**PERMITTING & COMPLIANCE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

**STORAGE TANK SYSTEM COMPLIANCE VERIFICATION PROGRAM**

**LEVEL OF EFFORT GUIDANCE**

**LEVEL 1 AND LEVEL 2 PROGRAMS**

**PURPOSE:**

This enforcement guidance is provided for the Level 1 (Compliance Assistance) and Level 2 (Compliance Assistance with Self-Enforcement) contracted local tanks programs to clarify the process for violation citation and subsequent compliance assistance actions.

# VIOLATION TYPES:

Violation types in the storage tank program:

1. Significant Non-Compliance - A (SNC–A)

These violations are considered a top priority due to their potential for harm to the environment. *They are identified in the “Significance” column of the Storage Tank System Program Violation List (*Guidance Document A *of the Contract Scope of Work - see* [Compliance Contracts](https://floridadep.gov/waste/permitting-compliance-assistance/content/compliance-contracts) *)*.

1. Significant Non-Compliance - B (SNC–B)

These violations are considered a high priority due to their potential for harm to the environment. *They are identified in the “Significance” column of the Storage Tank System Program Violation List (*Guidance Document A *of the Contract Scope of Work - see* [Compliance Contracts](https://floridadep.gov/waste/permitting-compliance-assistance/content/compliance-contracts)*)*.

1. Minor

These violations are considered a lower priority. *They are identified in the “Significance” column of the Storage Tank System Program Violation List (*Guidance Document A *of the Contract Scope of Work - see* [Compliance Contracts](https://floridadep.gov/waste/permitting-compliance-assistance/content/compliance-contracts)*)*.

# SNC-A VIOLATIONS:

The following “Level of Effort” is required on SNC-A violations at the local program level for Level 1 Contractors. Level 2 Contractors will enforce violations according to local ordinances. See attached Flowchart for County Compliance and Referral Actions.

1. Upon discovery of a SNC-A violation, the local program shall cite the violation in FIRST (Florida Inspection Reporting Storage Tanks) and notify the facility owner/operator no later than 72 hours of the violation discovery. Then, the local program shall finish the inspection, send the inspection report to the facility (property) owner AND operator (if a separate party) with a Non-Compliance Letter (NCL). The Level 1 Contractor will send the NCL indicating that the matter is being referred to the DEP District office and refer the facility to the DEP District office within 14 calendar days.
2. Violations referred to the DEP District office shall be in accordance with [Guidance Document G](https://floridadep.gov/waste/permitting-compliance-assistance/documents/g-guidance-case-referrals), Guidelines for Case Referrals, of the Contract Scope of Work – see [Compliance Contracts](https://floridadep.gov/waste/permitting-compliance-assistance/content/compliance-contracts). The local program shall ensure that FIRST is up-to-date and appropriate documents are attached in accordance with the FIRST User’s Guide.

# SNC-B & MINOR VIOLATIONS:

The following “Level of Effort” is required on SNC–B and Minor violations at the local program level for Level 1 Contractors. Level 2 Contractors will enforce violations according to local ordinances. See attached Flowchart for County Compliance and Referral Actions.

1. Upon discovery of a SNC-B or Minor violation, the local program shall cite the violation in FIRST and notify the facility owner/operator within 72 hours of the violation discovery. Then, the local program shall finish the inspection and issue a Compliance Assistance Offer (CAO) Letter to the facility owner/operator within 14 calendar days.

For violations that cannot otherwise be corrected, such as for gaps in monthly visuals or testing, which occurred three consecutive months or less, the violation shall be closed with the issuance of the CAO Letter to the facility owner/operator within 14 calendar days.

1. If the facility owner/operator responds that the violation has been corrected, and the facility provides documentation (photographs, manifests, and/or repair receipts), the violation may be closed and a Return to Compliance Letter should be issued. If the documentation appears to be insufficient, the local program may request a Compliance Assistance inspection from the Division of Waste Management who may authorize a Compliance Assistance inspection. The local program may also request a Compliance Assistance inspection to document the resolution of violations for those facilities at which there has been a poor compliance history (including those referred for enforcement) or where access was denied to the facility or components.

A Compliance Assistance inspection may not be conducted unless the Division of Waste Management approves the Compliance Assistance inspection through [STR\_VARIABLES@FloridaDEP.gov](mailto:STR_VARIABLES@FloridaDEP.gov) prior to it being conducted.

1. The owner/operator is given up to 90 calendar days to resolve the violation at the local program level. If at the 90-calendar day mark, the violation remains unresolved, the Level 1 Contractor shall refer the violation to the DEP District office. The 90-day clock begins on the date of the site inspection.

Even if the violation is in the process of resolution and is being accomplished in a manner that is acceptable to both the Level 1 Contractor and DEP, the violation should be referred at the 90-day mark to the DEP District office. Upon referral, the District will take the lead on enforcement. The District may request assistance from the County during the enforcement process, but the District will be the principal contact with the owner/operator from this point forward.

1. Violations referred to the DEP District office by the Level 1 Contractor shall be in accordance with [Guidance Document G](https://floridadep.gov/waste/permitting-compliance-assistance/documents/g-guidance-case-referrals), Guidelines for Case Referrals, of the Contract Scope of Work – see [Compliance Contracts](https://floridadep.gov/waste/permitting-compliance-assistance/content/compliance-contracts). The local program shall ensure that FIRST is up-to-date and appropriate documents are attached in accordance with the FIRST User’s Guide.

# AREAS OF CONCERN (AOCs):

FIRST allows an inspector to cite any rule citation and identify it as either an Area of Concern (AOC) or a Violation during an inspection. If a violation of the rule is discovered during the inspection, then a Violation should be cited. If the inspector has determined that the issue has not reached the point of being a violation of the rule, but there is a concern, then an AOC should be cited.

It should be noted that all AOCs cited in an inspection are automatically closed in FIRST upon the inspection report being finished.

