

Overview of Underground Injection Control (UIC) Program

In the 1970's, Congress passed the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), giving EPA the authority to control underground injection to protect underground drinking water sources. The federal UIC Program is responsible for regulating the construction, operation, permitting, and closure of injection wells that place fluids underground for storage or disposal. There are six classes of injection wells, Classes I-VI. Five of these classes of injection wells involve generally very deep, high-tech wells used for the disposal of hazardous and radioactive wastes, enhancement of oil and gas and mineral recovery (Class II) or carbon sequestering. All but Class V wells are prohibited in Vermont.

The Vermont UIC Rules, were originally adopted in 1982. State Primacy for the federal program established on January 16, 1984 via a Memorandum of Agreement between EPA Region I and the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation. The Vermont UIC Rules are administered through the ANR-DEC Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division's (DWGPD's), UIC Program. UIC Permits are required for discharging certain non-sanitary wastes into an opening in the ground. Some discharges are prohibited because they have a high risk of impacting groundwater.