



SC DEPARTMENT *of*
**ENVIRONMENTAL
SERVICES**

Bureau of Regional and Laboratory Services (BRLS) Environmental Emergency Response

November 3, 2025

Environmental Assistance Conference



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**ENVIRONMENTAL
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Air Quality

Land & Waste Management

Coastal Resources

Water

Regional & Laboratory Services



What is environmental response?







Environmental response criteria

- Environmental Response can be many things
- Fuel spills, facility fires, Sanitary Sewer overflows, train derailments, transportation related incidents, etc.
- "Emergency" means something different to everyone

What does SCDES consider an "emergency" for an environmental response?

Any material released, accidentally or intentionally, that creates a hazard to the environment and/or poses an immediate public health risk.

The release may be ongoing or has been stopped.

Authority

- SC Pollution Control Act
- SC Oil and Gas Act
- Hazardous Waste Management Act
- Safe Drinking Water Act
- Solid Waste Management Act
- SCDES is the lead state agency for directing the assessment of the radiological impact of a Nuclear Power Plant incident

Division of Environmental Emergency Response

- Monitor 24-hour Emergency Contact telephone line for the reporting of environmental emergencies
 - Oil and hazardous material releases (fixed facilities and transportation)
 - Fish kills
 - Radiological material releases (fixed facilities and transportation)
- Monitor and advise on release containment and cleanup

Response organization

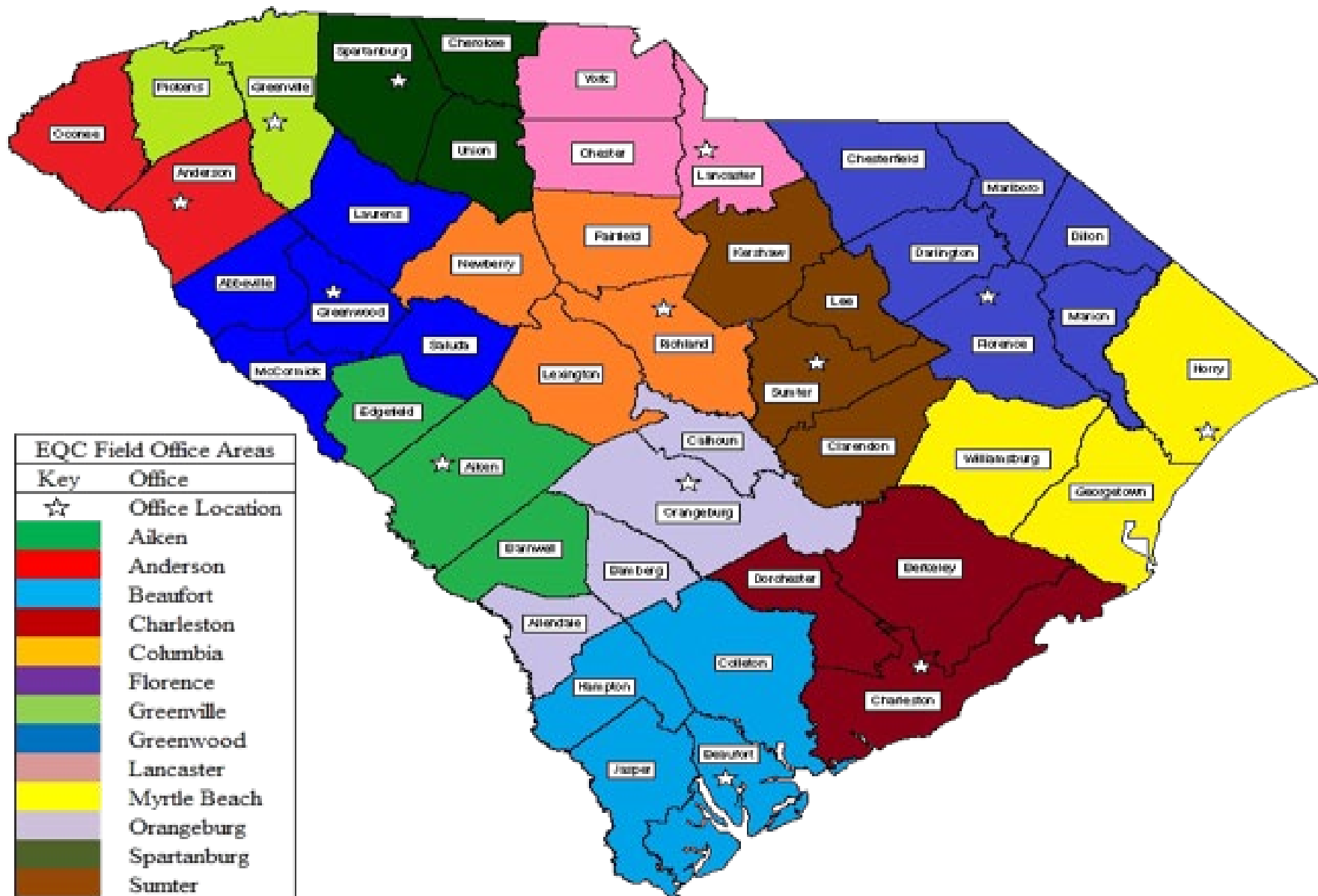
- Central Office: DEER Central Office Duty Officer (CODO)
 - Receive the original notification
 - Dispatch region responder
 - Provide chemical /responder safety information as needed
- Region Offices: Regional On Scene Coordinator (ROSC)
 - Regional offices with response personnel stationed in 13 subareas.
 - Provide primary response personnel and coordination with the responsible party

Departments initial contact

24-hour Emergency Contact Line: 888 481-0125

- Telephone is answered by SCDES on-call staff during normal work hours (8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)
- Telephone is answered by SC Emergency Management Division's Warning Point after hours, weekends, and holidays. DEER on-call staff member is contacted and will return the call to gather specifics and appropriate logistical concerns.
- CODO does receive NRC reports

Environmental Response Teams





South Carolina is growing

- Population
- New and expanding industries
- Increased public attention

Tier II / RMP Facilities Overview

The Emergency Planning & Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) requires facilities storing any substance for which a safety data sheet (SDS) is required by OSHA and in quantities exceeding the Threshold Planning Quantity (specified for Extremely Hazardous Substance or 10,000 pounds for all other substances) to report these substances to the state, Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPC's) and fire departments on a Tier II form.

The SC State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) requires an annual submission of Tier II reports by March 1 from qualifying facilities.

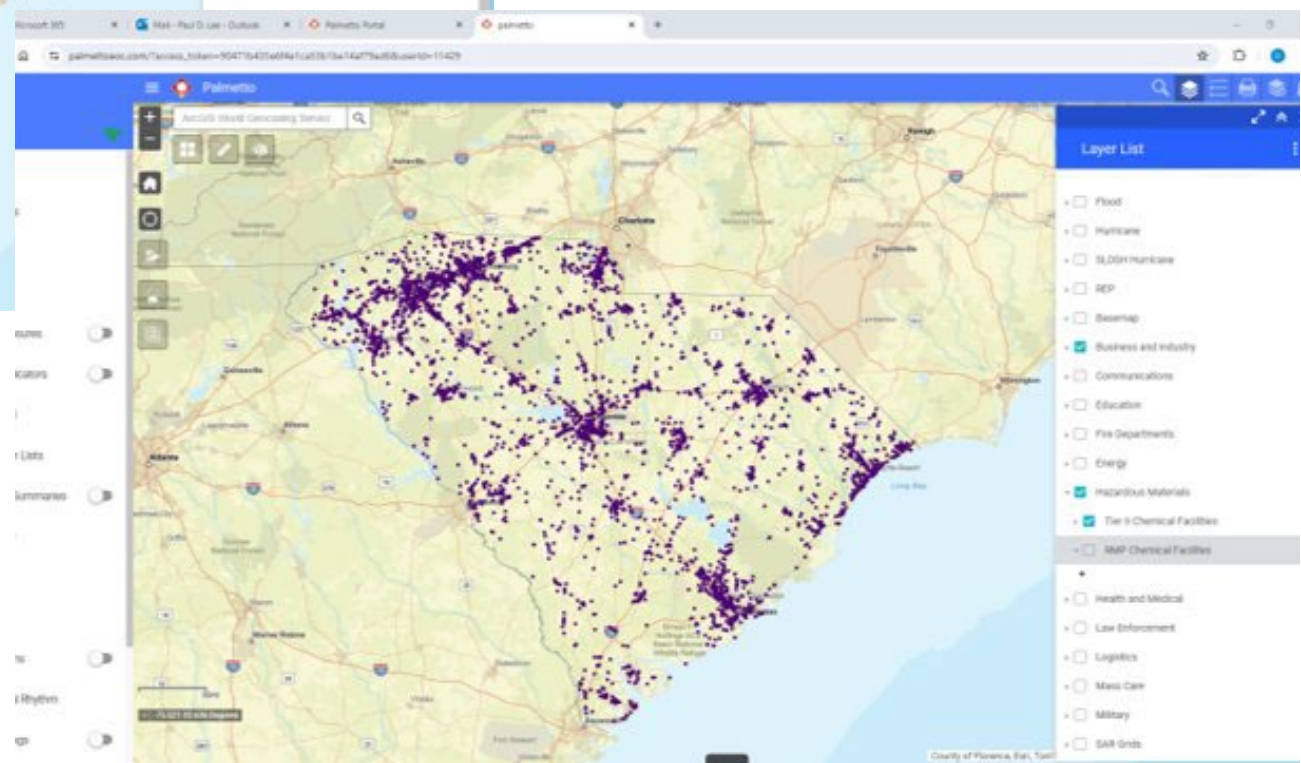
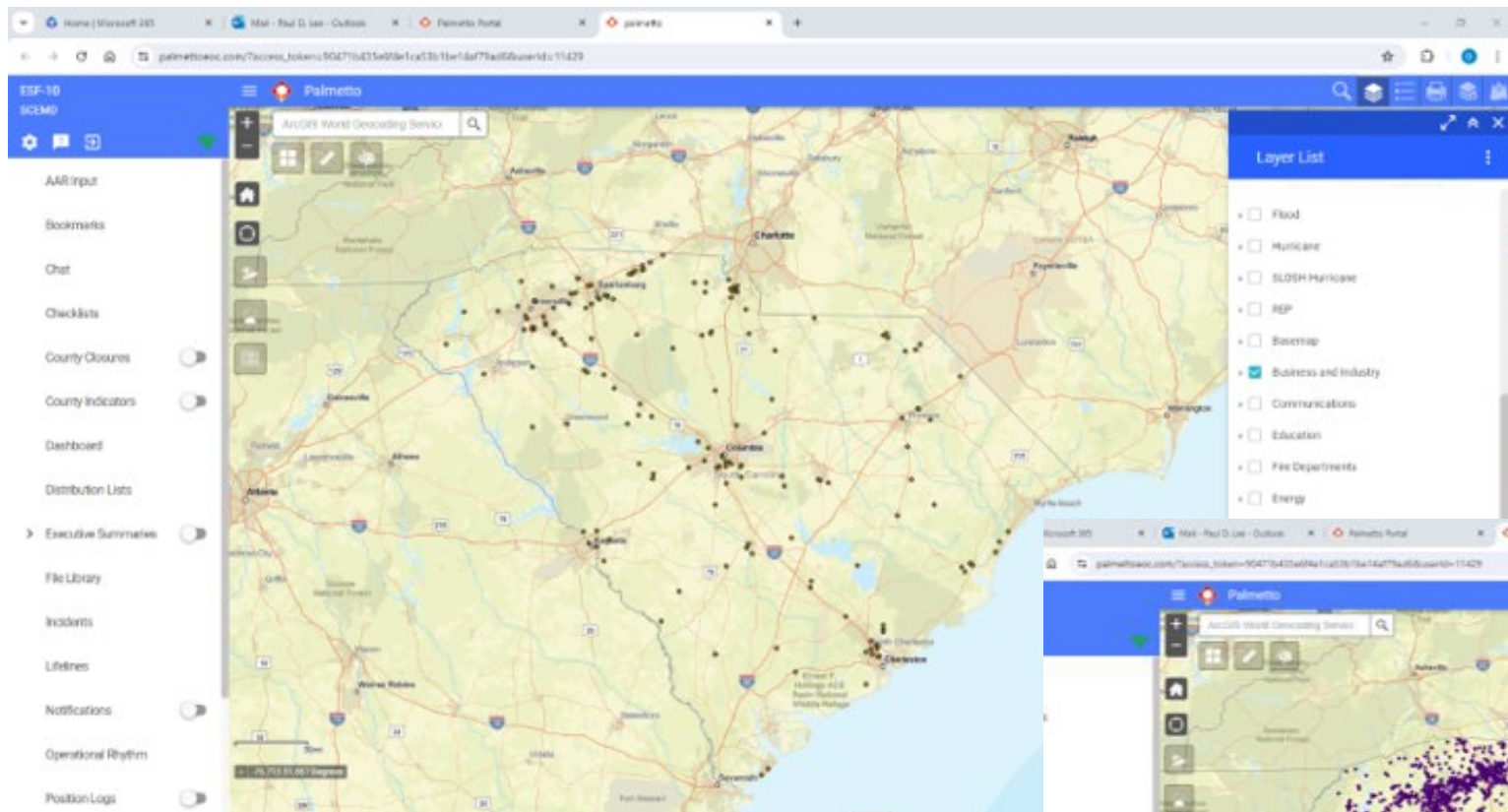
DES requires the use of E-Plan to satisfy the SERC'S Tier II reporting requirements. E-Plan is a web-based information system that holds facility-specific hazard information. Facilities sign up for an account in E-Plan and authorize a user to have access to the system.

Risk Management Program (RMP) Rule

Section 112(r) of the Clean Air Act Amendments requires Chemical Accident prevention processes to be implemented at facilities that use certain hazardous substances. Facilities holding more than a threshold quantity of a 112 (r) regulated substance in a process are required to implement a Risk Management Program. The regulations require owners or operators of covered facilities to submit an RMP to EPA . Those federal regulations have been delegated to SC DES (BAQ-Air Toxics Section) to inspect and enforce.

Tier II and RMP Facilities

- 4411 Tier II facilities in 2025
- 287 RMP facilities



2024 emergency DEER response activities

Oil, HazMat Spills, and Fish Kills	
Calls to 24 Hour Phone Number	2910
Oil Spills	386
Hazardous Material Spills	62
Other Spills	120
Fish Kills	33
Hazardous Materials/ Nuclear Exercises	11
Offal Spills	09

Emergency Response Priorities 2025

Increase engagement with partners
across the state

- LEPC
- TIMS
- SCEMA
- LAC
- Federal Partners
- Drills/Exercises



South Carolina is more than a state.

It's our home.

- We are driven by science.
- We are dedicated to service.
- We are champions of sustainability.



**How can we better
partner with you?**





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Local Pollution

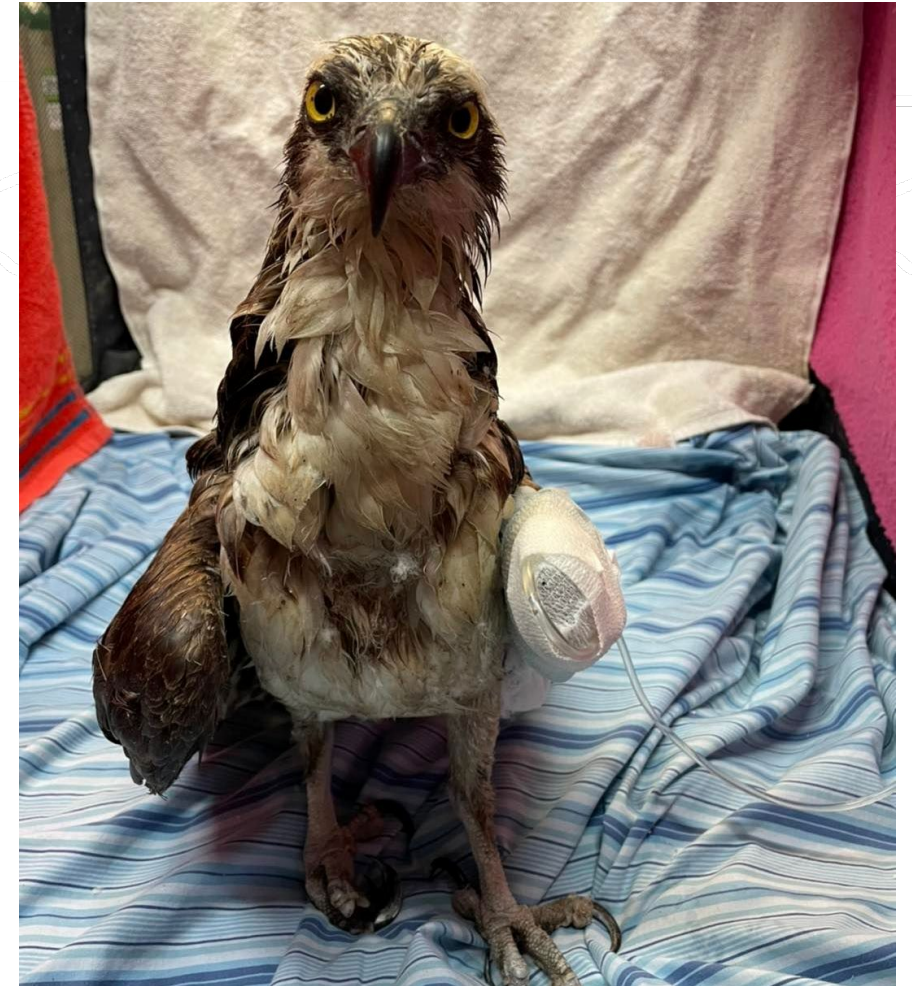
Discovery to Remediation

Ashley Auerbach

Introduction

On the morning of August 11, 2022, the agency received several calls stating that birds had been found in a pond covered in grease.

An osprey and two green herons that were rescued from the pond



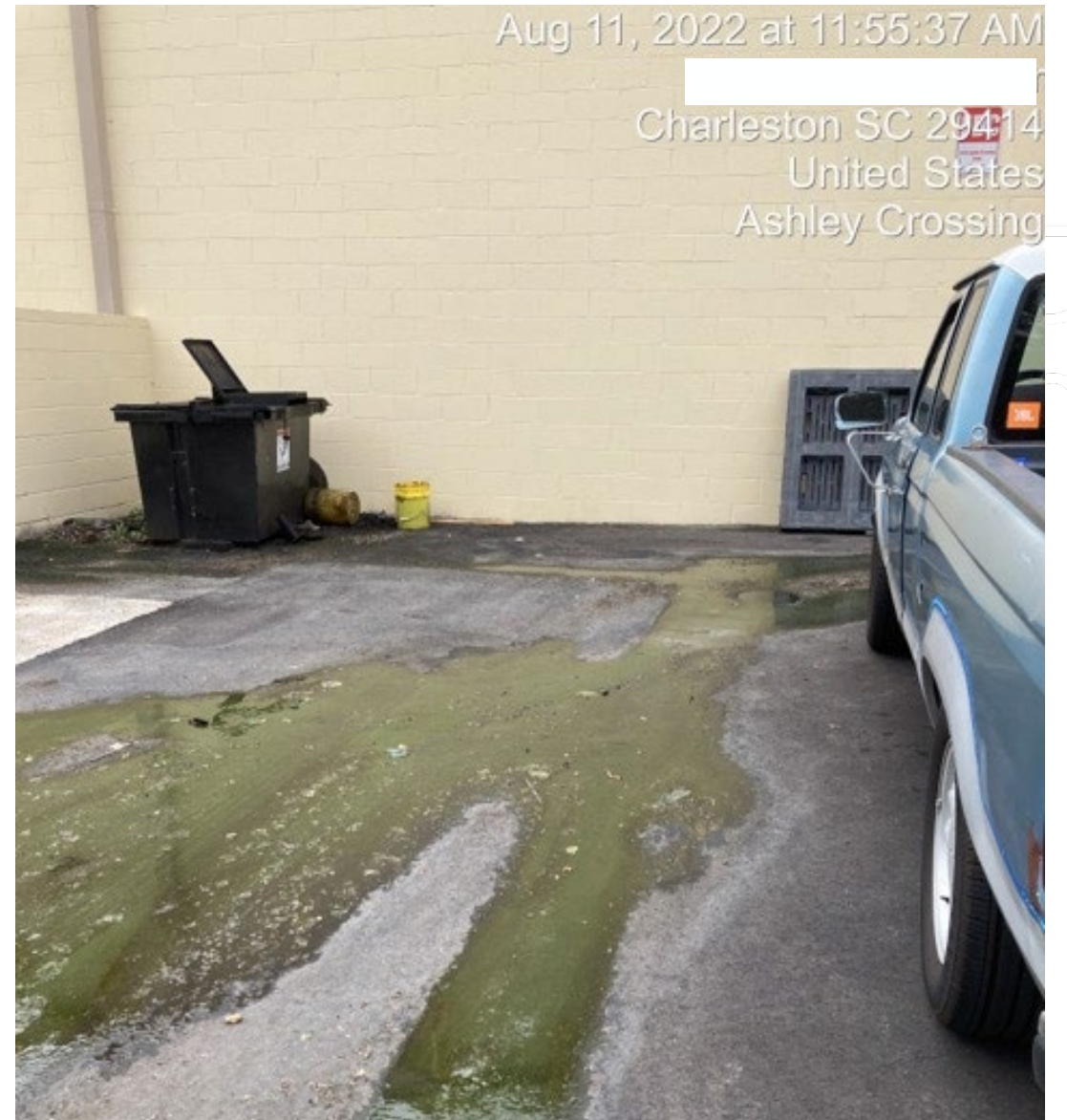
Initial Response Actions

- Determine jurisdiction
- Contact the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4)
- Visit the site
- Determine the source of the pollution



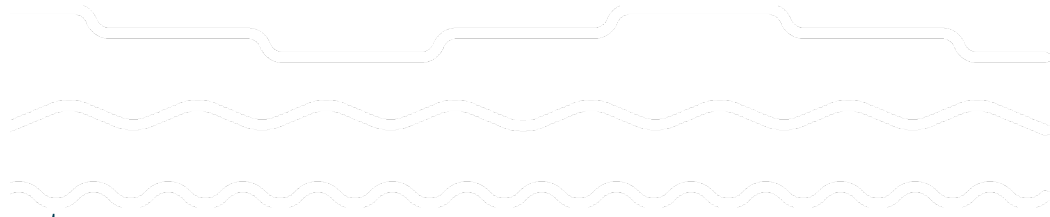
Initial site visit







Objectives

Three horizontal decorative wavy lines in a light gray color, positioned to the right of the 'Objectives' title.

- Speak with the potential responsible party
- Stop the discharge into the pond
- Communicate with other agencies/partners
- Evaluate the impact to the receiving waters
- Have the storm drain system cleaned
- Oversee pond remediation



Other Partners Involved

- Department of Natural Resources
- U.S. Coast Guard
- Local city MS4
- Animal rehabilitation center
- SCDES Media Relations team









Final outcome

- The City issued a Notice of Violation to the responsible party because it was their first offense, and they took responsibility for the clean up.
- Clean-up costs were estimated to be \$20,000-\$30,000.
- The public reacted with outcries for the business to be boycotted so they also lost revenue.
- Some birds died as a result of this incident, and some were able to be released.





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Environmental Response Team Site Visits

Stephen Whisonant



ERT Site Visit Purpose

- Build familiarity and relationships
- Not compliance inspections
- Coordination with facilities
- Scheduled visits
- Joint exercise



Coordination

- Scheduling via phone and email
- We do not want to interrupt facility processes
- Would love to attend joint visits and exercises



Expectations

- Site map
- Facility emergency contacts
- Hours of operation and security
- Stormwater discharge and containment
- Typically, 2-6 SCDES employees and could be 1-4 hours depending on the activity

Expectations



- We want to serve the regulated community
- Is there a Tier II or SPCC (Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure)?
- Not an inspection – want to be proactive

Previous visits



Compliance assistance

- We also perform CAVs (Compliance Assistance Visits) upon request
- Similar to inspections but the focus is returning or staying in compliance
- The facility schedules with a specific SCDES program specialist





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Questions?

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