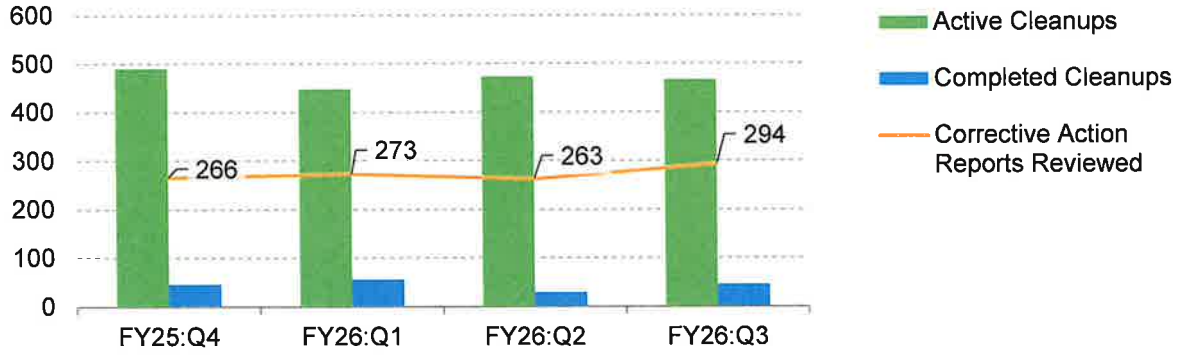
GEORGIA
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION

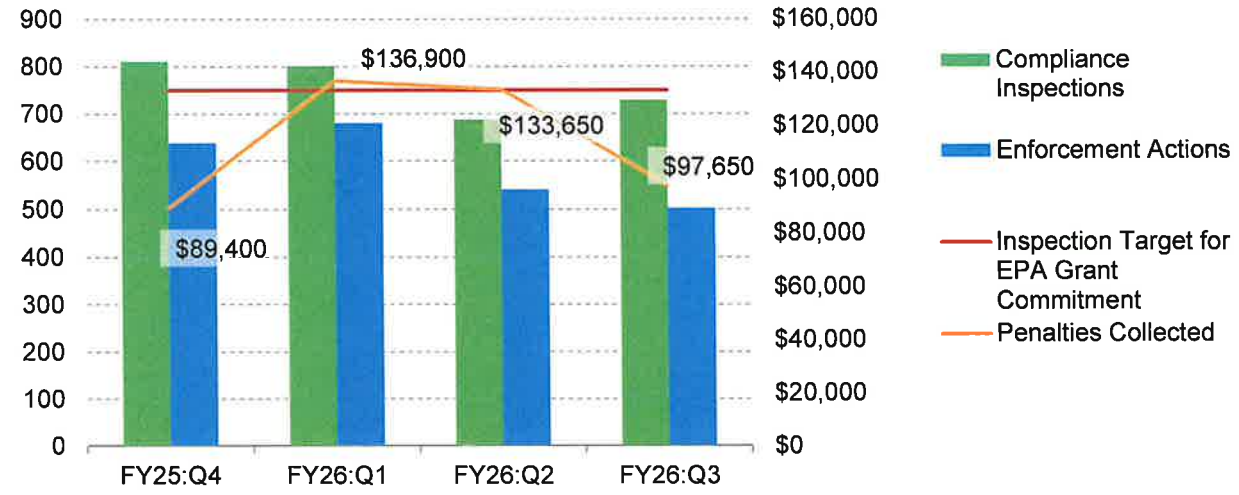
# Land Protection Branch Permitting and Compliance Quarterly Report

State Fiscal Year 2026
Third Quarter
January 1, 2026 – March 31, 2026

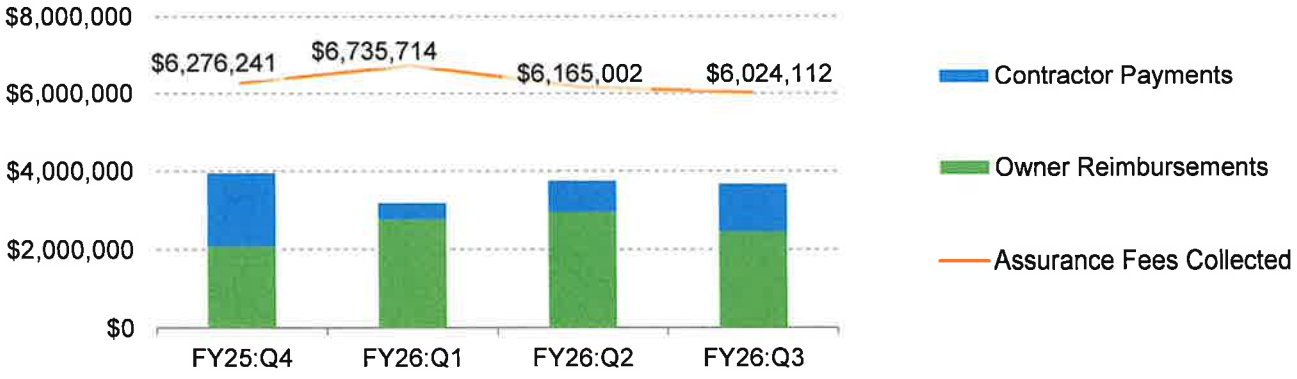
## Underground Storage Tank (UST) Corrective Action



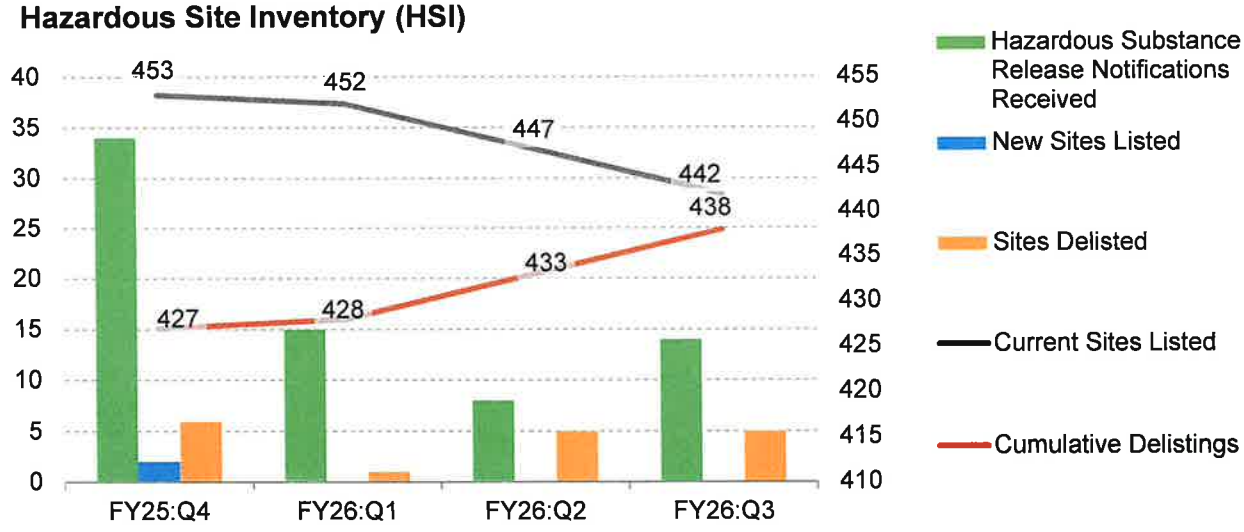

## UST Compliance



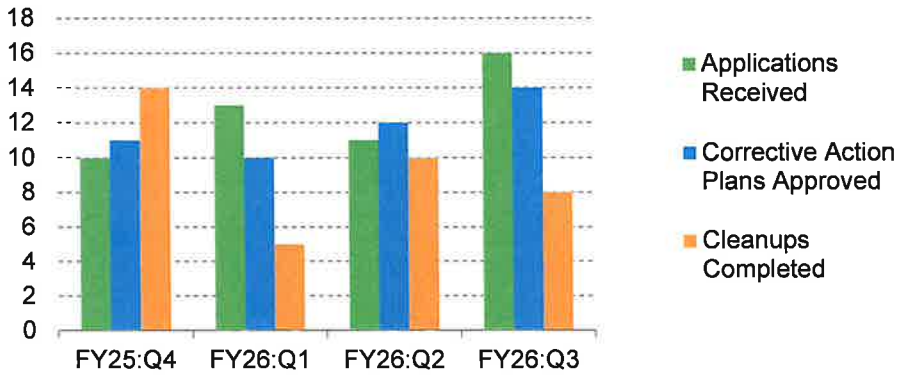

## UST Fees and Payments



## Hazardous Site Inventory (HSI)

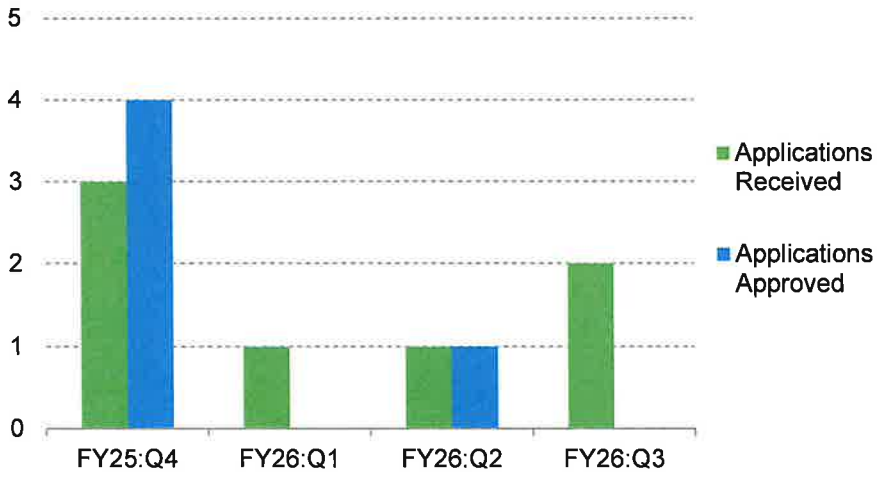



## Brownfields




By the end of the third quarter of state fiscal year 2026, the Brownfields Program received **1,540** applications and **808** properties had certified compliance with reduction standards and received a final limitation of liability.

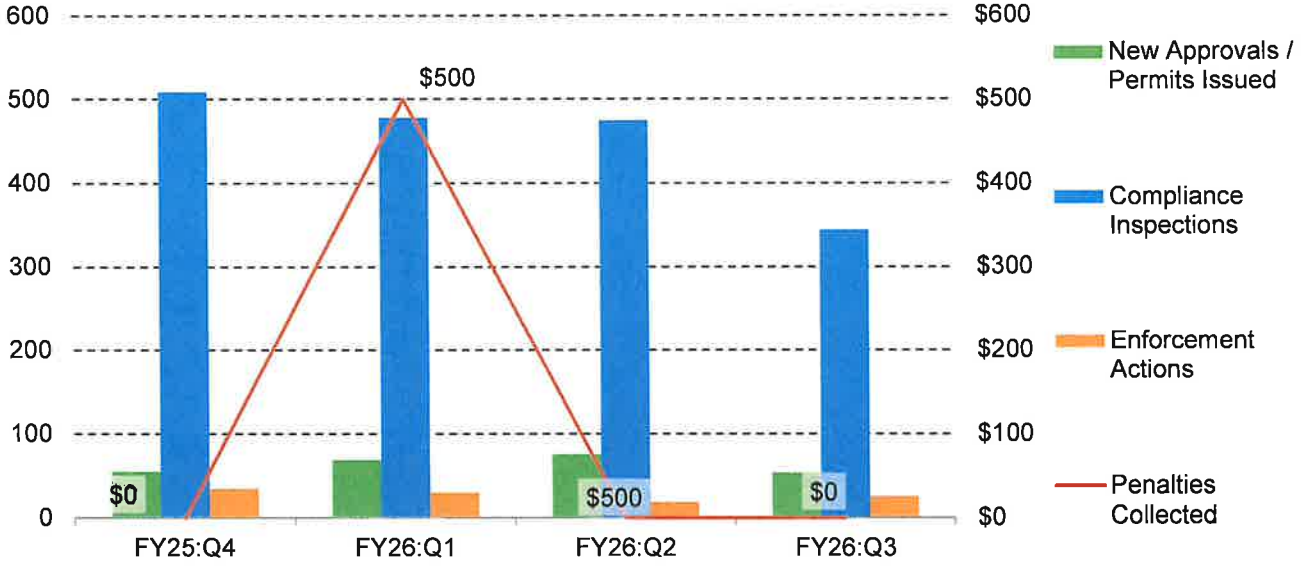
## Voluntary Remediation




By the end of the third quarter of state fiscal year 2026, the Voluntary Remediation Program received **194** applications and approved **185**. **Seven** applications were under review, **one** was incomplete, and **11** were withdrawn (this figure includes applications withdrawn after approval). **One** site was remediated and removed from the HSI.

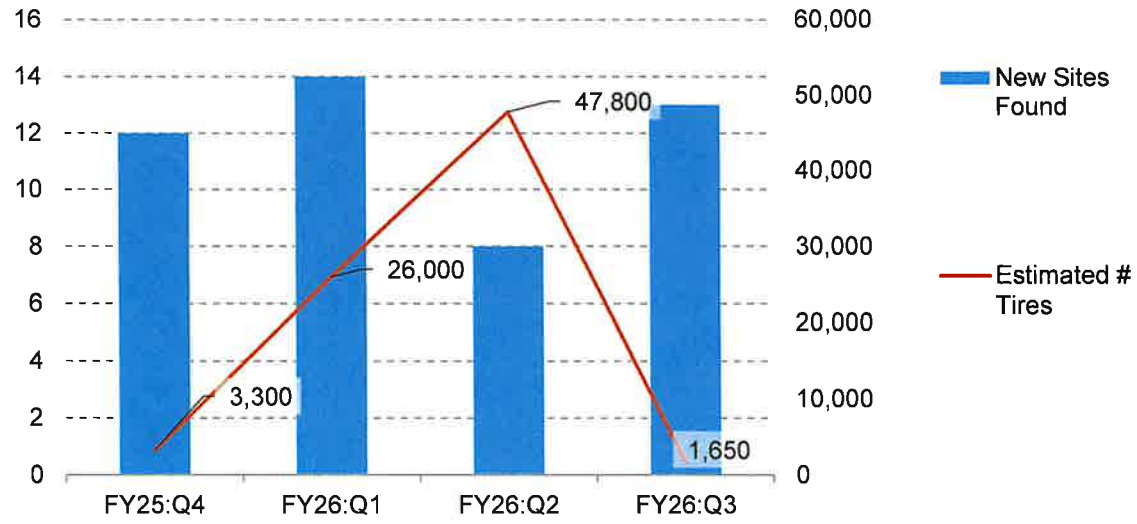
*Note: Numbers for these three programs may differ from previous reports due to receipt of updated data.*

## Tire Permitting and Compliance

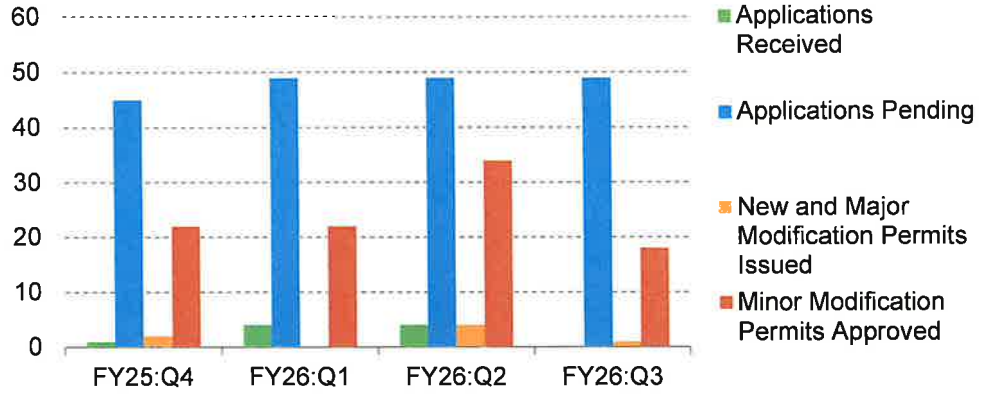



By the end of the third quarter of state fiscal year 2026, there were **6,610** registered scrap tire generators, **711** registered used tire dealers, **199** permitted tire carriers, **52** approved or permitted tire sorting operations, and **14** permitted scrap tire processors in Georgia. There were also **nine** sorters, **44** carriers, and **32** processors outside of Georgia approved by the program to accept scrap tires generated in Georgia.

## Tire Dumps

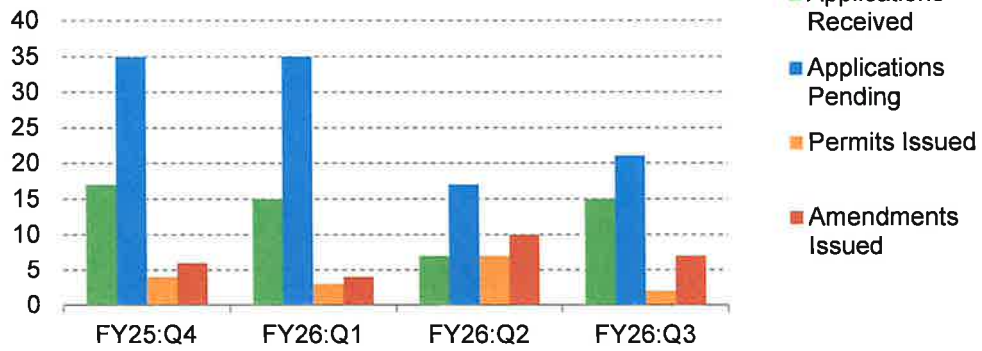


## Solid Waste Permitting



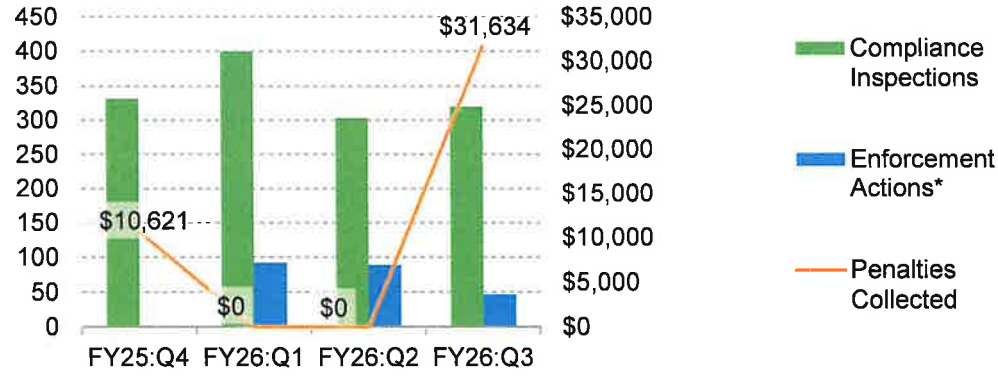

By the end of the third quarter of state fiscal year 2026, there were **195** permitted solid waste facilities in operation, **31** solid waste facilities in the closure process, and **316** closed landfills in Georgia.

## Surface Mining Permitting



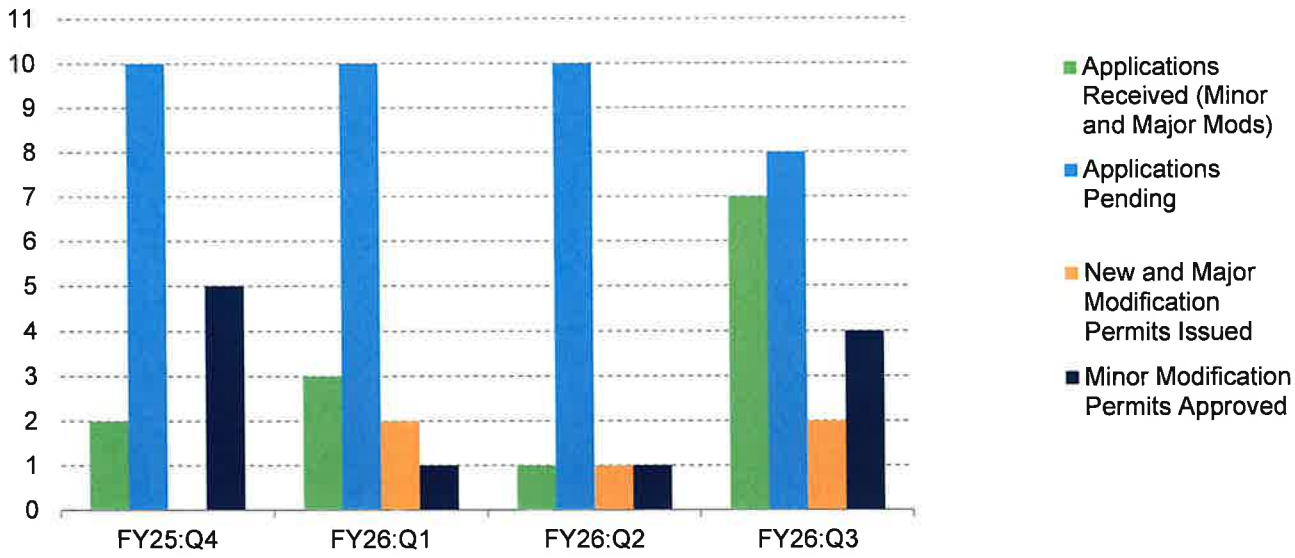

By the end of the third quarter of state fiscal year 2026, there were **772** permitted surface mines in Georgia.

## Solid Waste and Surface Mining Compliance



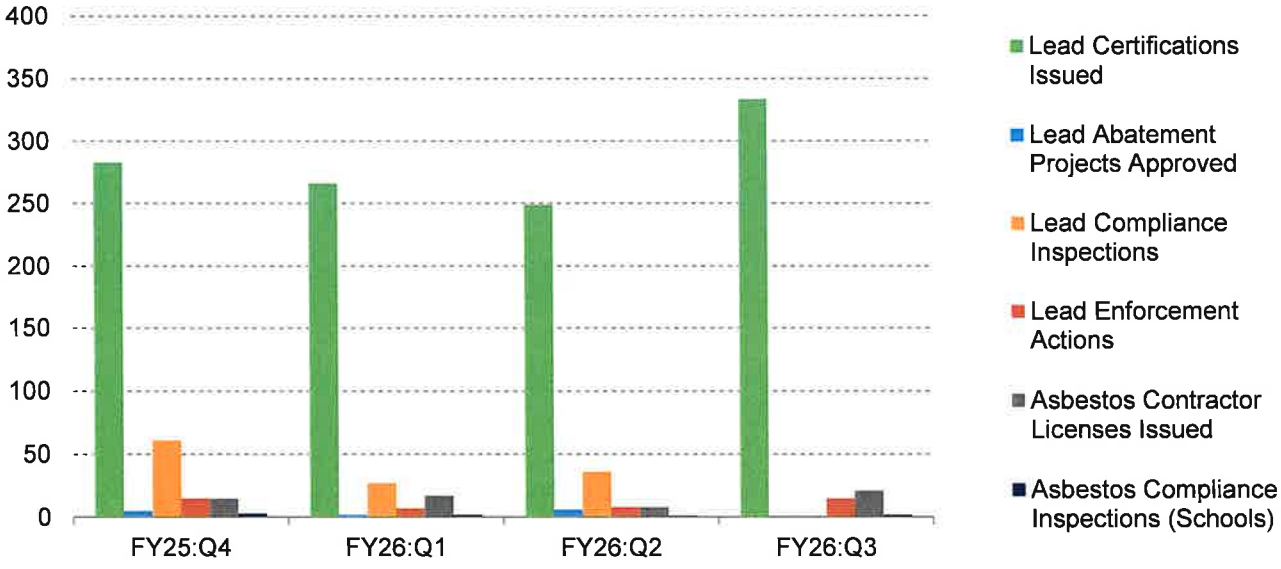

*Includes noncompliance letters, violation notices, and consent orders.

## Recovered Materials Permitting*



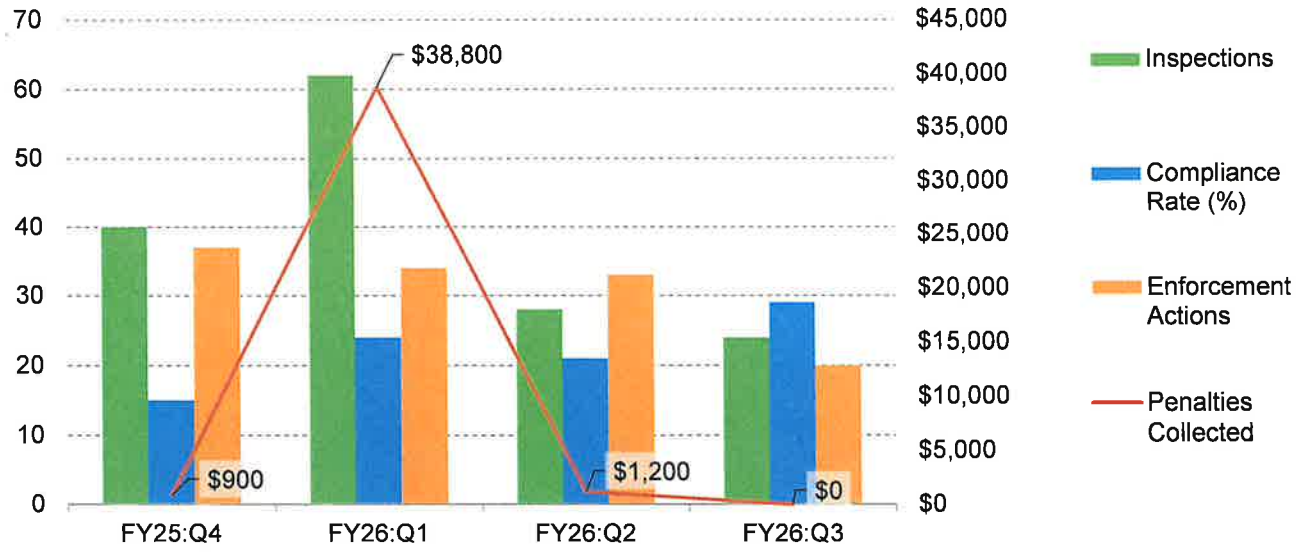

*Includes permit-by-rule facilities.

## Lead-Based Paint and Asbestos

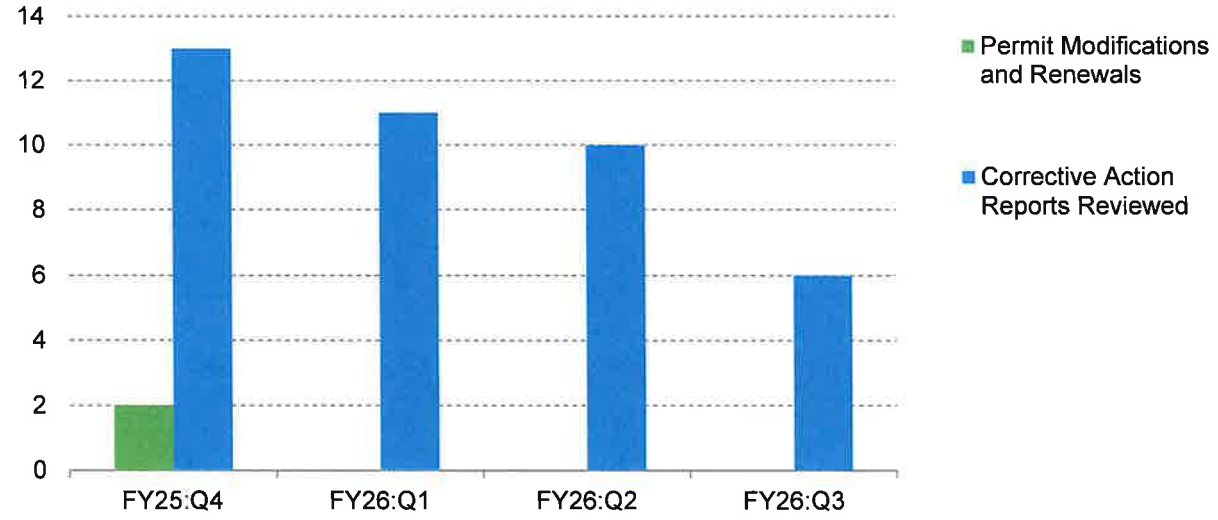



EPD receives approximately 500 asbestos project notifications per quarter. However, due to reductions in funding, EPD only performs asbestos inspections at schools. U.S. EPA handles all other inspections and enforcement.

## Hazardous Waste Compliance and Enforcement




## Hazardous Waste Permitting and Corrective Action



GEORGIA
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION

# Air Protection Branch
# Quarterly Report

State Fiscal Year 2026
Third Quarter

January 1, 2026 - March 31, 2026

Cloudland Canyon

## The Air Protection Branch's responsibilities include:

- Monitoring Air Quality
- Permitting Stationary Sources
- Licensing Users of Radioactive Materials
- Inspecting Sources Permitted and Licensed by the Branch
- Auditing and Reviewing Stack Tests
- Overseeing the Georgia Vehicle Emissions Inspection Program
- Providing Assistance to Small Businesses
- Developing State Air Quality Rules and State Implementation Plans (SIPs)
- Modeling and Emission Inventory Development
- Fee Collection and Financial Management
- Office of the State Climatologist

## Notable APB Events:

- Exceedances of the 2006 24-hour $PM_{2.5}$ standard (35 $\mu g/m^3$) occurred at:
    - Macon (54.5 $\mu g/m^3$), Augusta (48.5 $\mu g/m^3$), General Coffee (40.6 $\mu g/m^3$), and Valdosta (35.8 $\mu g/m^3$) on January 13;
    - Macon (36.1 $\mu g/m^3$) and General Coffee (36.6 $\mu g/m^3$) on January 14;
    - Columbus Baker (56.0 $\mu g/m^3$) and General Coffee (45.5 $\mu g/m^3$) on February 9;
    - General Coffee (100.6 $\mu g/m^3$) on February 10;
    - Albany (74.4 $\mu g/m^3$) and General Coffee (37.6 $\mu g/m^3$) on February 13;
    - Albany (42.9 $\mu g/m^3$) and Columbus Baker (65.6 $\mu g/m^3$) on February 14;
    - United Avenue (60.2 $\mu g/m^3$) on February 19;
    - Albany (80.4 $\mu g/m^3$) on March 14;
    - Albany (44.4 $\mu g/m^3$), Columbus Baker (45.1 $\mu g/m^3$), and Macon Allied (43.8 $\mu g/m^3$) on March 20;
    - Augusta (39.1 $\mu g/m^3$) and Macon Allied (47.0 $\mu g/m^3$) on March 21; and
    - Savannah (36.4 $\mu g/m^3$) on March 22.

- In February, EPA officially approved five Canadian wildfire exceptional event demonstrations and two prescribed exceptional event demonstrations for Macon lowering the 2022-2024 annual $PM_{2.5}$ design value from 9.4 to 9.0 micrograms per cubic meter, thereby demonstrating attainment with the 2024 annual $PM_{2.5}$ standard. The two prescribed fire exceptional event demonstrations that were approved by EPA were the first regulatorily significant prescribed fire exceptional event demonstrations ever approved in the country. In March, EPA officially approved Canadian wildfire exceptional event demonstrations for Atlanta and concurred on the exclusion of our roadside monitor for comparison to the annual $PM_{2.5}$ NAAQS, allowing Atlanta to meet the annual $PM_{2.5}$ standard.

# Monitoring Air Quality

Air quality in the United States is regulated through the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). EPA sets NAAQS for six pollutants: particulate matter, ozone, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, lead, and carbon monoxide.

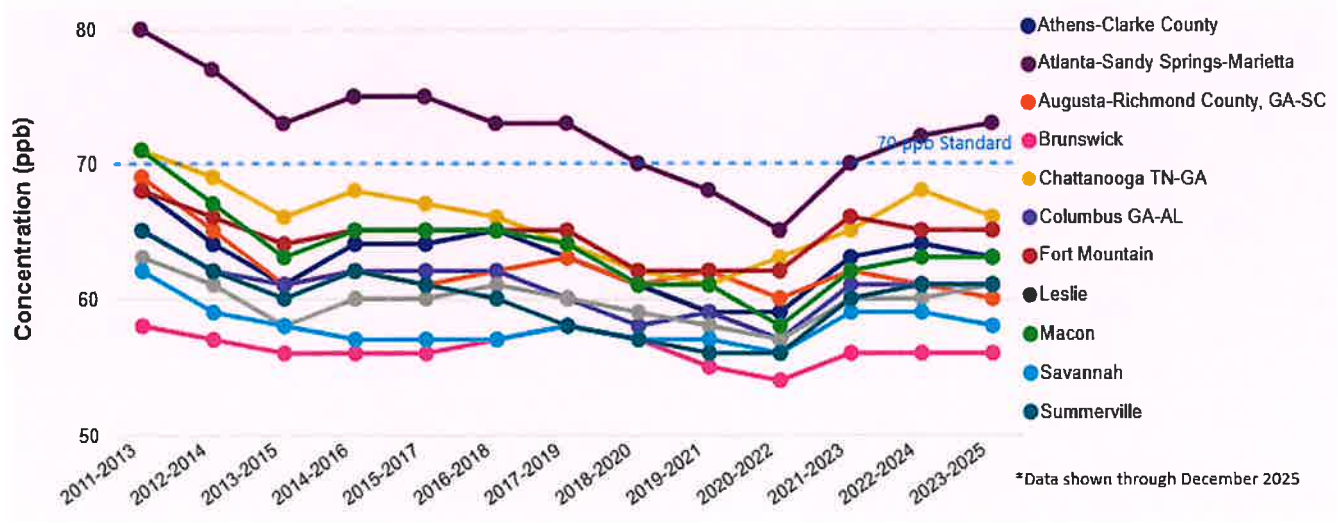
## Ozone ($O_3$)

Ground-level ozone is formed when volatile organic compounds (VOCs) such as fumes from fuels, paints, solvents and vegetation combine with oxides of nitrogen ($NO_X$) from fuel combustion in the presence of heat and sunlight. Ozone pollution can cause inflammation of the lungs. Ozone season in Georgia is March 1 – October 31. Hot, dry summer days are very conducive to ozone formation.

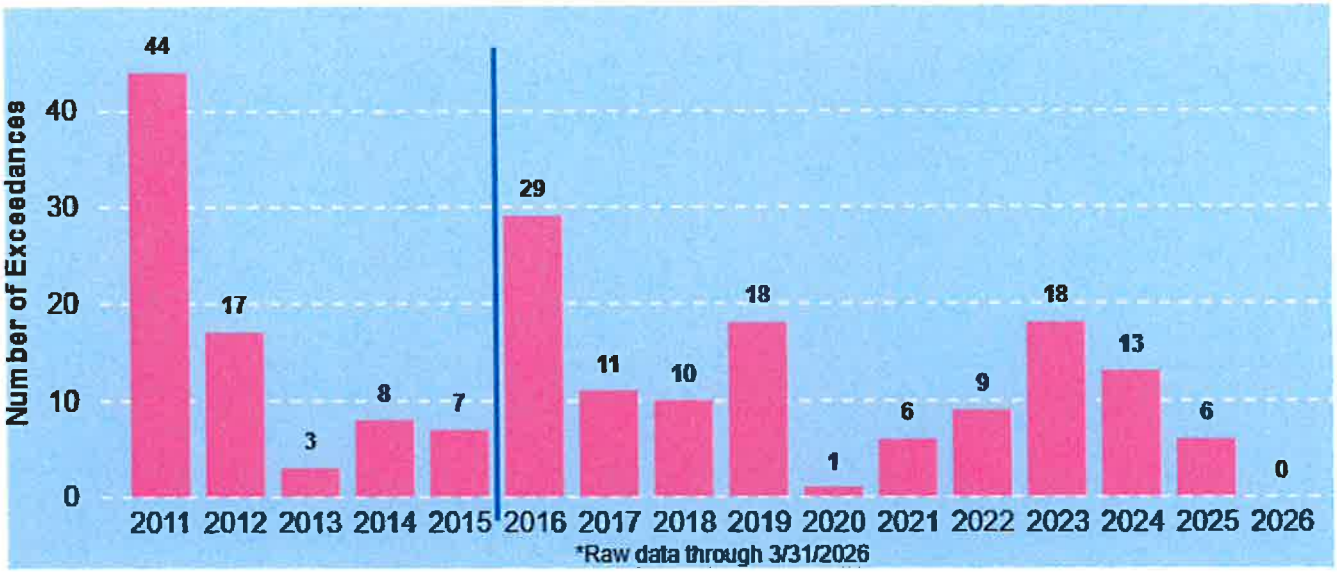
The current ozone standard or NAAQS is 70 ppb. An exceedance of the ozone standard occurs when the measured daily maximum 8-hour average ozone concentration is above the ozone NAAQS. If the exceedances occur frequently enough, the design value (i.e., 3-year average of 4th highest ozone concentrations recorded each year) may exceed the ozone NAAQS and the area may be designated as nonattainment for ozone.

Seven counties in the Atlanta metro area were designated by EPA as nonattainment for the 2015 ozone standard in 2018 (Bartow, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton, Gwinnett, and Henry). In 2020, the Atlanta metro area attained the 2015 ozone standard. The Air Protection Branch submitted a formal redesignation request to EPA on February 25, 2022. EPA approved the request on October 17, 2022. Currently, there are no ozone nonattainment areas in Georgia. However, the most recent ozone design value in Atlanta (based on 2022-2024 data) exceeded the 70 ppb standard, triggering the evaluation and implementation of contingency measures to help the area meet the standard.

**8-Hr Ozone, 3-Yr Averages of 4th Max. Value for each Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)**



**Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta MSA Ozone Exceedance Days**

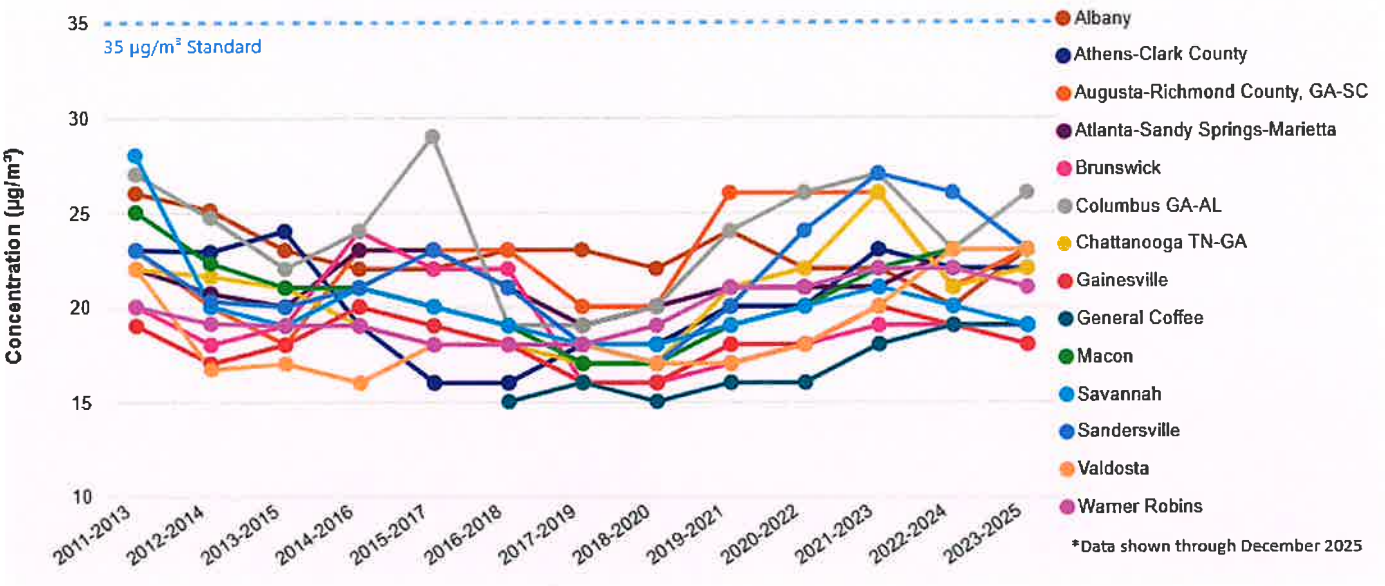



## Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)

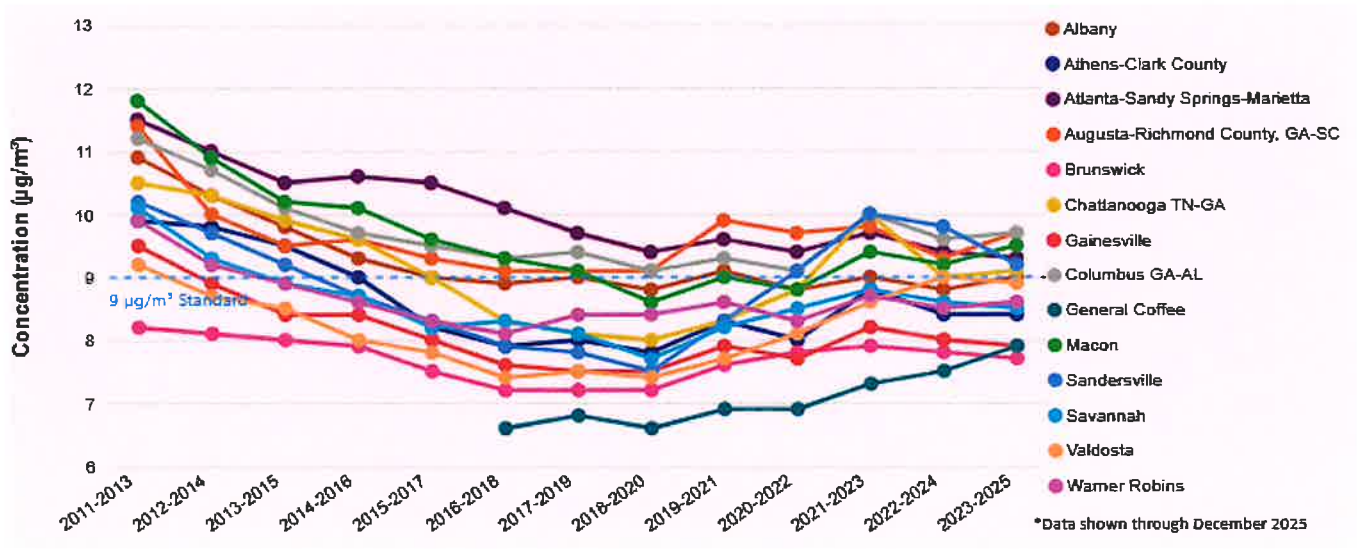
$PM_{2.5}$ are very small inhalable particles. $PM_{2.5}$ can be emitted directly from a source or formed in the atmosphere as a result of complex reactions of chemicals such as sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides. EPA has set both a 24-hour standard and an annual standard for $PM_{2.5}$. $PM_{2.5}$ can get deep into your lungs, aggravating asthma and decreasing lung function. In May 2024, EPA lowered the annual $PM_{2.5}$ standard from 12.0 $\mu g/m^3$ to 9.0 $\mu g/m^3$.

Georgia, like most states, is transitioning to continuous monitoring of $PM_{2.5}$ in order to provide real-time data to citizens. An emerging concern with the continuous monitors is that they tend to measure higher concentrations of $PM_{2.5}$ than filter-based monitors. This difference appears to be greater during prescribed fire or wildfire events. This move to continuous monitoring is one of the reasons for the uptick in measured $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations in 2021-2023. Georgia and other states are working with EPA to address this discrepancy.

## $PM_{2.5}$ ($\mu g/m^3$) 3-Year Averages of 98th Percentile of 24-Hour Averages for Each Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)

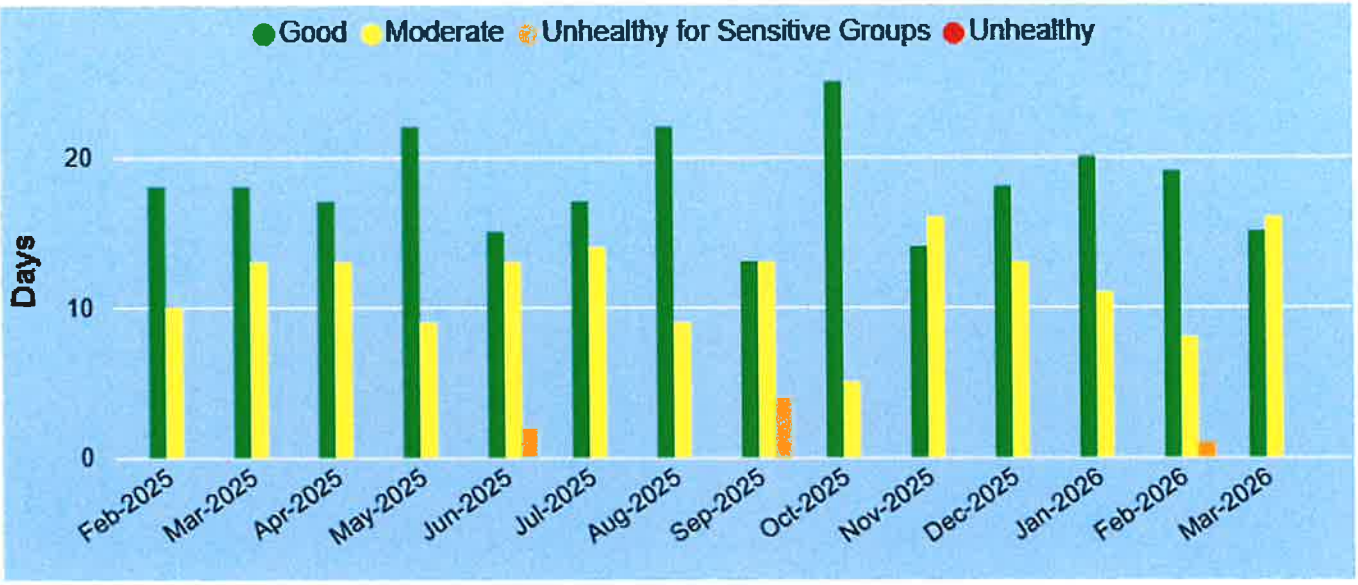



## $PM_{2.5}$ ($\mu g/m^3$), 3-Year Averages of Highest Annual Averages for each Metropolitan Statistical Area



## Atlanta Air Quality Index (AQI) Distribution

AQI is calculated using all criteria pollutants. Particulate matter and ozone are the major contributors in Georgia.





| | |
|---|---|
| Good | Air quality is considered satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk |
| Moderate | Air quality is acceptable; however, for some pollutants there may be a moderate health concern for a very small number of people who are unusually sensitive to air pollution. |
| Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups | Members of sensitive groups may experience health effects. The general public is not likely to be affected. |
| Unhealthy | Everyone may begin to experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects. |
| Very Unhealthy | Health warnings of emergency conditions. The entire population is more likely to be affected. |
| Hazardous | Health alert: everyone may experience more serious health effects |

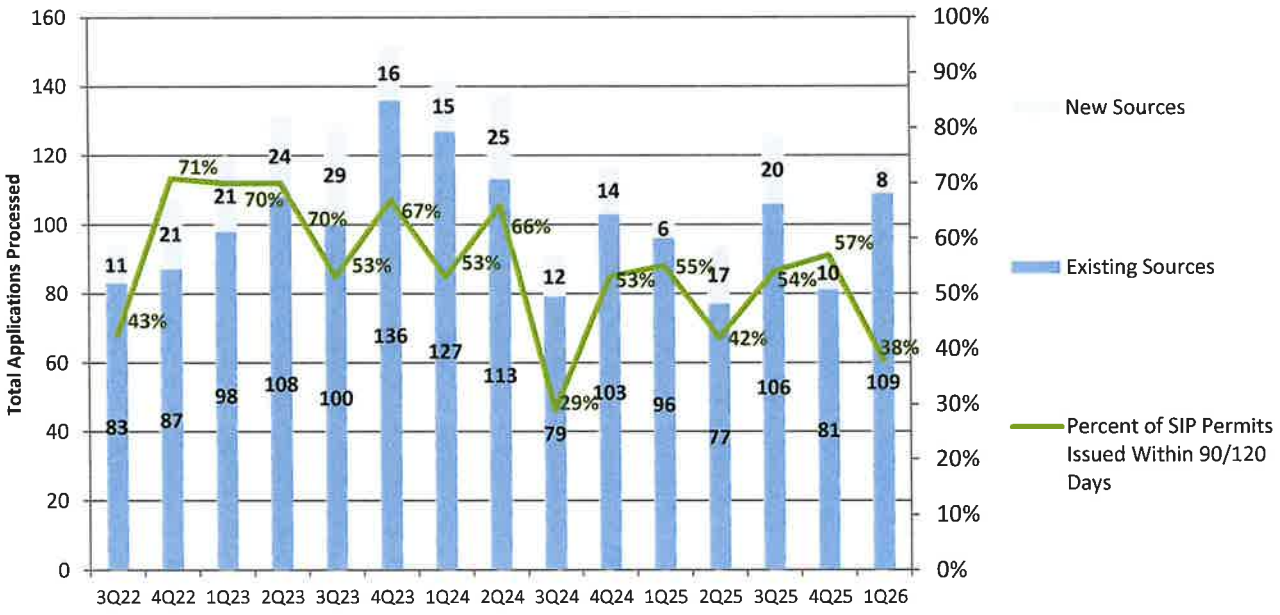
# Permitting and Licensing

The Stationary Source Permitting Program (SSPP) issues air quality construction and operating permits to factories and power plants collectively referred to as stationary sources. The air quality permits contain all applicable state and federal rules. The Georgia Rules for Air Quality Control prohibit beginning construction until a permit is issued; therefore, permits are a major priority for the regulated community, especially SIP construction permits.

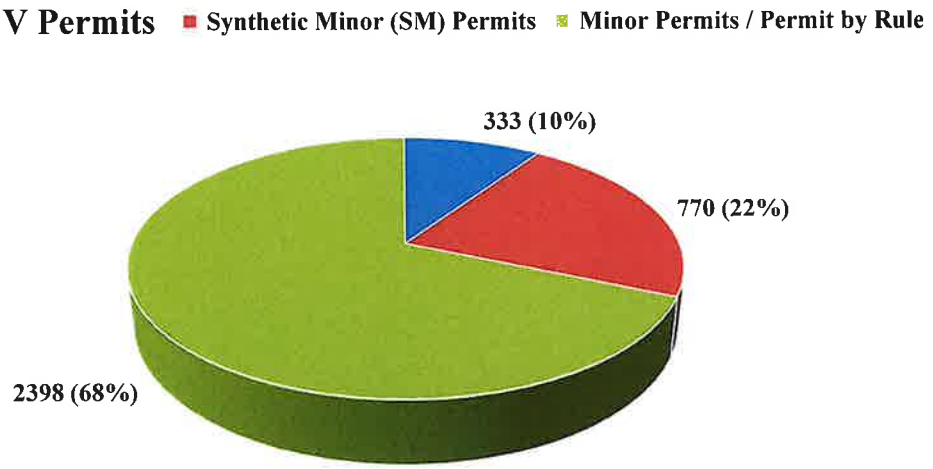
The SSPP processes about 500 permit applications a year for over 3,500 active permitted sites in Georgia. There are two broad categories of air permits, Title V operating permits for major sources (subject to greater federal oversight by EPA) and SIP operating and construction permits.

On March 31, 2022, the Air Protection Branch expanded the public's opportunity to comment on draft operating permits in response to a change in EPA requirements. This may increase the processing times for some permit applications.

## Stationary Source Permit Applications



# Active Permits in Georgia (FY2026)



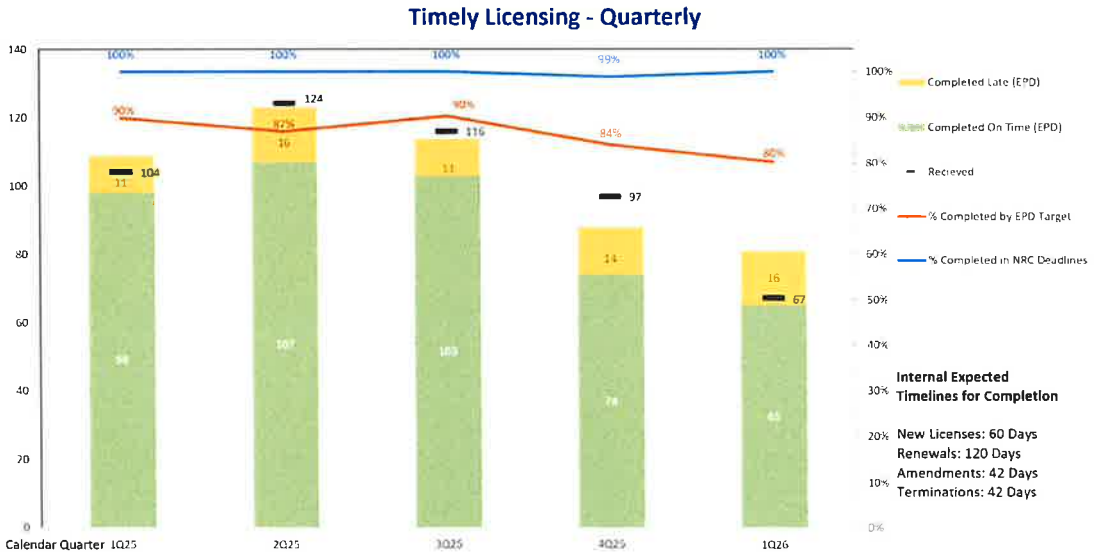

**Expedited Permit Program -** APB offers an expedited permit application processing program to companies that want permits delivered quickly. Fees are assessed for program participation.

SFY 2026 total-to-date:

- 29 applications accepted
- $440,000 in expedited fees collected
- Open applications: 11

## Radioactive Materials Licensing Actions

The APB issues licenses to users of radioactive materials such as hospitals, doctor's offices, radiopharmacies, industrial radiography, colleges, universities, environmental laboratories, consultants and industrial plants with gauging devices. Average length of time to complete a license application review varies based on the complexity of the application.

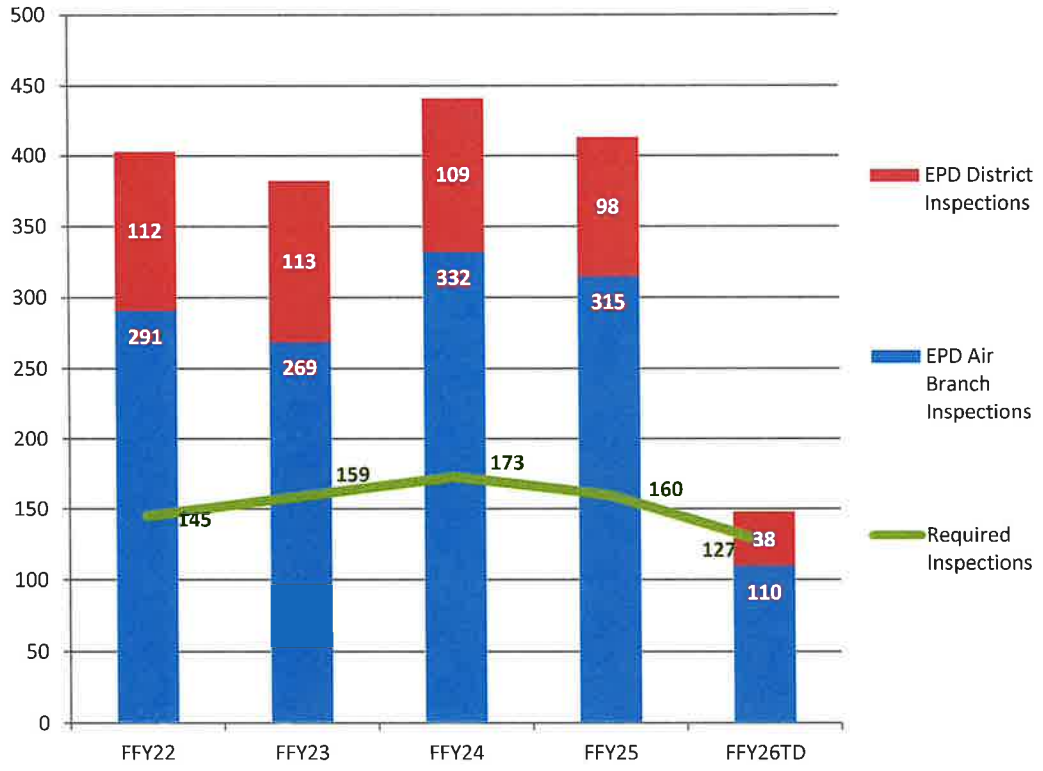


# Compliance Assurance and Assistance

Compliance activities in the APB ensure that facilities across Georgia are in compliance with state and federal regulations. Compliance activities include on-site inspections, report reviews, and stack test reviews. A stack test is a procedure for sampling a gas stream from a single sampling location such as a "smokestack" at a facility, unit, or pollution control equipment.

## Stationary Source Compliance Inspection Summary

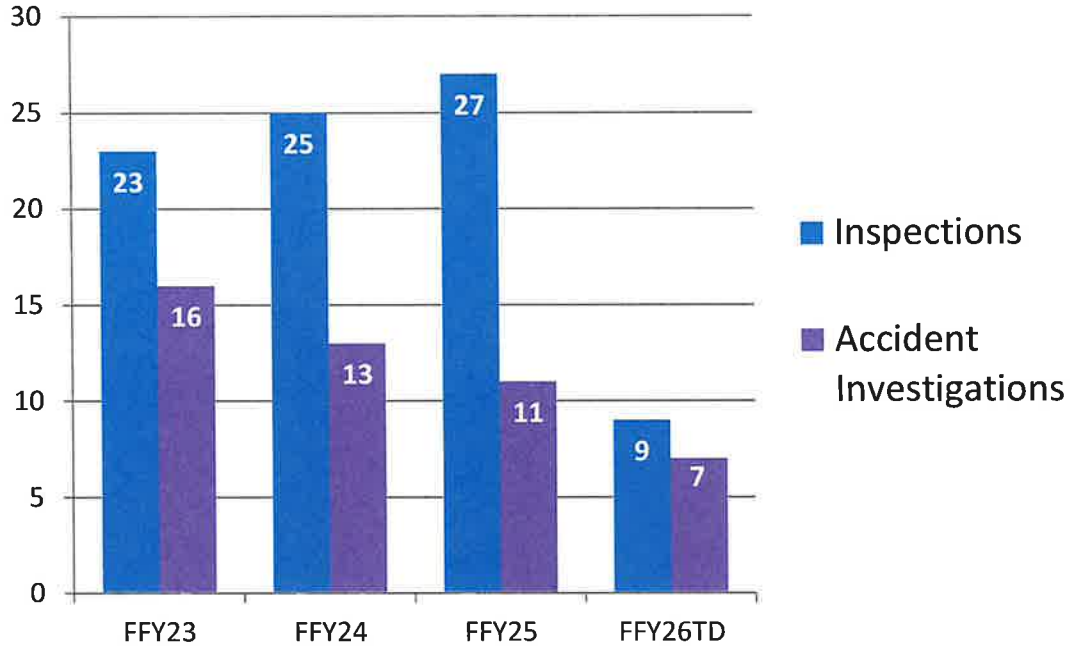
Over 1,000 permitted sites in Georgia are subject to periodic compliance monitoring and evaluation. EPA requires major sources of emissions to be inspected at least once every two years. Synthetic minor sources of emissions (those sources that have the potential to emit major source levels of air pollutants but have taken limits to reduce actual emissions below the major source emissions thresholds) are required to be inspected at least once every five years. The required inspections noted in the chart below indicate those sources that are at their 2- or 5-year deadline.




Federal Fiscal Year 2026 (FFY26) started on October 1, 2025, and ends on September 30, 2026.

## Risk Management Activities

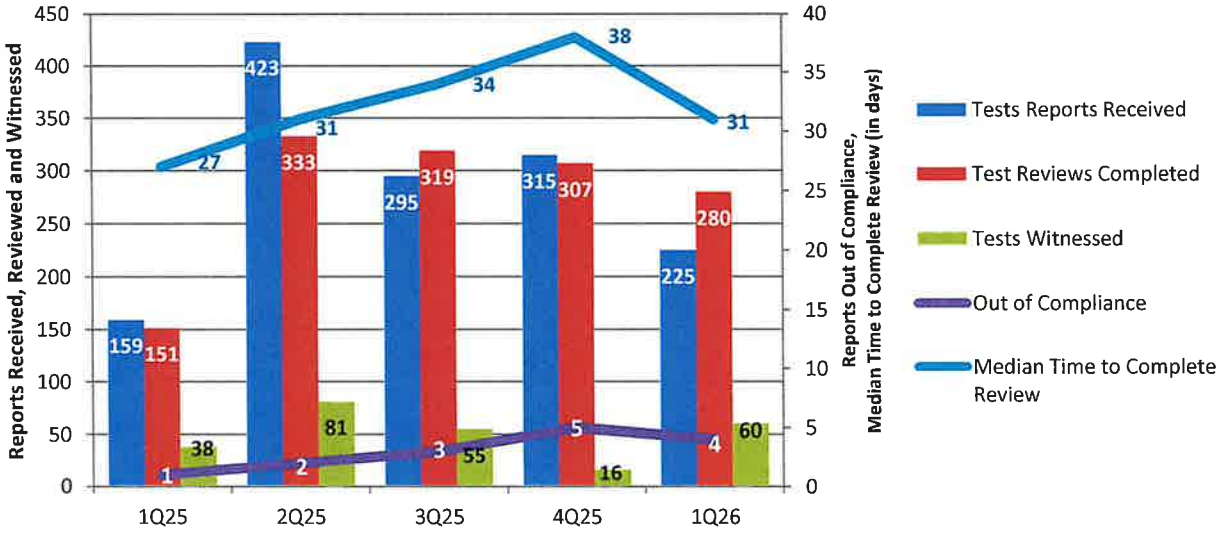
About 270 sources in Georgia are subject to the Federal Chemical Accident Prevention Provisions (Risk Management). Most sources are subject to Risk Management requirements due to large inventories of anhydrous ammonia or chlorine.




**FFY - Federal Fiscal Year (Oct 1 - Sept 30)**

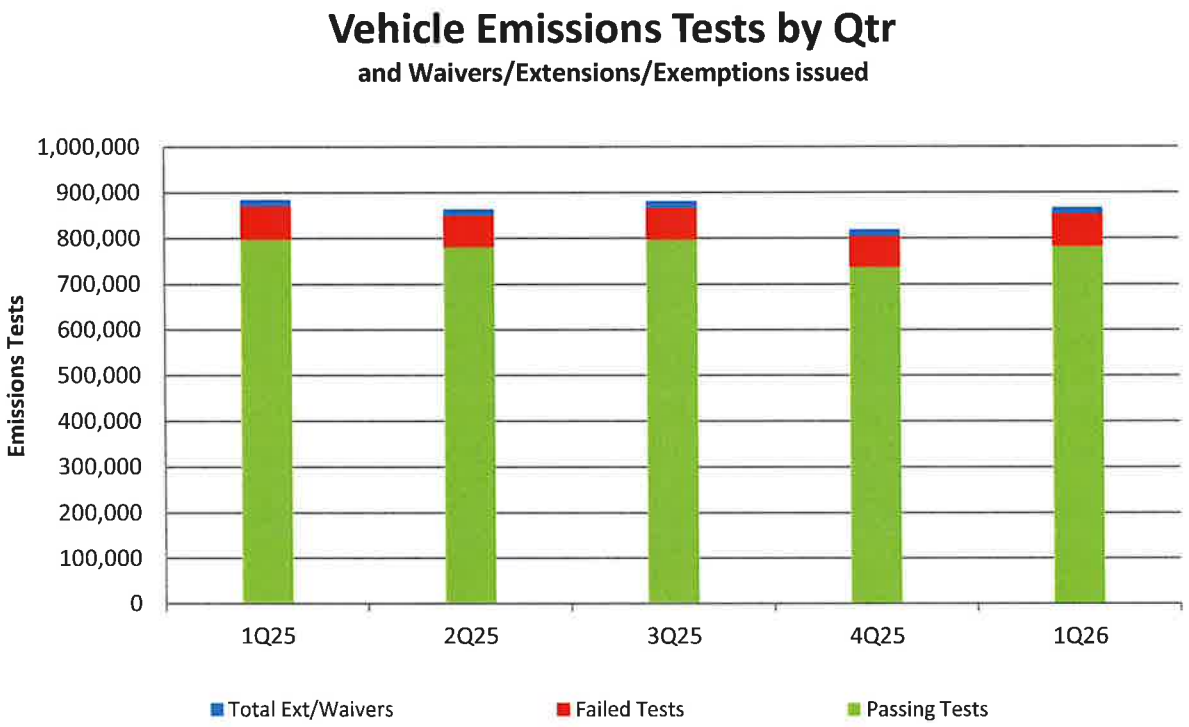
## Industrial Source Monitoring

Some sources are required to conduct stack tests either one-time or on a periodic basis. Tests are conducted by a company, or a testing firm, contracted by the company and the test reports are reviewed by the Industrial Source Monitoring Unit (ISMU). ISMU also conducts on-site audits of some stack tests.



## Vehicle Emissions Tests

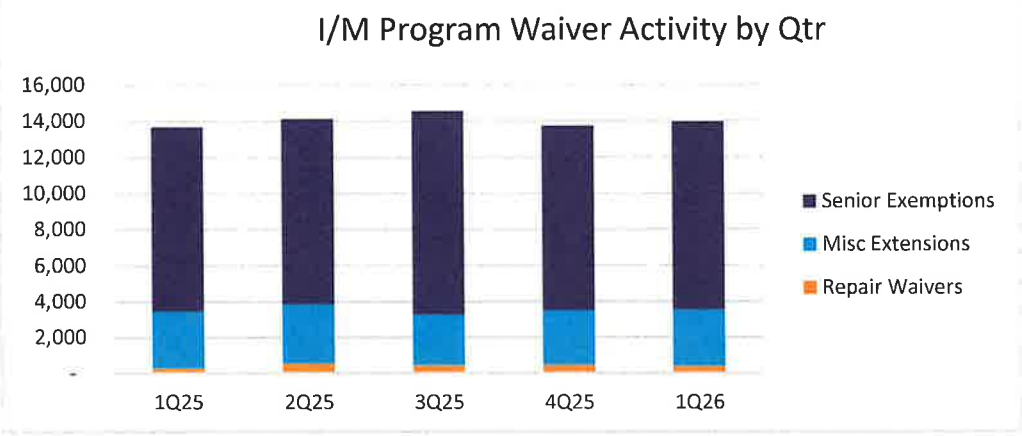
The APB manages the Vehicle Emissions Inspection and Maintenance (I/M) Program and processes new station and inspector licenses. The program is designed to identify gasoline-powered cars and light-duty trucks that pollute the air and ultimately encourage their repair and maintenance. For calendar year 2025, the program covers all 2001-2022 model year gasoline-powered cars or light-duty trucks with a gross vehicle weight rating of 8,500 pounds or less if they are registered in the following 13 metro Atlanta counties: Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, Paulding or Rockdale. Vehicle owners in these counties must have a passing vehicle emissions test in order to obtain an annual vehicle registration tag. Vehicles that fail must seek repairs. Some emissions testing stations are located outside the metro area to serve college students.



### Types of Vehicle Emissions Waivers and Extensions Issued

Waivers and extensions are available to motorists if certain criteria are met:

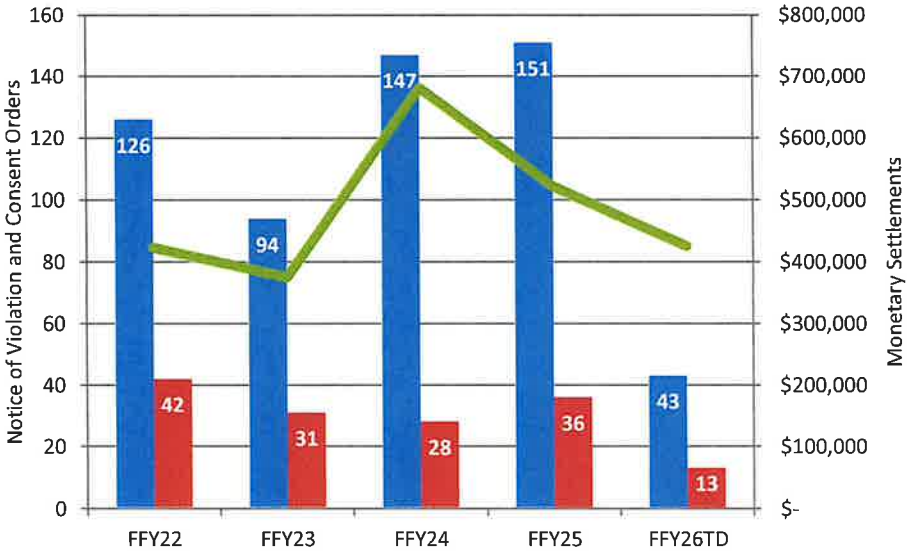
- A repair waiver can be issued if the cost of emissions-related repairs meets or exceeds $1,053 and the vehicle shows improvement in all areas it failed on the first test and still passes all the areas it passed on the first test.
- A senior exemption can be issued if the motorist is 65 years old or older, drives the vehicle less than 5,000 miles and the vehicle is 10 model years or older.
- Miscellaneous extensions include various out-of-area scenarios such as student, business, and military. The vehicle must be tested once it returns to the area.




## Stationary Source Enforcement Summary

Stationary Source enforcement action is utilized to resolve alleged violations, provide deterrence for future violations and promote a level playing field in the industry in which the violations occurred.

- Notice of Violation - alleging violations and giving the company an opportunity to respond to the allegation.
- Consent Order - a negotiated agreement that typically involves a monetary settlement.
- Monetary Settlements - APB uses *Settlement Calculation Procedures* to determine the proposed monetary settlement.



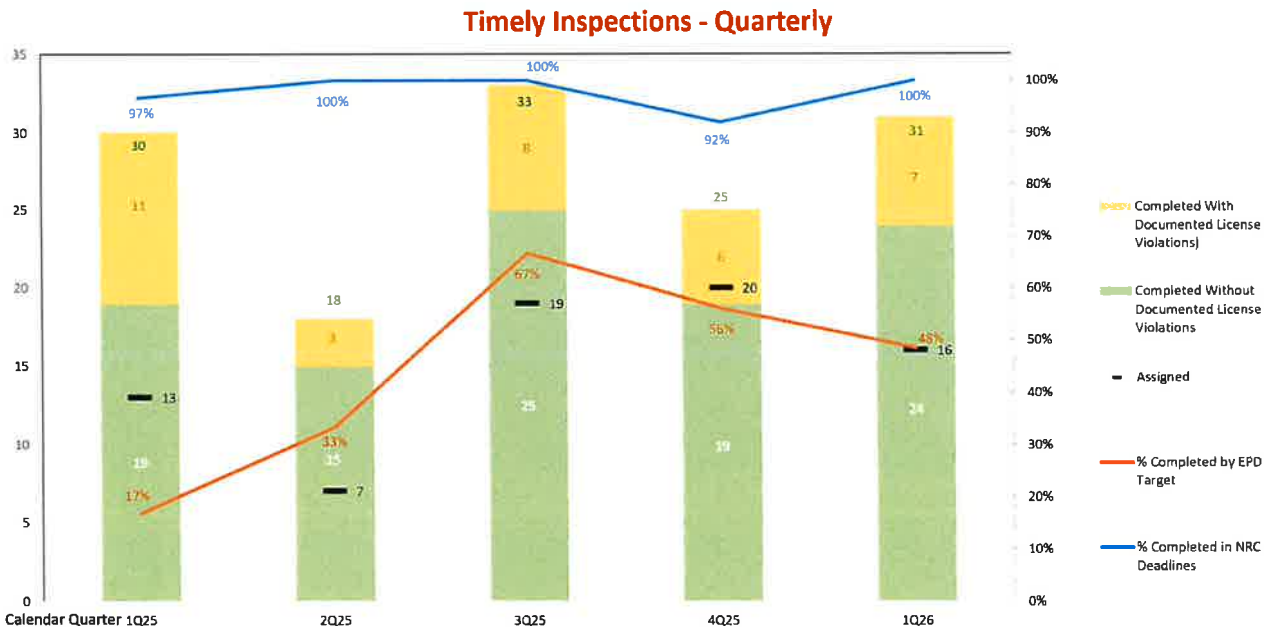

Federal Fiscal Year 2026 (FFY26) started on October 1, 2025, and ends on September 30, 2026.

## Vehicle Emissions Program Enforcement Summary

Vehicle emissions civil enforcement action is utilized to ensure that station owners and inspectors are correctly conducting vehicle emissions tests. APB works with the station owners and inspectors to achieve compliance by means of station audits. Deficiencies are addressed through information letters and meetings. However, if these measures fail to address non-compliance, APB may seek enforcement through Notices of Violation, Consent Orders, and station owner or inspector license suspensions or revocations (Administrative Orders). Currently, there are approximately 710 stations and 2,000 inspectors in the program.

## Status of Radioactive Materials Inspections

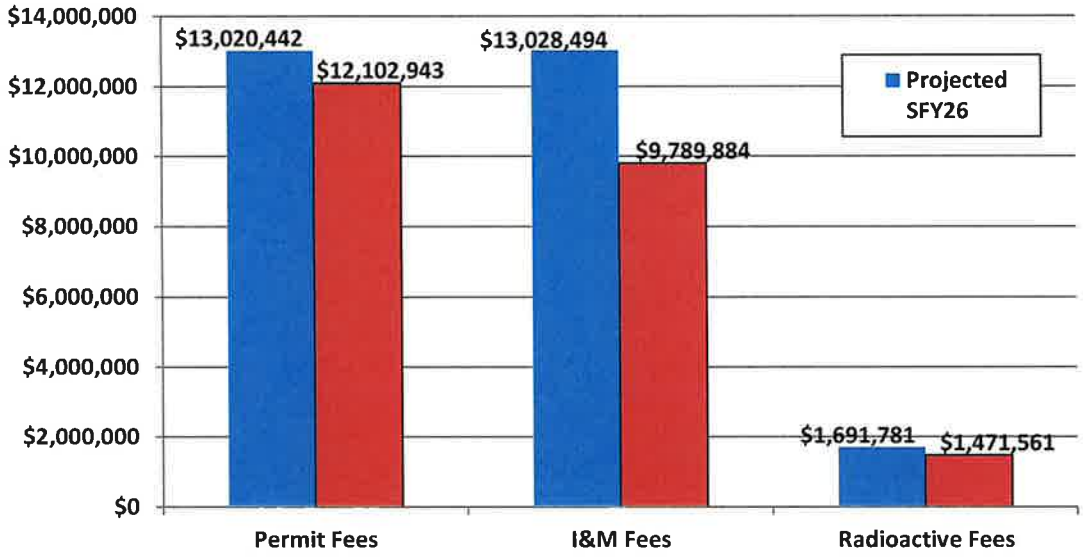
The federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) defines the inspection frequency based on the level of hazard posed by the radioactive materials used. Violations tend to be administrative in nature (such as missing paperwork) or instances when licensees use inappropriate techniques and procedures while using radioactive materials.



# Fee Collection Activities

Much of the Air Protection Branch is funded through fees collected from regulated entities. Air permit fees are collected from permitted factories and power plants collectively referred to as stationary sources. Permit fees fund most of the permitting, compliance, source monitoring, planning, and support activities of the Branch. Air permit fees include annual fees and permit application fees for certain types of permit applications. The Branch receives $1.44 per motor vehicle emissions test from the fees collected at emissions testing stations. These are vehicle Inspection and Maintenance or "I&M" fees that support the implementation of the vehicle emission testing program. The counties receive $1.00 per test. Radioactive Material Program fees are collected from entities that are licensed to use radioactive materials and are used to implement licensing and compliance activities associated with radioactive materials.

## Total Fees Collected




**SFY - State Fiscal Year (July - June)**

- Title V Fees are mostly collected in September. (Some large emitters pay quarterly.)
- I/M Fees are evenly distributed throughout the year.
- Radiation Fees are generally collected in October.

GEORGIA
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION

# Watershed Protection Branch Permitting and Compliance Quarterly Report

State Fiscal Year 2026
Third Quarter
January 1 – March 31, 2026

The Watershed Protection Branch administers the following:

- Water withdrawal permits
- Permits to operate a public water system
- Wastewater permits
- Stormwater permits
- Stream buffer variances
- 401 water quality certifications
- Safe Dams program
- Nonpoint source grants and outreach

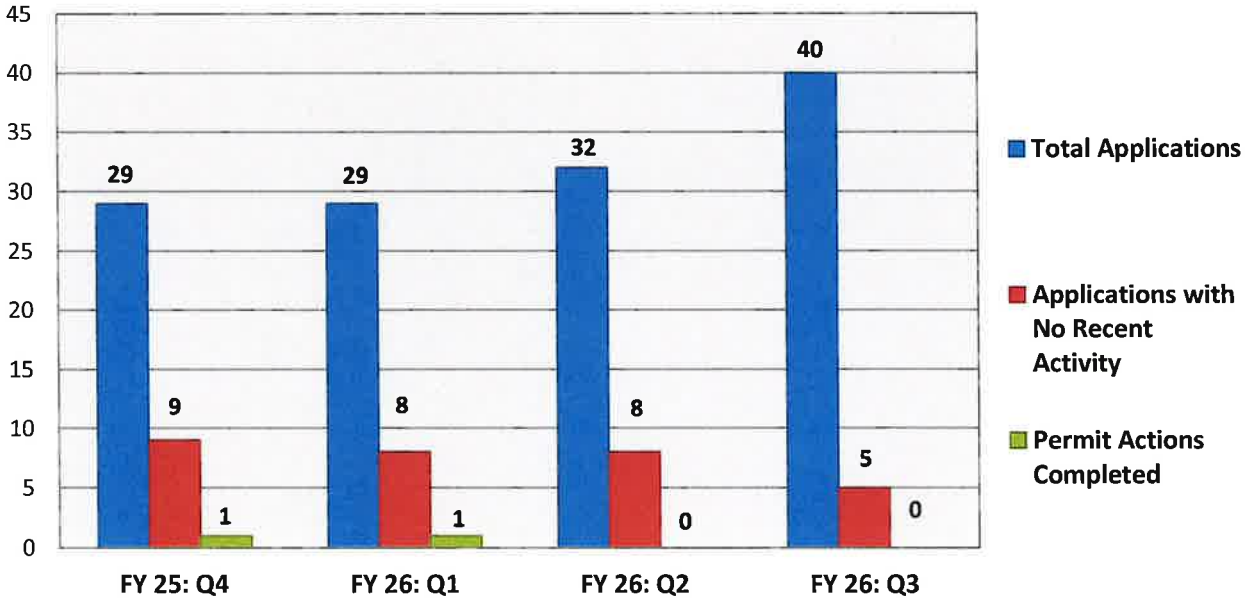
This report summarizes the Watershed Protection Branch's programmatic activities for the Third Quarter of State Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26), which covers the period of January 1 - March 31, 2026.

## Surface Water Withdrawal Permitting Activities

During the Third Quarter of FY26, no (0) surface water withdrawal permits were issued.

| Application Type | # of Applications Processed |
|---|---|
| New Permits | 0 |
| Renewal Permits | 0 |
| Amended (Modified) Permits | 0 |
| Temporary Permits | 0 |

The following graph provides information about surface water withdrawal permit applications and permitting actions completed within the prior 12-month period.



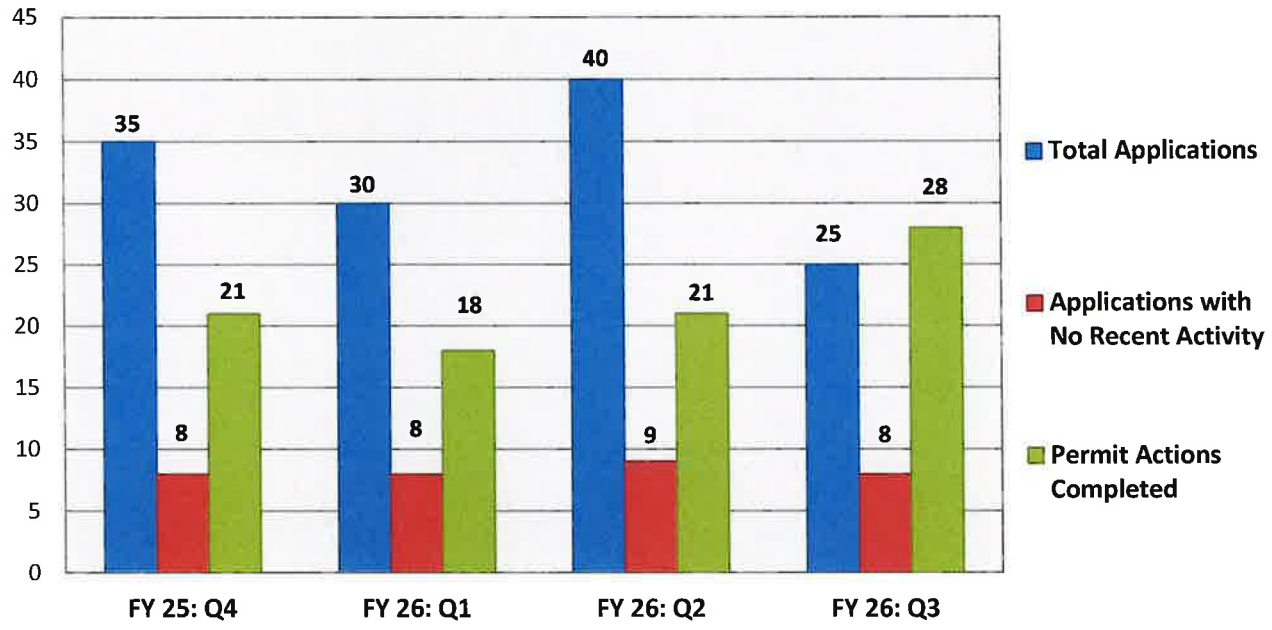

Note: The total number of permit actions completed during each quarter includes permits issued, permits revoked, permits rescinded, and applications that have been retracted.

## Groundwater Withdrawal Permitting Activities

During the Third Quarter of FY26, twenty-seven (27) groundwater withdrawal permits were issued.

| Application Type | # of Applications Processed |
|---|---|
| New Permits | 1 |
| Renewal Permits | 17 |
| Amended (Modified) Permits | 9 |

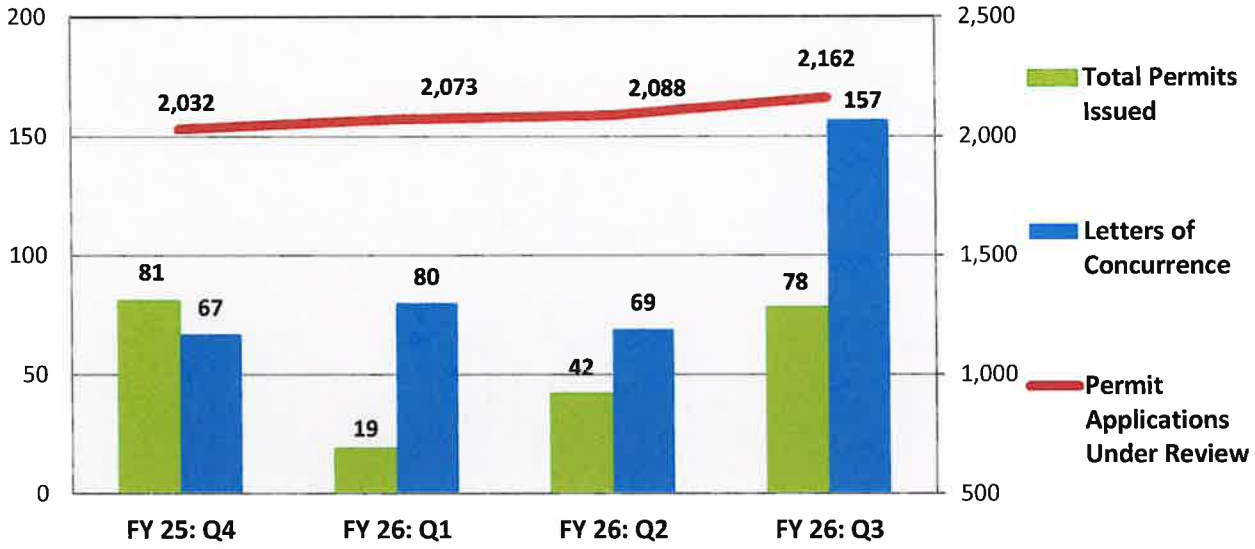
The following graph provides information about groundwater withdrawal permit applications and permitting actions completed within the prior 12-month period.




Note: The total number of permit actions completed during each quarter includes permits issued, permits revoked, permits rescinded, and applications that have been retracted.

## Farm Water Withdrawal Permitting Activities

As of March 31, 2026, there are approximately 26,980 farm water withdrawal permits. During the Third Quarter of FY26, 38 new and 40 revised farm water withdrawal permits were issued, 0 farm water withdrawal permits were relinquished, and 157 new Letters of Concurrence were issued. The following graph provides information about the number of farm water withdrawal permit applications under review, total new Letters of Concurrence issued, and total new and revised farm water withdrawal permits issued within the prior 12-month period.



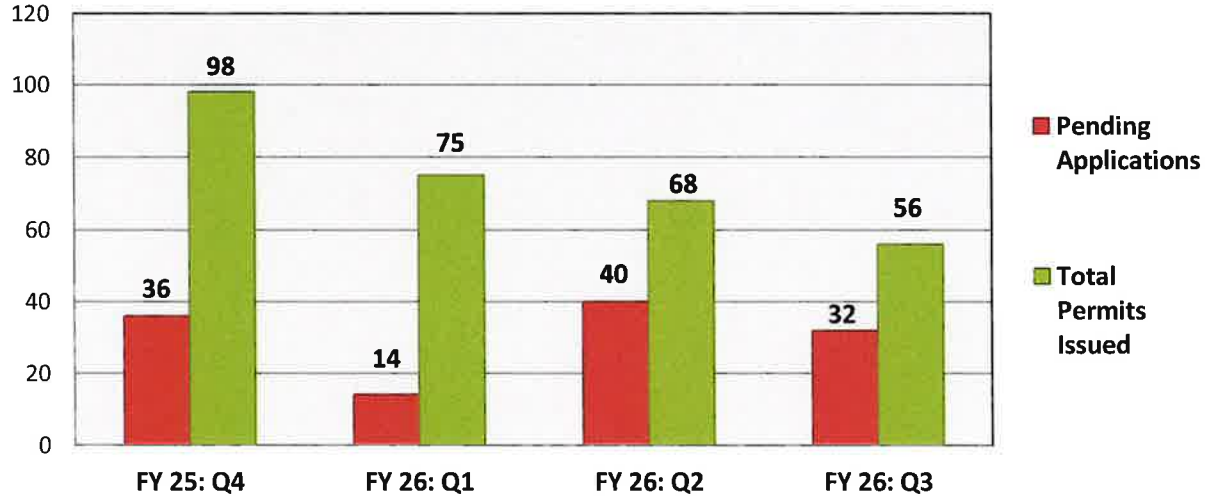

Note: A Letter of Concurrence gives an applicant permission to install a proposed water withdrawal system for agricultural water use.

**Public Water System Permitting Activities**

During the Third Quarter of FY26, fifty-six (56) drinking water permits were issued.

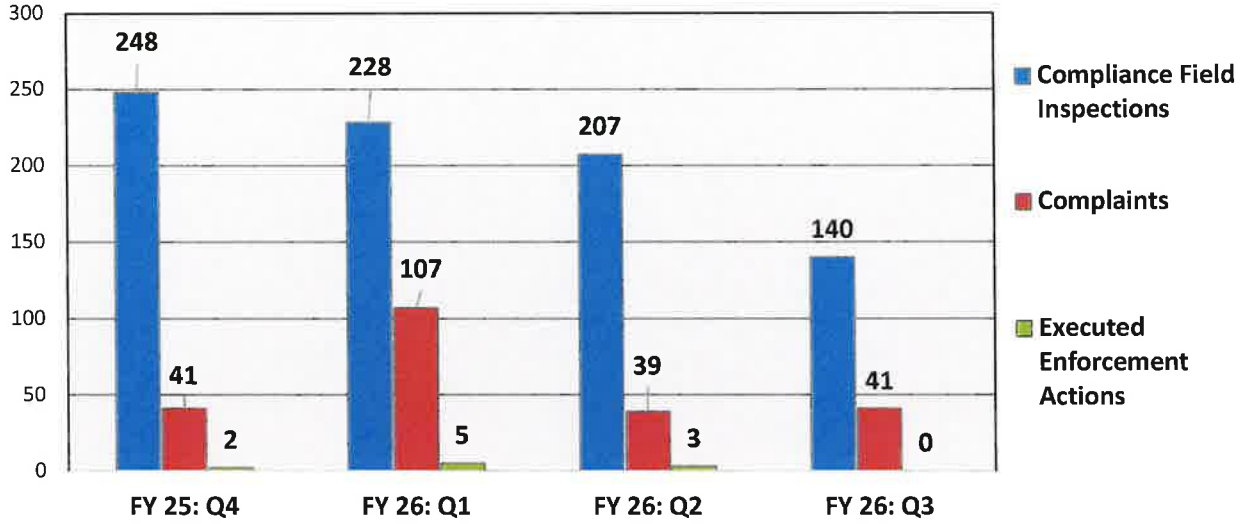
| Application Type | # of Applications Processed |
|---|---|
| New Permits | 4 |
| Renewal Permits | 30 |
| Amended (Modified) Permits | 22 |

The following graph provides information about drinking water system permit applications and permits issued within the prior 12-month period.



## Safe Drinking Water Compliance Activities

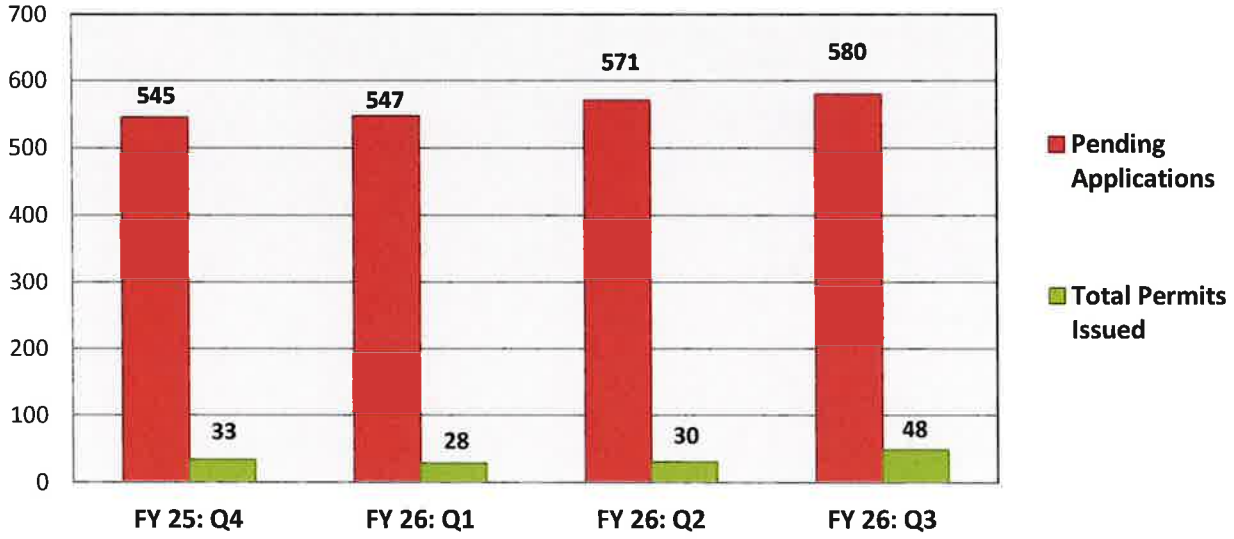
The following graph identifies the number and types of safe drinking water compliance activities conducted by the Branch and District Offices during the prior 12-month period.




Note: Numbers of Compliance Field Inspections in previous quarters have been updated to include inspection activities that were conducted in that quarter but entered in the tracking system at a later date.

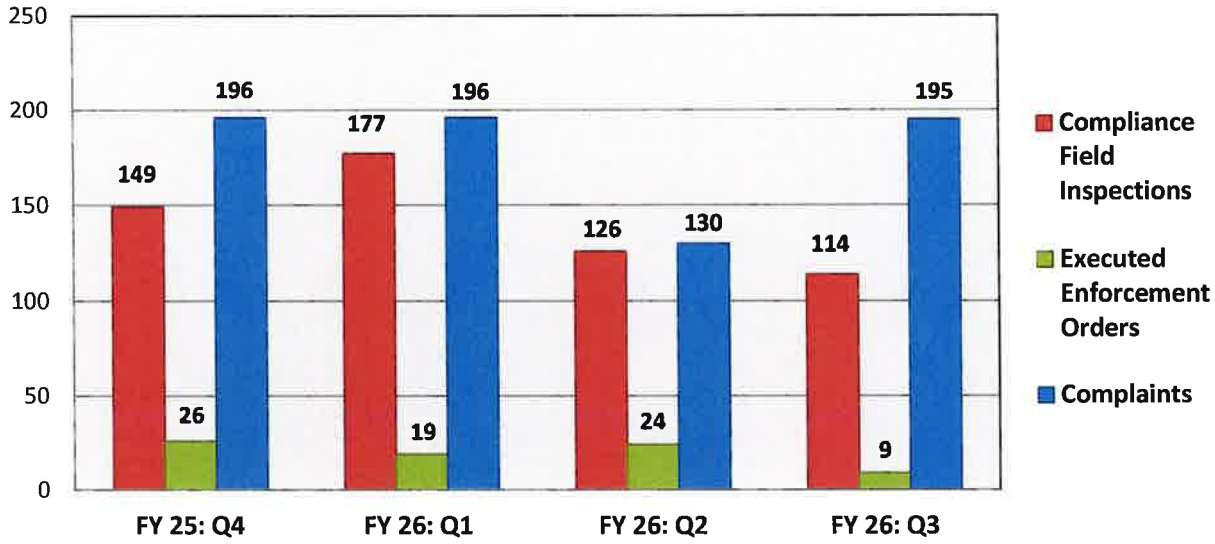
## Wastewater Regulatory Program Activities

During the Third Quarter of FY26, the Wastewater Regulatory Program issued 48 permits. They included 27 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits, 0 general permits (with 7 Notices of Coverage), 7 Land Application System (LAS) permits, 4 pretreatment permits, and 10 Underground Injection Control (UIC) permits. The following graph provides information about the number of pending permit applications and permits issued within the prior 12-month period.



## Wastewater Compliance Activities

The following graph identifies the number and types of wastewater compliance activities conducted by the Watershed Protection Branch and EPD District Offices during the prior 12-month period.



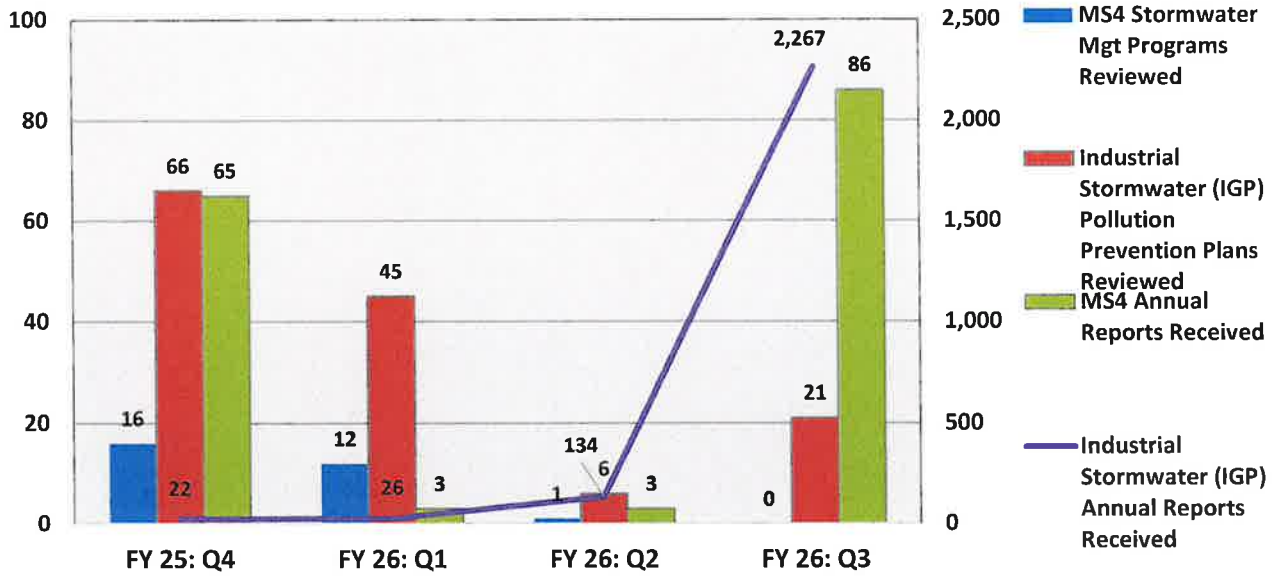

Note: Numbers of Compliance Field Inspections in previous quarters have been updated to include inspection activities that were conducted in that quarter but entered in the tracking system at a later date.

## Stormwater Permitting Activities

The Nonpoint Source Program administers 3 general construction permits, a general industrial stormwater permit, as well as the Phase I and Phase II Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) permits. The following table identifies the number of stormwaters permits, and the number of Notices of Intent (NOIs) received under those permits during the Third Quarter of FY26.

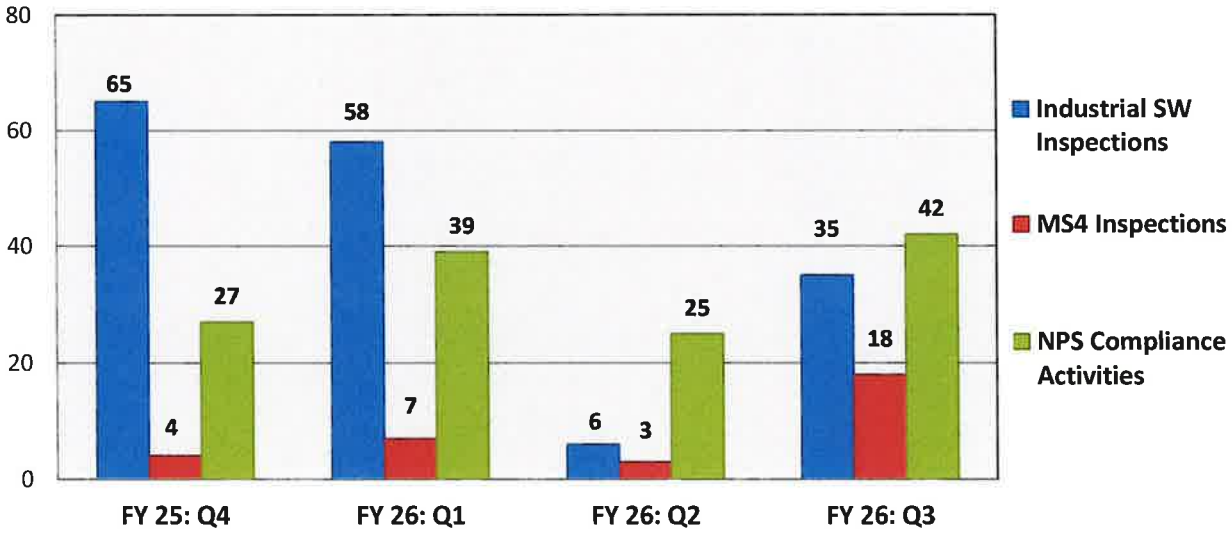
| Category | # of Permits | # of NOIs Submitted |
|---|---|---|
| Construction | 3 | 1,473 |
| Industrial | 1 | 291 |
| Municipal | 60 | 0 |

The following graph provides information about the programs, plans, and reports received or under review by the Watershed Protection Branch during the prior 12-month period.



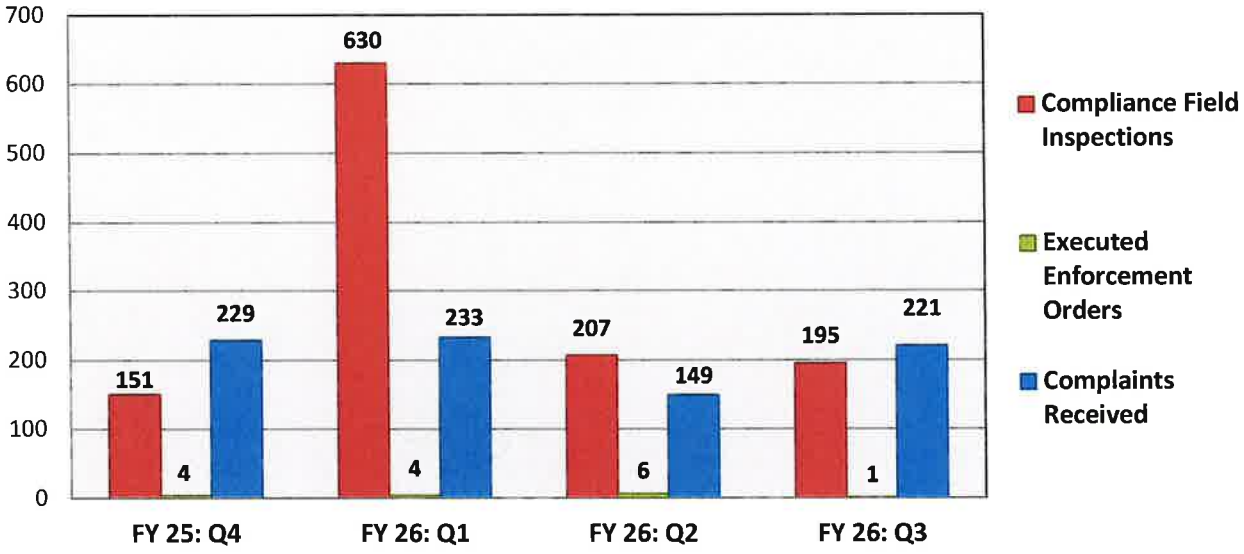

## Stormwater Inspection and Compliance Activities

The following graph provides information about stormwater inspection and compliance activities conducted by the Branch's Nonpoint Source Program during the prior 12-month period.




Note: Nonpoint Source Program compliance activities include issuance of Noncompliance Documentation Letters (NDLs) and Notices of Violation (NOVs).

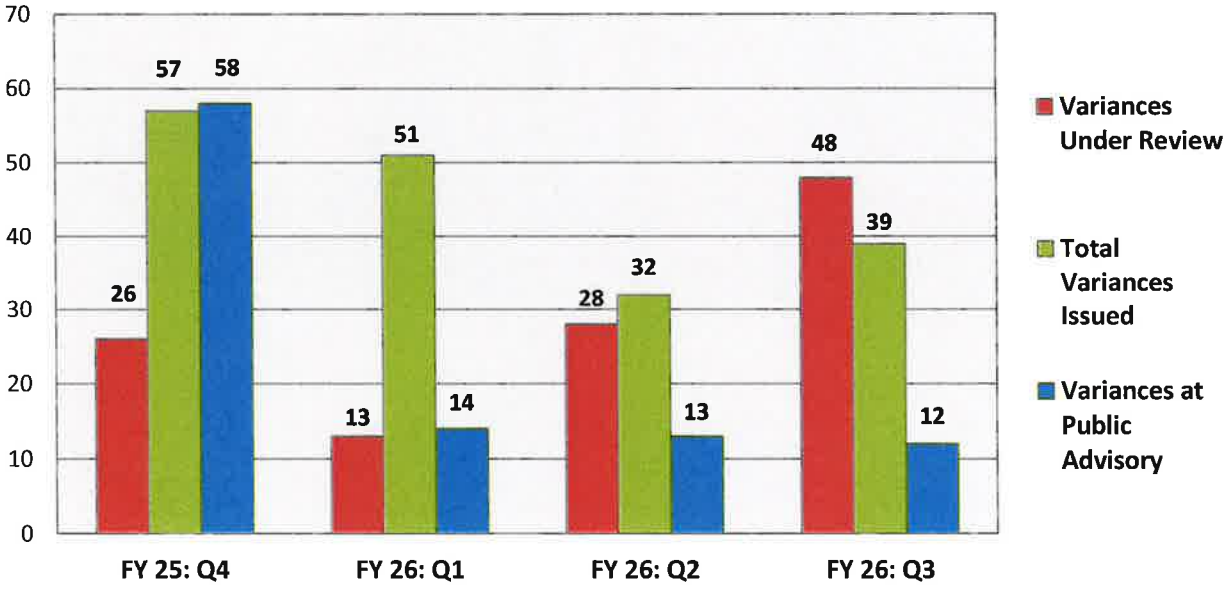
The following graph provides information about the stormwater and erosion and sedimentation control compliance activities conducted by the Branch and EPD District Offices during the prior 12-month period.




Note: Numbers of Complaints received in previous quarters have been updated to include those that were received in that quarter but entered in the tracking system at a later date.

**Stream Buffer Variance Activities**

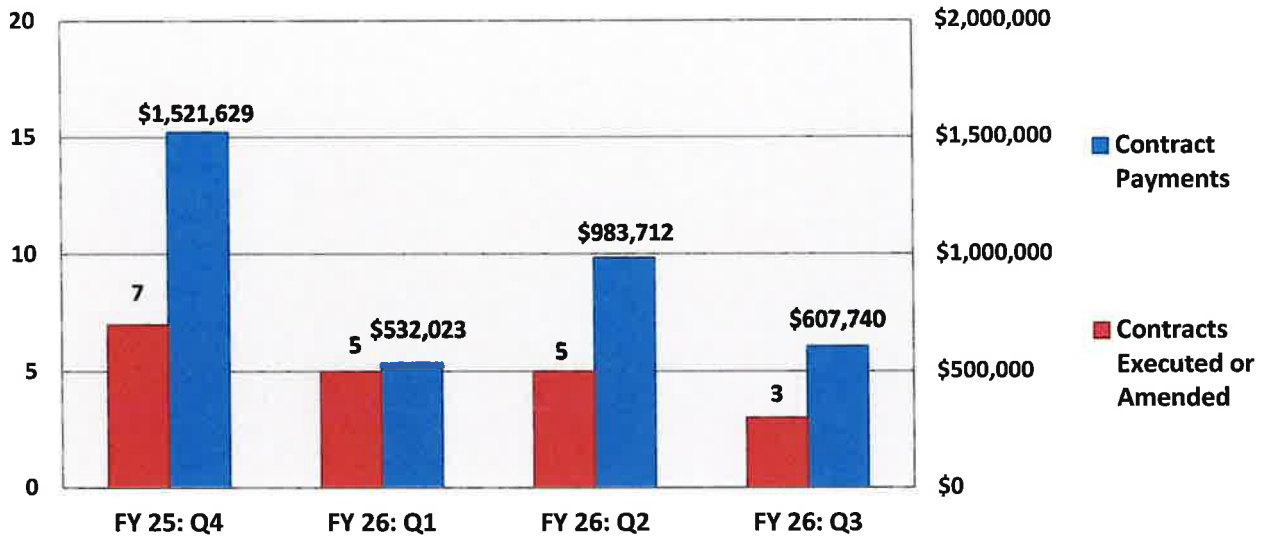
The following graph provides information about buffer variance applications reviewed or processed during the prior 12-month period.




As of March 31, 2026, sixty (60) buffer variance applications are pending.

## Nonpoint Source Grants Contracting Activities

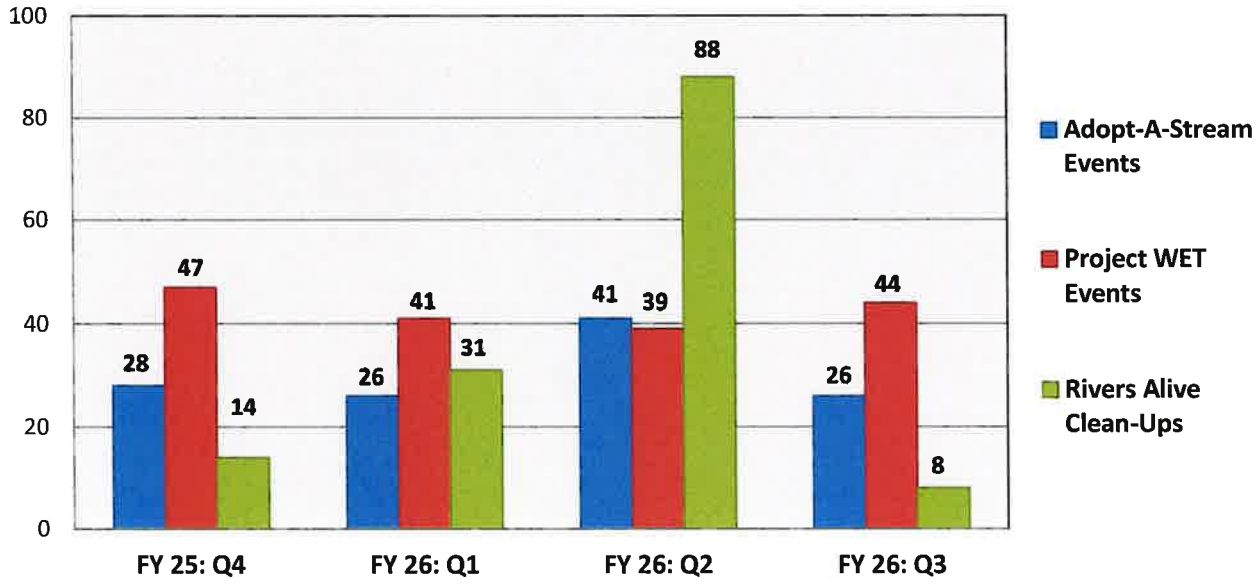
The following graph provides information about the contracting activities of the Nonpoint Source Program during the prior 12-month period.




As of March 31, 2026, there are forty (40) active nonpoint source grant projects state-wide.

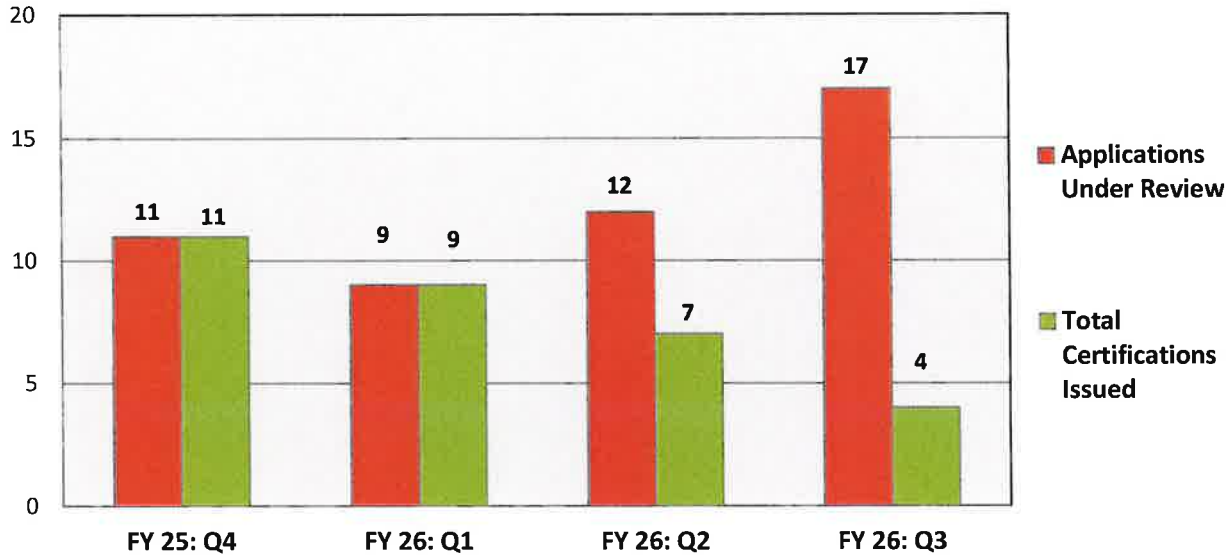
## Nonpoint Source Outreach Activities

The following graph provides information about the number of outreach and education events conducted by the Nonpoint Source Program during the prior 12-month period.



## 401 Water Quality Certification Activities

The following graph provides information about Clean Water Act Section 401 water quality certifications reviewed or issued during the prior 12-month period.

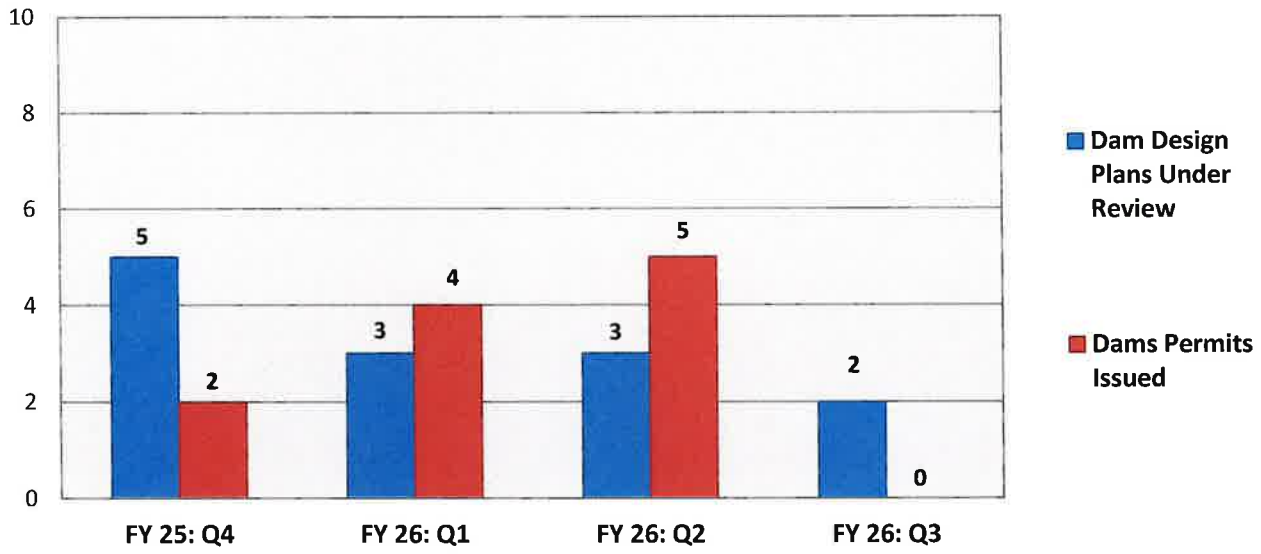



## Safe Dams Program Activities

There are currently 507 Category I Dams in Georgia (305 are permitted). During the Third Quarter of FY26, no (0) safe dams permit applications were approved.

| Category | Total |
|---|---|
| Dams To Be Studied | 303 |
| Dams To Be Studied (State Owned) | 33 |
| Category I Classification Letters Issued This Quarter | 0 |
| Category I Dams Total | 507 |
| Category I Dams Permitted | 305 |
| Category I Dams Not Permitted | 202 |
| Category I Dams Not Permitted (State Owned) | 137 |
| Applications Under Review (for New Permits) | 2 |
| Applications Approved This Quarter | 0 |

The following graph provides information about the safe dams program's permitting activities during the prior 12-month period.




## Safe Dams Compliance Activities

The following graph provides information about safe dams program's compliance activities during the prior 12-month period.