



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF
INSPECTOR GENERAL

March 8, 2016

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Project Notification:
Evaluation of EPA Efforts to Protect Tribal Communities From
Risks Related to Underground Storage Tanks
Project No. OPE-FY16-0013

FROM: Christina Lovingood, Director /s/
Land Cleanup and Waste Management Evaluations
Office of Program Evaluation

TO: Mathy Stanislaus, Assistant Administrator
Office of Land and Emergency Management

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) plans to begin preliminary research on the EPA's work related to Underground Storage Tank and Leaking Underground Storage Tank programs in Indian country. Our review will include the Office of Underground Storage Tanks as well as other applicable Office of Land and Emergency Management (OLEM) programs and select EPA regional offices. This project is included in our annual plan.

For our objectives, we ask the following questions:

- 1) Do the EPA's 2006 Tribal Strategy and 2015 revised underground storage tank regulations prioritize and address releases that present the greatest threat to human health or the environment?
- 2) Has the EPA reduced the overall backlog of underground storage tank cleanups in Indian country?

Applicable generally accepted government auditing standards will be used in conducting our project. The anticipated benefits of this project are for the EPA to more effectively address public health concerns related to leaking underground storage tank cleanups, including groundwater contamination; reduce the backlog of tribal leaking underground storage tank cleanups; and improve the EPA's direct implementation of the tribal underground storage tank program.

We will contact you to arrange a mutually agreeable time to discuss our objectives and the purpose of the preliminary research phase of our project. We would also be particularly interested in any areas of concern that you may have. We will answer any of your questions about the project process, reporting procedures, methods used to gather and analyze data, and what we should expect of each other during the course of the project. Throughout the project, we will provide updates on a regular basis to agreed-upon contacts from your offices.

To ensure the success and timely completion of this project, please provide your input on regions, tribes and any experts we should contact during preliminary research.

We respectfully note that the OIG is authorized by the Inspector General Act of 1978 to have timely access to personnel and all materials necessary to complete its objectives. We will request your resolution if an agency employee or contractor refuses to provide requested records to the OIG, or otherwise fails to cooperate with the OIG. We may report unresolved access matters to the Administrator and include the incident in the Semiannual Report to Congress.

The project will be supervised by me and the Project Manager will be Jill Trynosky. Any information related to the project should be addressed to me at (202) 566-2906 or lovingood.tina@epa.gov, or Jill Trynosky at (202) 566-2718 or trynosky.jill@epa.gov.

cc: Barry Breen, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Land and Emergency Management
Carolyn Hoskinson, Director, Office of Underground Storage Tanks, Office of Land and Emergency Management
Kecia Thornton, Audit Follow-Up Coordinator, Office of Land and Emergency Management
Jane Nishida, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of International and Tribal Affairs
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