

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE FEDERAL STIMULUS PROJECTS

L.U.S.T.

Congress appropriated \$210 million to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for cleaning up petroleum leaks from underground storage tanks. Because the national underground storage tanks program is primarily administered through existing state programs, the vast majority of money the U.S. EPA receives will go to state and territorial underground tank programs through grant agreements. Ohio's program will be administered through the Ohio Department of Commerce, Bureau of Underground Storage Tank Regulation (BUSTR).

According to the U.S. EPA, money can only be used either to:

- Oversee cleaning up underground tank leaks, or
- Directly pay for cleaning up leaks from federally regulated tanks where the responsible party is unknown, unwilling, unable, or the cleanup is an emergency response.

Recently, the U.S. EPA announced that Ohio will receive \$8,080,000 under the ARRA for these cleanups. U.S. EPA, Region 5 (Ohio is within Region 5) will enter into cooperative agreements with states and territories later this spring. BUSTR is required to formally apply for ARRA funds via a grant application process. As Ohio's plan is finalized, that plan will be posted on this site. That cooperative agreement will include more detailed descriptions of Ohio's spending plans. We have not yet received final guidance from the U.S. EPA, but continue to plan for how these funds will be allocated.

BUSTR, under the guidance of the federal OMB and US EPA, will examine sites at gasoline or service stations that had at least one release at one underground storage tank system on the property. The preliminary guidance for site selection by BUSTR is that sites have an unidentified owner or unknown party responsible for the release.

Additional criteria are applied in order to select sites for the ARRA grant. The criteria include: high contamination and toxicity scores as demonstrated from previous soil borings and water quality tests, and proximity to drinking water/aquifers and public places-- including schools.

Because there are literally hundreds of sites that may be eligible for clean-up, many sites will not be addressed under the grant and ARRA guidelines. Additionally, some sites that may be candidates for clean-up and fit the selection criteria will not be cleaned-up due to the lack of the owner/operator's cooperation or denial of site access to contractors.

Contractors

If you are a contractor and wish to be considered for contracted clean up work (i.e., site investigation, site assessment, corrective action, remedial action) you will be required to submit a proposal. The request for proposal ("RFP") process is being developed at this time to meet the ARRA requirements, including strict reporting requirements needed in order to meet ARRA goals of transparency and accountability. The bid process and the details for bidding, including the scope of work and the criteria for qualification as a contractor will soon be posted. As information is finalized, the details will be posted at this website.