



GEORGIA
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION

Land Protection Branch Update

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GIEC
December 2023



LAND PROTECTION BRANCH ORGANIZATION

Chuck Mueller, Chief

Risk Assessment

NPL Unit

Amy Potter, Risk
Assessment

Sarah Visser,
Assistant Chief

William Cook,
Solid Waste
Management

Lena Chambless,
Recovered Materials
and Abatement

Jay Kemberling,
Underground
Storage Tanks

Jim McNamara,
Hazardous Waste
Corrective Action

Holly Nelson,
Hazardous Waste
Management

Jason Metzger,
Response and
Remediation

MSW & Industrial
Landfills

Waste Reduction

Inspections and
Enforcement

RCRA
Remediation

RCRA Permitted
Facilities

HSI and
Abandoned Sites

Environmental
Monitoring

Scrap Tire
Compliance

Private Party
Cleanups

HW Generators

HSRA
Remediation

Surface Mining

Lead and
Asbestos

EPD Managed
Cleanups

DOD Facilities

Voluntary
Remediation and
Brownfields



LAND PROTECTION BRANCH: BY THE NUMBERS

Underground
Storage Tanks



29,579

Scrap Tire
Generators



7,539

Hazardous Waste
Handlers



5,363

Licensed Lead
Paint Firms



1,013

Surface Mining
Permits



752

Hazardous Sites
Inventory



474



LAND PROTECTION BRANCH: BY THE NUMBERS

Active Brownfields Projects



671

Scrap Tire Piles in Enforcement



70

RCRA Permitted Facilities



54

NPL Sites



17

Active, Permitted Landfills



188



BRANCH CHALLENGES

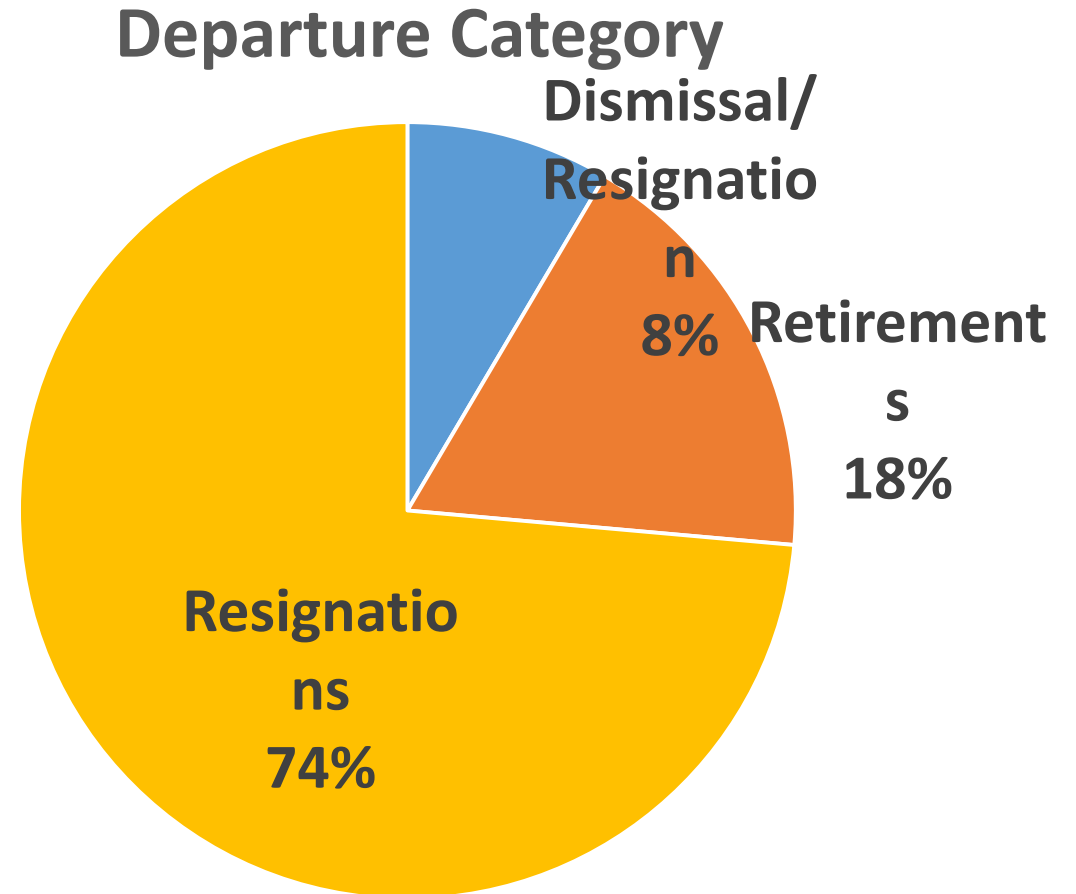
- In many programs, the less complex sites have been addressed. This leaves the sites with higher levels of complexity that take longer and cost more to cleanup.
- Increasing EPA expectations without additional funding or clear metrics
 - Environmental Justice
 - Coal Combustion Residuals
 - Increased inspection and enforcement involvement



#1 CHALLENGE – STAFF RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT

Land Branch Employees - 189
of Positions Turned Over Since
7/1/19 - 109
Percentage of Turnover - 57%

Dismissal – 9
Retirements – 19
Resignations – 78
Intern/Temp - 3





MAJOR PRIORITIES





COAL COMBUSTION RESIDUALS (CCR) PERMITS

- **Closure by Removal Permits Issued - Crisp (1), Hammond (3), McIntosh (1), McManus (1), Yates (2), Mitchell (1)**
- **Closure in Place Permits Issued - Bowen (1), Hammond (1)**
- **Landfill Permits – Branch (1), Bowen (1), McIntosh (2), Scherer (1), Wansley (1), Yates Gypsum (1)**

January 2022, EPA issued a new interpretation of infiltration. This policy change has impacted the issuance of Closure in Place Permits.

We're working with EPA to ensure all issued permits will comply with the rules and be protective of human health and the environment.



TWIN PINES MINING PERMIT APPLICATION

- **Georgia EPD is completing our review of the Mining Land Use Plan and put it on public notice January 19, 2023 for 60 days**
- **Held 2 virtual public meetings in February**
- **Received in excess of 78,000 comments**
- **Finalizing review and response to determine if additional revisions to MLUP are necessary.**
- **After MLUP approved, all permits will go to public notice**



FINANCING HAZARDOUS WASTE & SOLID WASTE

- **Constitutional amendment and House Bill 511 passed, dedicating fees.**
- **Effective July 1, 2022**
- **Planning for increased funding**
 - **Staffing**
 - **New programs consistent with authorized uses**





HAZARDOUS WASTE TRUST FUND



- Established in 1992
- Fees collected from generators of hazardous waste, solid waste tipping fees and fines for violations.
- Clean contaminated sites and reimburse local governments for old, leaking landfills

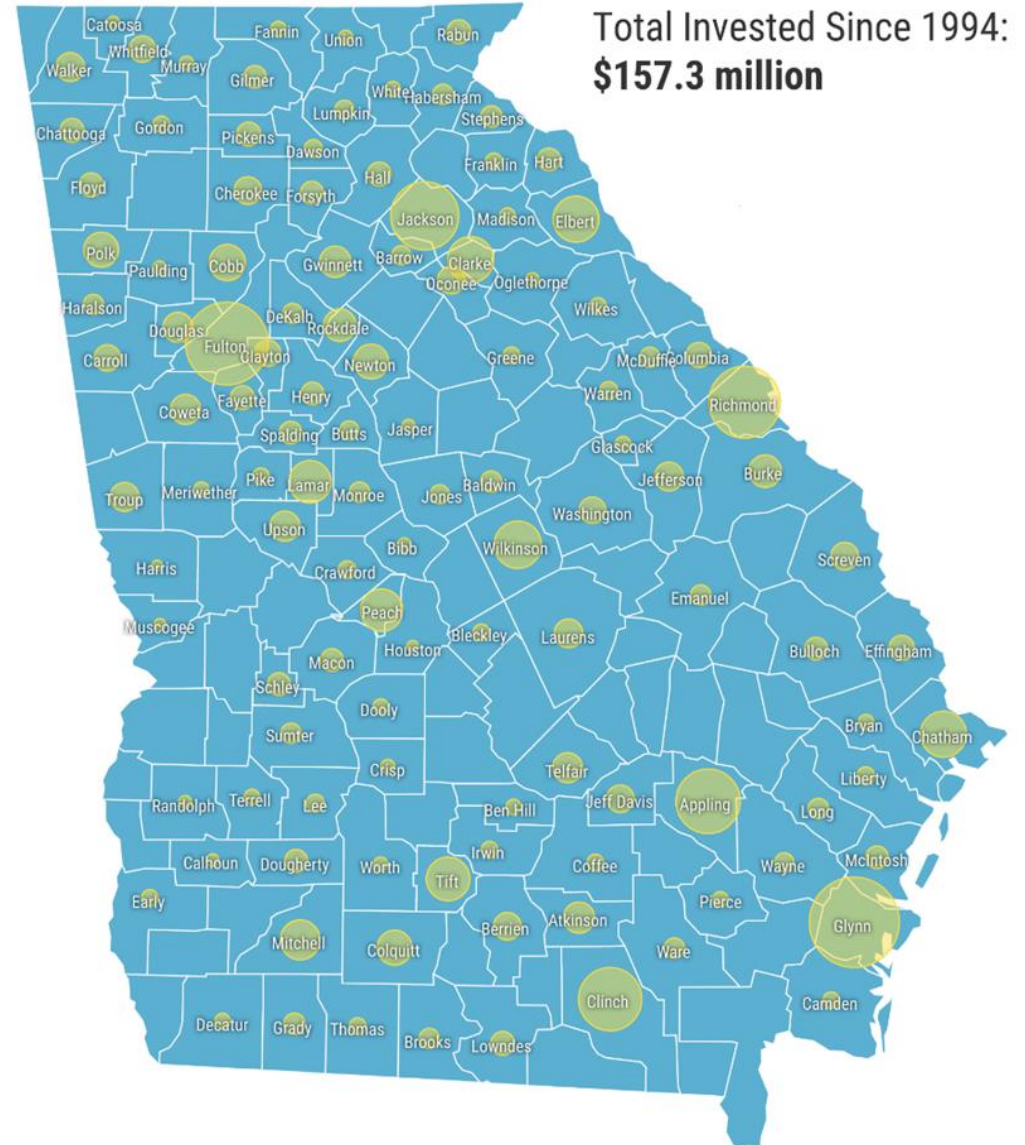


HAZARDOUS SITE INVENTORY

**Since 1994, the Fund has identified
916 hazardous sites.**

**447 have been removed after meeting
appropriate environmental
standards or emergency action.**

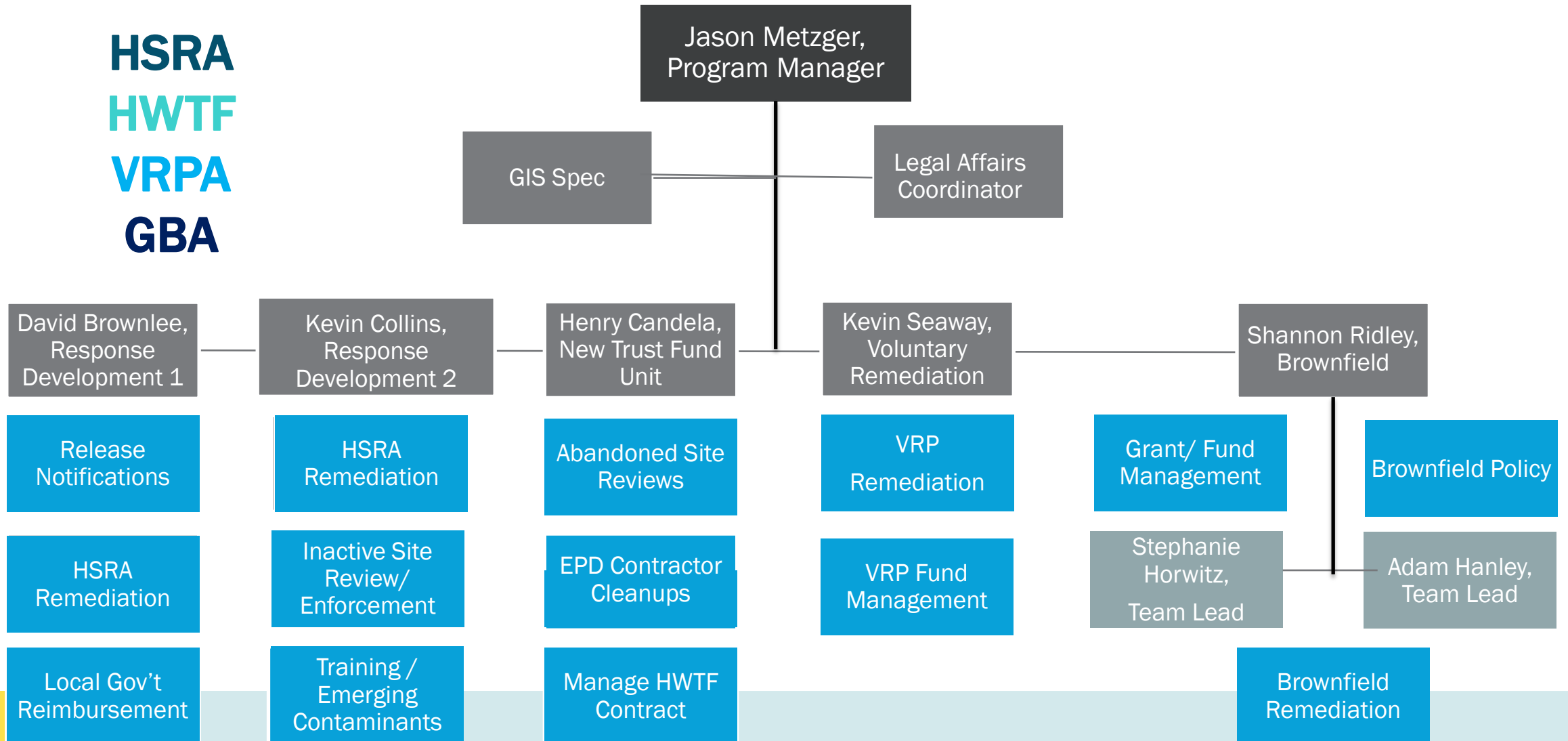
**469 (51%) remain on the inventory. 64
are classified as abandoned and
will need future state funds to
cleanup.**





RESPONSE AND REMEDIATION PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

HSRA
HWTF
VRPA
GBA



<https://careers.Georgia.gov>



SOLID WASTE TRUST FUND

- Established in 1990, funds come from a fee on each new tire sold
- The responsibility for collecting and remitting the \$1 fee shifted from the retailer to the distributor effective July 1, 2023.
- Funds scrap tire management, scrap tire cleanups, abandoned landfills, emergencies at solid waste facilities, and grants to public entities.





SOLID WASTE TRUST FUND GRANT PROGRAM

Tire Products Grant (\$1 million) - New for FY24, will fund the direct costs of incorporating scrap tire-derived products into projects that would otherwise use new or virgin materials, or for research projects to support scrap tire innovation.

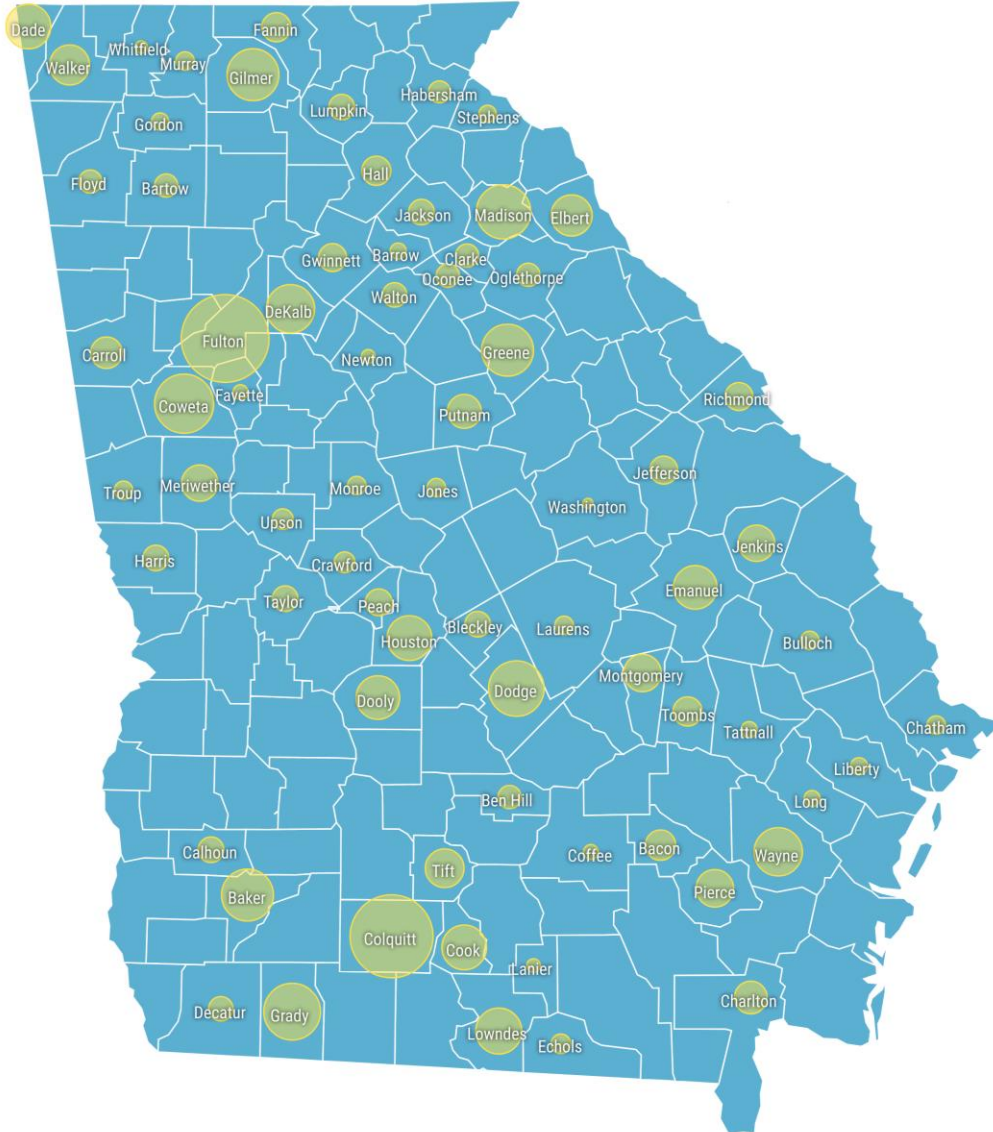
Recycling and Waste Diversion Grant Program (\$2 million) - Funds projects to reduce solid waste, recover valuable materials, support manufacturing, and encourage innovation. Awarded \$2.7M to 21 projects in FY23.

Local Government Scrap Tire Abatement Reimbursement (\$500k) - Reimburses local governments for the direct costs associated with recycling tires abated in their communities. This program is non-competitive and funds are available year round.

Details: <https://epd.georgia.gov/solid-waste-trust-fund-grant-program>



LOCAL GOVERNMENT REIMBURSEMENTS



Funding available for:

- Right of Way Cleanups
- Tire Dump Cleanups
- Amnesty Days

Since 2016 the program has reimbursed local governments more than **\$2.3 million** to remove the equivalent of **911,459** passenger tires!



HAZARDOUS WASTE GUIDANCE

Georgia Risk Assessment Guidance

- **Technical Advisory Committee meeting, discussing and working on drafting**
- **Focus is on streamlining the process, improving consistency across programs, and addressing chemical specific issues**
- **Goal is to have a draft for broader stakeholder input by Q1 2024**



RCRA PART B CLOSURE/TERMINATION

- **Several facilities have either completed the necessary physical activities for permit termination or have submitted requests to modify their permits and begin the process.**
- **Potentially 4 permit terminations expected in 2024, and a couple more in the next 2-3 years.**
- **Internal discussions have begun on developing a streamlined determination process that should facilitate removal actions at facilities contaminated with listed waste.**



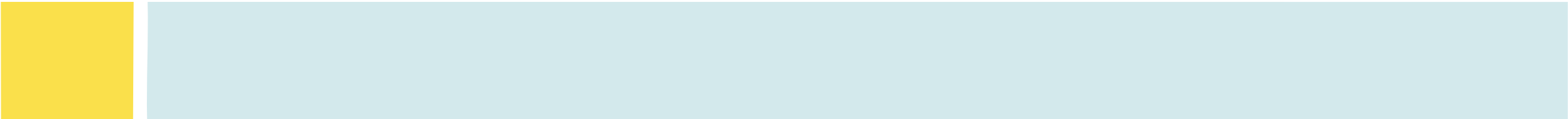
POTENTIAL RULEMAKING

Nothing firm yet, but discussing:

- **UST – GUST participation**
- **HWTF criteria for local government reimbursement eligibility**

No plans to address PFAS until EPA finalizes it's rulemaking

No plans to address HSRA revisions until GRAG is finalized





CAREERS AT EPD

- Work-life Balance
- Fulfilling and rewarding work
- Annual and sick leave accrual
- 13 Holidays per year
- Primarily work from home
- Alternative work schedules
- Minimal travel and in-state
- Variety of Healthcare Plans
- Combined Pension / 401K match



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DIVISION



<https://careers.Georgia.gov>



QUESTIONS?

