

# Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Information for Tribes

## Protecting, Preserving and Cleaning Up Tribal Lands

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A goal of EPA's Office of Land and Emergency Management (OLEM) is to prevent contamination and restore land by promoting and implementing protective waste management practices and by assessing and cleaning up contaminated sites.

EPA works with federally recognized tribes by supporting the implementation of federal environmental laws, with a special emphasis on assisting tribes to administer their own environmental programs. These efforts help us promote our federal trust responsibility; government-to-government relationships; and EPA's 1984 Indian Policy.

Within EPA's statutory authorities, preventing contamination and cleaning up contaminated land protects human health and the environment, while enabling tribal communities to pursue future beneficial use or reuse of resources for economic, environmental and traditional purposes.

This link provides information on waste management programs and resources for tribes: <https://www.epa.gov/tribal-lands>



## RCRA Overview

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RCRA protects communities and promotes resource conservation. To achieve this, EPA develops regulations, guidance and policies that ensure the safe management and cleanup of solid and hazardous waste, and programs that encourage source reduction and beneficial reuse. RCRA prevents contamination from adversely impacting our communities that could result in future contaminated sites, including [Superfund](#) sites.

For more information on the history of RCRA, how RCRA works today, RCRA regulations for non-hazardous and hazardous waste, and tools available for implementing RCRA, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/rcra/resource-conservation-and-recovery-act-rcra-overview>

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\*All information on this fact sheet is available on the EPA Web Site.

## **Role of Tribal Governments**

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EPA views tribal governments as the appropriate non-federal parties for making decisions and carrying out program responsibilities affecting Indian reservations, their environments, and the health and welfare of the reservation populace. Tribal governments are responsible for the proper and safe collection and management of non-hazardous waste that is generated on their lands.

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## **EPA's Tribal Waste Management Program**

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EPA's Tribal Waste Management Program provides national policy direction, and partners with the EPA Regions and other federal agencies to assist tribes with their sustainable materials management and waste management programs. It also provides technical assistance, training and funding, education, and outreach to tribes, and facilitates waste program peer matches among tribes.

For more information, please visit:  
<https://www.epa.gov/tribal-lands/tribal-waste-management-program>

## **EPA's Direct Implementation of Federal Environmental Programs in Indian Country**

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EPA is responsible for implementing federal environmental statutes in Indian country where there is no federally-approved tribal program in place. Currently, EPA maintains responsibility for the implementation of most federal environmental statutes in Indian country, including regulating the management of hazardous waste and the permitting of municipal solid waste landfills.

For more information, please visit:  
<https://www.epa.gov/tribal/direct-implementation-indian-country>

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## **Tribal Waste Management Funding Resources Directory**

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The Tribal Waste Management Funding Resources Directory is an online searchable resource that lists financial waste management assistance sources (grants, loans, cost-sharing) available to tribes and nonprofit organizations. Both subject matter criteria-based searches and general word-based searches of the funding programs are possible.

For more information, please visit:  
<https://www.epa.gov/tribal-lands/tribal-waste-management-funding-resources-directory>

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