Tank Talk
US EPA’s
Underground Storage Tank (UST) Program In Indian Country

Tribal Lands and Environment Forum
August 2018
Overview

• What Is An UST
  • Number of USTs in Indian country

• Program
  • Purpose
  • Implementation
  • Regulations
  • Funding
  • Challenges
  • EPA assistance
What Is An UST?

• An UST is one or more tanks and any underground piping connected to the tanks that have at least 10 percent of their combined volume underground.

• Federal law
  ▪ Solid Waste Disposal Act (SWDA), *Subtitle I*
  ▪ Also known as Resource Conservation or Recovery Act (RCRA)

• The federal UST regulation applies only to USTs storing petroleum, petroleum blended with biofuels, and certain other hazardous substances.
208 tribes have federally regulated active USTs on their lands

About 2,600 USTs at 900 active facilities

About 6,000 USTs closed since 1988

263 cleanups not yet completed
Program Purpose

- Prevent releases
  - Work to improve compliance by tank owners and operators

- Clean up releases
  - Protect human health and the environment and
  - Revitalize communities

- Protects soil, groundwater, and surface water
UST Indian Country Program Implementation

• EPA is implementing agency
  ▪ UST notification requires UST owners to notify the implementing agency (U.S. EPA in Indian country) within 30 days of bringing an UST into use or ownership of regulated UST

• Compliance assistance

• Inspections
  • EPA-led
  • Tribal inspectors with federal credentials

• Partnership
• Effective October 13, 2015
  ▪ Ensure all USTs, including those in Indian country, meet the same minimum standards
Each designated operator must be trained

Begin
- Monthly walkthrough inspections
- Annual testing of release detection equipment
- 3-year testing of spill prevention equipment and containment sumps used for interstitial monitoring of piping
UST Funding for Indian Country

Contracts and Grants: $3.8 million in FY2018

LUST Prevention
• About $1.4 million supports about 19 grants to tribes or tribal consortia for compliance assistance and training

LUST Cleanup
• About $1.9 million for direct cleanup in Indian country

Environmental Program Management (EPM)
• Up to $475,000 for U.S. EPA to support activities in Indian country
Program Challenges

### Prevention
- Compliance; upcoming deadline
- Maintaining 3-year inspection cycle
- Aging tank population
- Transition to alternative fuels; diesel or ethanol corrosion
- Financial responsibility (FR) coverage
- Turnover of owners and operators
- Staff and resources are limited

### Cleanup
- Cleanup rate
- Complex sites
- Abandoned tanks
- Staff and resources are limited
U.S. EPA Assistance
www.epa.gov/ust

- Publications for USTs in Indian Country
- Conference calls
- Training, conferences, and webinars
- Grants
- Operator exam
- Inspector training
- Technical compendium for regulations
Any questions?