

Introduction to the Underground Injection Control Program

October 21, 2025
U.S. EPA Region III
Drinking Water and Source Water Protection Branch

Mission of the UIC Program

- The UIC program's mission is to protect underground sources of drinking water (USDWs) from the subsurface emplacement of fluids.
- Authorized under the Safe Drinking Water Act
 - UIC Regulations promulgated on May 25, 1984 and became effective on June 25, 1984.

UIC Program Activities and Well Classes

- **UIC Injection Well Regulations Cover:**
- Technical aspects (from site evaluation through operations to closure).
- Permitting and site inspections.
- Reporting requirements and compliance.



Six UIC Well Classes for Different Types of Fluids

Class I: Hazardous and nonhazardous wastes

Class IV: Shallow hazardous and radioactive (banned)

Class II: Fluids from oil and gas production

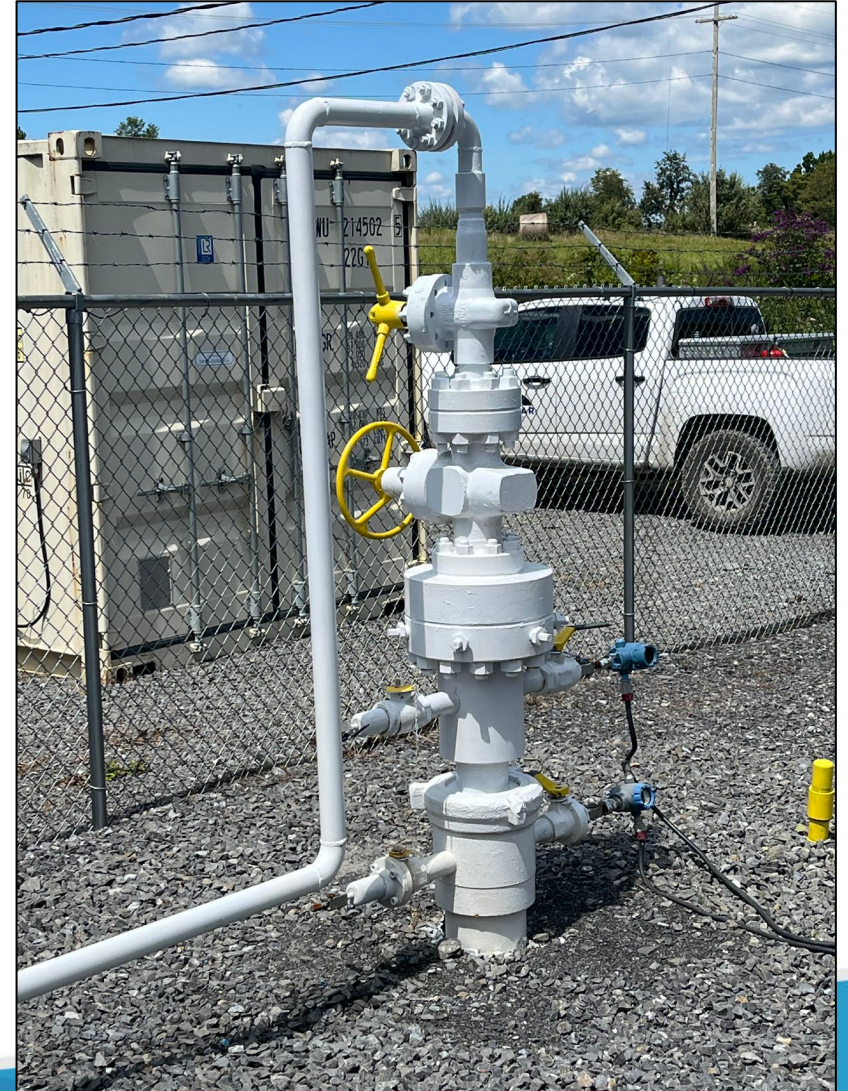
Class V: Nonhazardous wastes into or above USDWs (e.g., stormwater)

Class III: Fluids to dissolve and extract minerals

Class VI: Geologic sequestration (GS) of carbon dioxide (CO₂)

Class II Wells

- Deep wells that inject below USDWs
- Dispose of salt water produced with oil or natural gas (IID)
- Inject fluids for enhanced recovery of oil or natural gas (IIR)
 - Permitted & Authorized by Rule
 - Region 3 has 31 Class IID wells and approx. 1,620 Class IIR wells (most are abandoned)



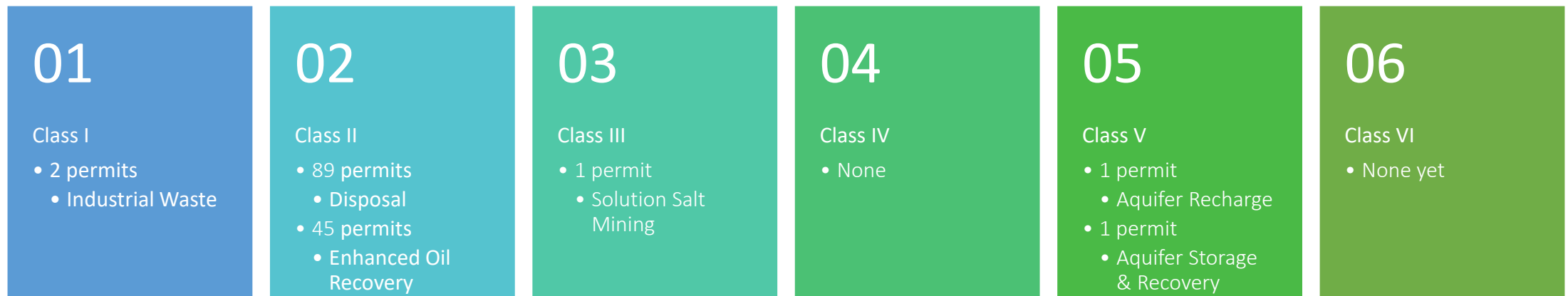
Class VI Wells

- Class VI wells are used for the injection of CO₂ into underground subsurface rock formations for long-term storage, or geologic sequestration.
- Region 3 received two (2) applications for three (3) wells. Both projects were in West Virginia.
 - Applications were transferred to the WVDEP when WV received primacy on March 28, 2025.
- Region 3 has had pre-application discussions with Archaea Energy about a project in Lackawanna Co., Pennsylvania.
 - Archaea recently drilled a stratigraphic test well to characterize the geology at the proposed injection site.



Historical Number of Permits by Well Class

Since 1984, Region III has issued or renewed 139 permits



Permitting



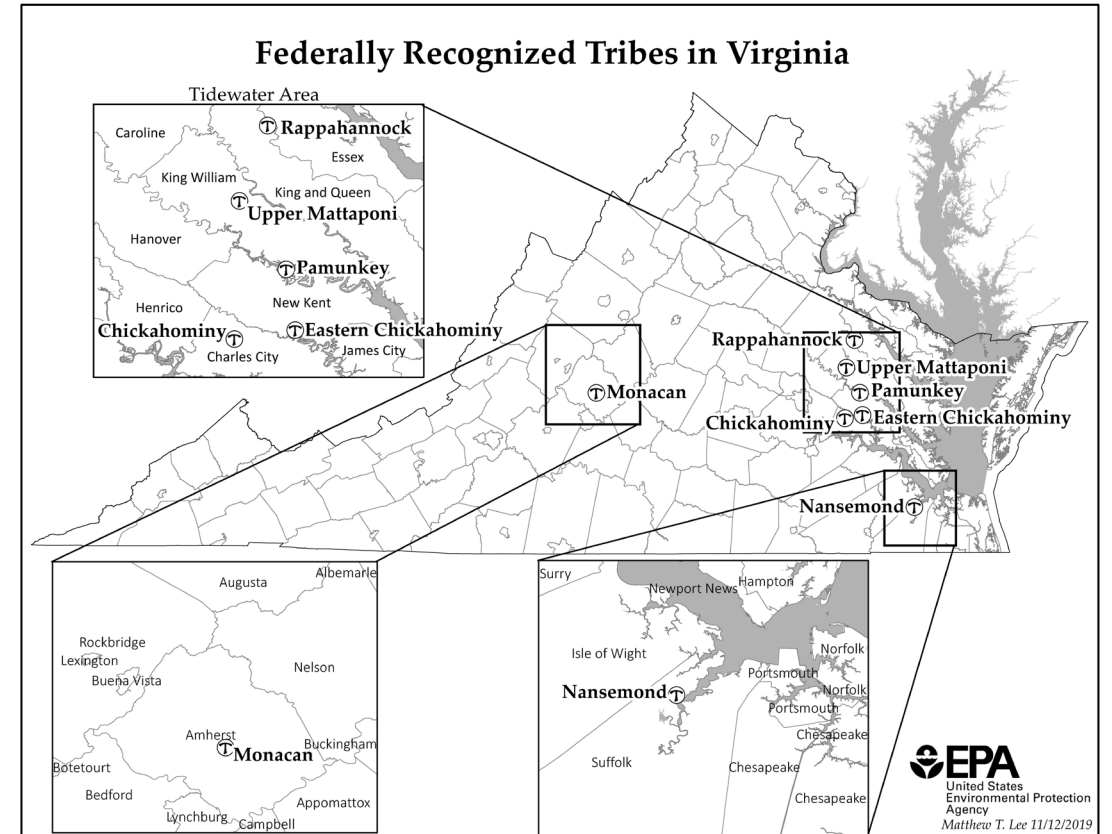
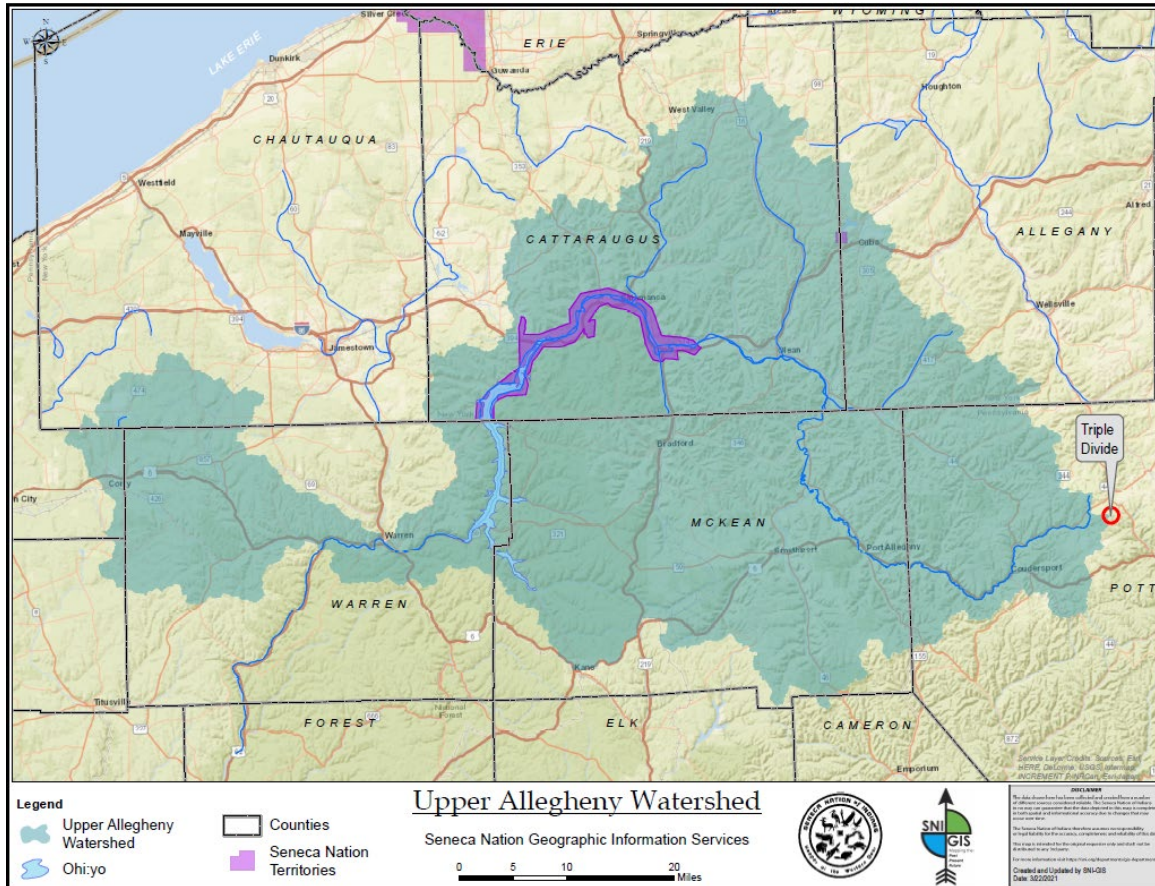
Public Participation in UIC

- SDWA mandates public participation (40 C.R.F. § 124)
- Draft permits are advertised for public comment in a local newspaper and on the EPA's website for at least 30 days
 - Public Comment Period has been extended based on response from public
- The public can request a public hearing
 - Hearings have been held virtually using MS Teams
- Opportunity to Appeal

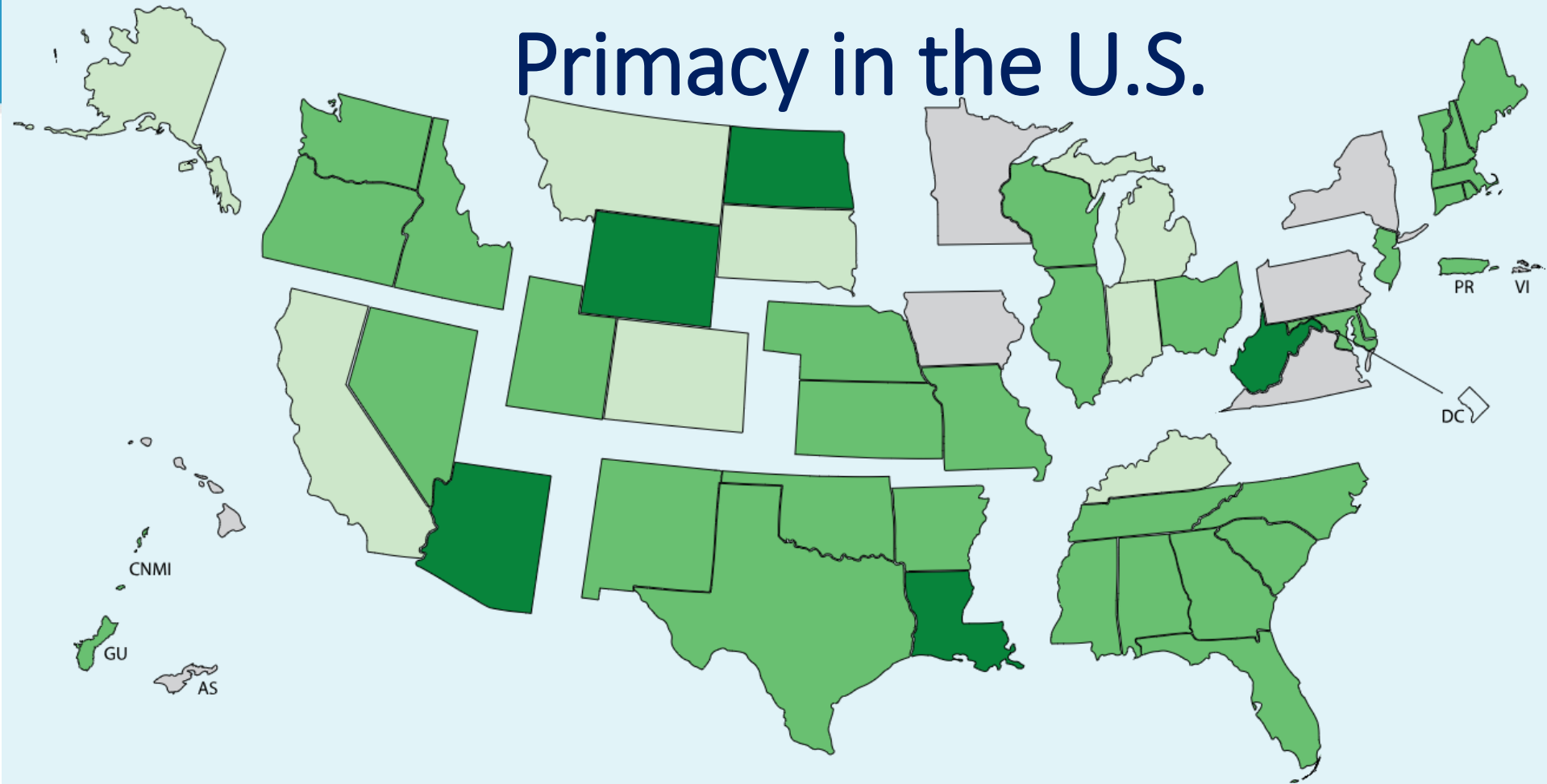
Inquiries on Permitting Actions

- In recent years, many permitting actions in Region 3, particularly disposal wells in Pennsylvania, have attracted a lot of negative attention
 - Media Inquiries
 - Congressional Inquiries/Elected Officials

Tribal Consultation



Primacy in the U.S.



Tribes

	Navajo Nation
	Fort Peck Tribes
	All Other Indian Tribes.

Key

	EPA manages all well classes.
	State has primacy for Class II wells only.
	State has primacy for multiple well classes.
	State has primacy for all well classes (Classes I, II, III, IV, V and VI).

Primacy Package

- Phase I: pre-application activities
- Phase II: completeness review and determination
- Phase III: application evaluation
- Phase IV: rulemaking and codification

Core Elements of Primacy Package

- Governor's letter
- Program description
- Attorney general's statement
- Memorandum of agreement between the state and the EPA regional administrator
- Copy of the state's UIC statutes and regulations
- Documents demonstrating the state's public participation process

Class VI Grant

- January 18, 2023 letter sent to Governors and Tribal Leaders regarding Letter of Intent (Due March 20, 2023)
- 50 million available to defray expenses related to the establishment and operation of a Class VI UIC program.
 - 100% federal funding – no match required
 - Award in single distribution with 5 year workplan
 - 25 states and Tribes submitted Letters of Intent to the EPA to participate in the grant program (AK, AL, AZ, CO, DE, GA, KS, KY, LA, MHA Nation, MI, MS, MT, Navajo Nation, ND, NE, NM, OH, OK, OR, PA, TX, UT, WV, WY).
- Amount is unprecedented for UIC program.
 - Total Allocation for Nation for Class I-V wells ≈ \$12,000,000
 - Region 3 portion ≈ \$700,000
 - Primacy States ≈ \$300,000 (DE,MD,WV)
 - EPA DI ≈ \$400,000 (DC,PA,VA)
 - Class VI grant interest 1.9 million (PA, WV, DE)

<https://www.epa.gov/uic/current-class-vi-projects-under-review-epa>

Questions?

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