b>	<b>4736</b>	<b>4498</b>	<b>4927</b>	<b>4063</b>	<b>3597</b>

### Activity Numbers by Month

Activity Type	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OSWW Final Inspection	1772	1849	1849	2041	1968	2189	2257	2292	2418	2598	2197	1943
OSWW Follow-up Inspection	253	353	340	361	322	337	393	426	349	419	327	282
OSWW Initial Inspection	1770	1840	1840	1979	1784	2072	2010	2000	1712	1881	1525	1355
OSWW Pumper/Hauler Vehicle Inspection	9	3	8	1	6	6	13	8	9	11	9	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>3807</b>	<b>4053</b>	<b>4040</b>	<b>4396</b>	<b>4085</b>	<b>4605</b>	<b>4682</b>	<b>4736</b>	<b>4498</b>	<b>4927</b>	<b>4063</b>	<b>3597</b>

### Activities Documented by Staff

Activity Type	Count	Percentage
OSWW Final I...	25,370	49.2%
OSWW Initial Ins...	21,770	42.28%
OSWW Follow-up Inspecti...	4,160	8.08%
<b>Total</b>	<b>51,489</b>	

# Priority 2

# Modernizing Permit Review Processes with AI Skilled Staff and Technologies

Recurring: \$2,545,756  
FTEs: 4

**Critical Need:** Continued economic growth and interest in Agency records is exponentially increasing demands for SCDES services. New deadlines for permitting timeframes, and a growing backlog of operating permit renewals requires technology/AI solutions. Modern technology is also needed to give the public **timely** and **efficient** access to SCDES's records.

**Solution:** Utilization of modern/AI technology

### Impact if not received:

- Delays in permitting will impact SC's economic competitiveness with other states
- Significant delays and backlogs of information requests will continue to grow & hinder SCDES transparency and accountability.

## National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit

(for Discharge to Surface Waters)

This NPDES Permit Authorizes

**The Glen at Wellford  
(Wellford Glen, LLC)**

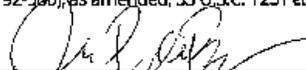
to discharge from a facility located at

**2081 Fort Prince Blvd  
Wellford, SC 29385**

to receiving waters named

**Frey Creek to North Tyger River**

in accordance with limitations, monitoring requirements and other conditions set forth herein. This permit is issued in accordance with the provisions of the Pollution Control Act of South Carolina (S.C. Code Sections 48-1-10 et seq., 1976), Regulation 61-9 and with the provisions of the Federal Clean Water Act (PL 92-500), as amended, 33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq., the "Act."

  
Jeffrey P. deBessonnet, P.E., Director  
Water Facilities Permitting Division

Issue Date: April 9, 2018

Expiration Date<sup>1</sup>: April 30, 2023

Effective Date: May 1, 2018

Permit No.: SC0030571

<sup>1</sup> This permit will continue to be in effect beyond the expiration date if a complete timely re-application is received pursuant to Regulation 61-9.122.6 and signed per Regulation 61-9.122.32.

Environmental Control

# Priority 3

## Sustaining SC's Recreational Waters Program for Environmental and Economic Success

Recurring: \$806,246  
FTE Conversions: 6.47

**Critical Need:** SC has > 7600 public swimming pools that are subject to state regulations. Many of the current pools are open year-round and the demand for new pool permits is increasing. Additional support is also needed to meet complexities with new designs and timely issuance of permits. Fees are no longer able to sustain the program.

**Solution:** Funds will be used to offset the shortfall in the fee structure and meet increasing permitting and inspection needs for pool operators, pool construction and the program.

**Impact if not received:** Significant delays in timely issuance of permits and reopening of pools with deficiencies. This will have a negative impact on tourism in SC along with recreational use for citizens.



# Priority 4 & 9

## Sustaining SC's Aquatic Science and Resource Management Programs for Environmental and Economic Success

Recurring: \$996,893

Non-Recurring: \$179,923

FTEs: 4

**Critical Need:** Inadequate program resources to respond to increasing Harmful Algae Blooms and Invasive Aquatic Plants.

**Solution:** Build scientific & analytical capacity in SC's response to harmful algae blooms and invasive aquatic plants. Preservation of SC's water resources is critical to recreation, tourism and a prosperous economy.

### Impact if not received:

- Impacts to public drinking water consumers and costs
- Increased risk of public exposure to toxins
- Loss of recreational use of lakes and rivers



# Sustaining SC's Aquatic Science and Resource Management Programs



Invasive Aquatic Plant Management

## Funding will:

- Expand management of invasive aquatic plant infestations statewide
- Proactively address emerging infestations before the issues impact local economies, recreational opportunities, drinking water, and native ecology
- Allow for additional surveillance
- Support opportunities to engage the public on the importance of best practices to minimize the spread of invasive aquatic plants



Harmful Algal Bloom (HABs) Monitoring

## Funding will:

- Expand program's monitoring coverage and testing capacity
- Position the program to respond to an increasing number of issues throughout the state
- Provide resources to expand testing, particularly near drinking water intakes
- Test for additional neurotoxins
- Position the program to respond to increasing number of HABs

# Sustainable Funding for the Clean-up of Uncontrolled Hazardous Waste Sites (Brownfields Opportunity)

Recurring: \$3,500,000

**Critical Need:** Funding to cover remaining cleanup costs of 24 existing hazardous waste sites will be depleted by June 2028 (provided no emergency actions are necessary). Additionally, there are 149 sites (“backlog”) in need of assessment to allow for future clean-up and redevelopment.

**Solution:** State appropriations will allow SCDES to address backlog of contaminated sites. This will reduce the risk of water quality impacts and additionally provide community Brownfields revitalization versus Greenfields for economic development.

**Impact if not received:**

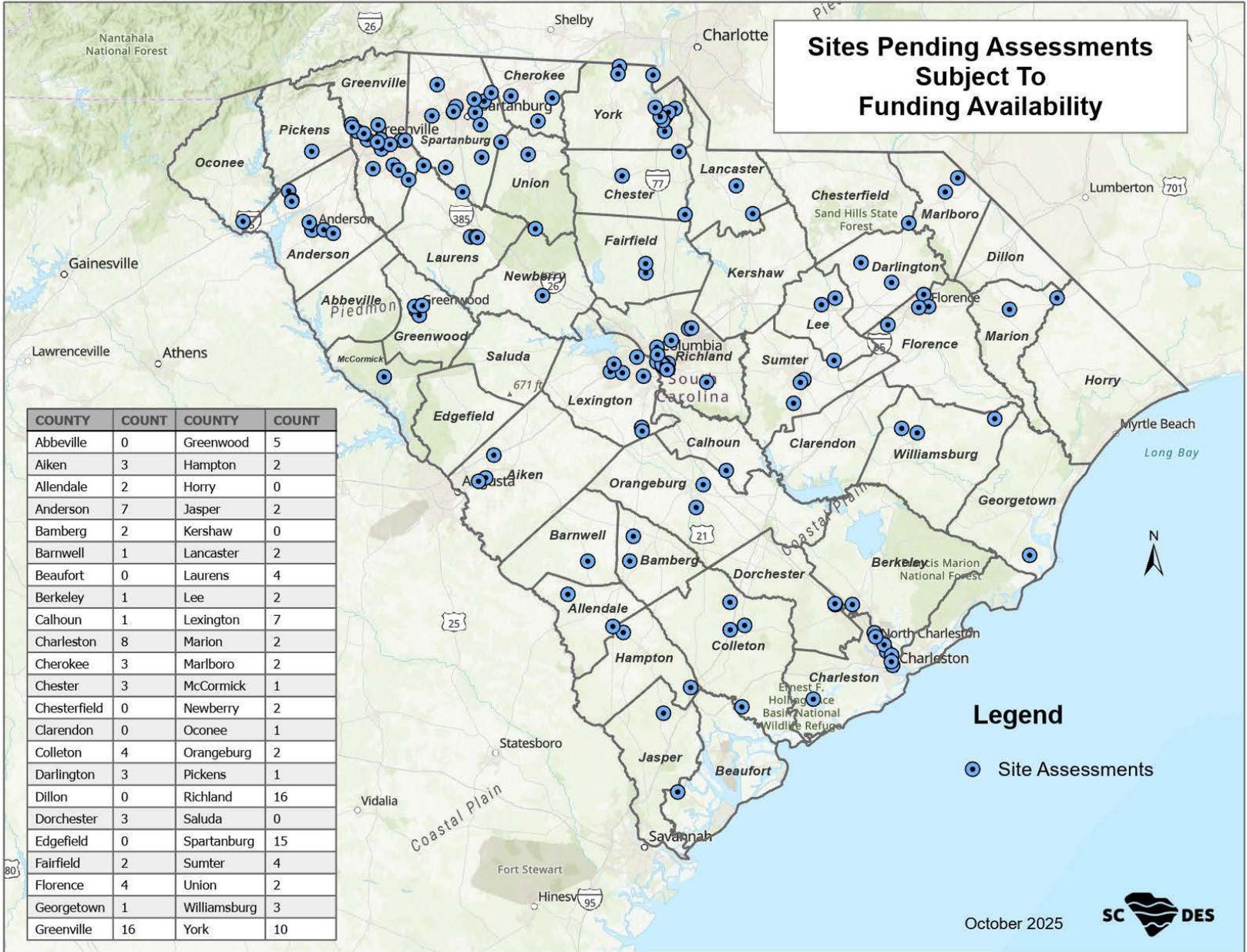
- Current remediation systems would be shut down and increase risk to nearby communities.
- Lost economic opportunities for brownfield redevelopment.
- Inability to respond to future emergencies that require immediate action.
- Sites in the backlog will continue to pose a potential risk to the community and prevent redevelopment opportunities, shifting development to “green” sites.

## Sites Pending Assessments Subject To Funding Availability

COUNTY	COUNT	COUNTY	COUNT
Abbeville	0	Greenwood	5
Aiken	3	Hampton	2
Allendale	2	Horry	0
Anderson	7	Jasper	2
Bamberg	2	Kershaw	0
Barnwell	1	Lancaster	2
Beaufort	0	Laurens	4
Berkeley	1	Lee	2
Calhoun	1	Lexington	7
Charleston	8	Marion	2
Cherokee	3	Marlboro	2
Chester	3	McCormick	1
Chesterfield	0	Newberry	2
Clarendon	0	Oconee	1
Colleton	4	Orangeburg	2
Darlington	3	Pickens	1
Dillon	0	Richland	16
Dorchester	3	Saluda	0
Edgefield	0	Spartanburg	15
Fairfield	2	Sumter	4
Florence	4	Union	2
Georgetown	1	Williamsburg	3
Greenville	16	York	10

**Legend**  
 Site Assessments

October 2025



# "A Success Story"

## Saluda Shoals Park

### Lexington County

**BEFORE**



**Former BC Components Site 2002**

**AFTER**



**Saluda Shoals Park 2024**

# **“A Success Story” Former Platt Saco Lowell Pickens County**

**BEFORE**



**Platt Saco Lowell Site 2006**

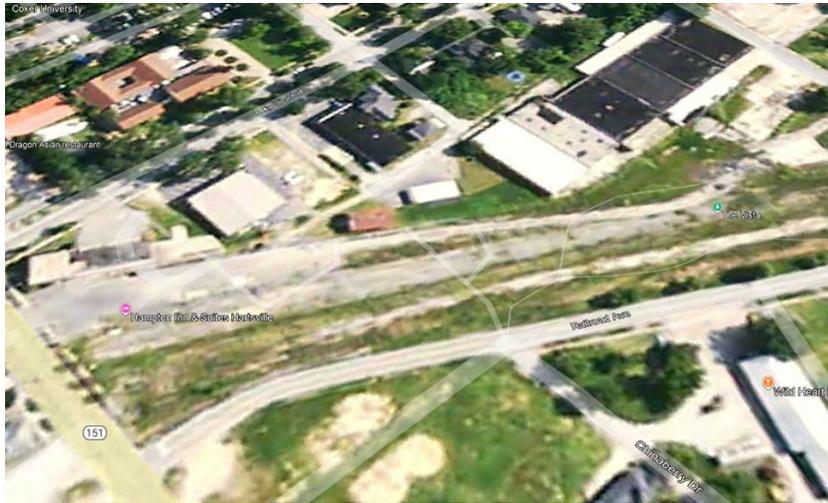
**AFTER**



**Walmart, Sam's Club,  
Marshalls, Academy Sports,  
Longhorn Steakhouse,  
Apartment Complex**

# "A Success Story" Hartsville Railroad Site Darlington County

**BEFORE**



**Former Railroad Avenue Site - AKA  
Hartsville Railroad 2005**

**AFTER**



**Hampton Inn**

# Other SC Brownfields Success Stories



**Conestee Nature Preserve**



**Rock Hill Sports & Event Center**

**Priority  
6**

# Sustaining SC's Laboratory Certification Program to Maintain Delegation

Recurring: \$213,924

FTE Conversions: 1.97

**Critical Need:** Current program funding is not adequate to continue certifying private laboratories that submit compliance data to the agency – a requirement of the Safe Drinking Water Act.

**Solution:** Funds will be used to offset the shortfall in the fee structure and maintain delegation.

**Impact if not received:**

- Risk losing delegation of drinking water program.
- Delays in certifications of commercial laboratories.



# Priority 7

## Supporting the Prevention and Removal of Abandoned & Derelict Vessels (ADV)

Recurring: \$150,000

**Critical Need:** State funding is necessary to fully implement Act No. 22 of FY2025. SCDES is tasked with expanding the MyCoast database from 8 counties to statewide to report abandoned vessels. Current agency funding only supports the 8 coastal counties and cannot be used for statewide services.

**Solution:** State funding will expand the South Carolina MyCoast platform (abandoned vessels) from 8 coastal counties to statewide. This database will support SCDNR's removal program and support SCDES' prevention program (vessel turn-in program), which includes recycling and disposal costs.

### Impact if not received:

- SCDES will not be able to fully carryout its functions as required under Act No. 22 of FY2025.
- Continued and increased obstruction of waterways and increased environmental impacts from abandoned vessels



# Replacing SCDES's Fleet Vehicles

Non-Recurring: \$3,000,000

**Critical Need:** 84 vehicles currently have over 150,000 miles (23.8% of Fleet). We also have 143 vehicles (41.6%) that are model year 2015 or older.

Timely replacement is critical for the safety of personnel, maintaining service reliability, and minimizing long-term costs associated with emergency repairs and liability exposure.

**Solution:** Replace 75 of these fleet vehicles.

**Impact if not received:** Without timely replacement, the agency will face escalating repair costs, increased vehicle downtime, and diminished capacity to fulfill mission-critical responsibilities.



# Other Funds Authority Request to Support Ongoing Operations

Recurring: \$5,000,000

**Critical Need:** As the agency works to improve permitting efficiency and reduce processing timeframes, it has allocated additional resources to support these efforts. Many of these permitting programs are funded through fee revenues.

**Solution:** Grant additional other funds authority to enable SCDES to access and utilize existing program revenues to support ongoing operations.

**Impact if not received:** SCDES will be unable to fully utilize available program funds. This limitation may result in reduced program capacity, delays in permitting processes, and the need to divert resources from other critical agency functions.



SC DEPARTMENT *of*  
**ENVIRONMENTAL  
SERVICES**



# Get in touch

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