

# Oneida Nation works to prevent leaks from underground storage tanks



Oneida Nation

Oneida, Wisconsin

## Project Time Period (FY2016– FY2018)

- **Tribal Contact:** Michael Arce, Environmental Specialist – Compliance Assistance
- **GAP Project Officer:** Tina Davis, EPA Region 5
- **Media:** Underground Storage Tanks (USTs)
- **GAP Funded Results:**  
Program Development (Core Competencies)  
TAS (or similar) application process

## Project Description

The Oneida Nation entered into a Direct Implementation Tribal Cooperative Agreement (DITCA) with EPA in October 2005. Under the DITCA, Oneida provides compliance assistance to owners and operators of federally regulated tanks within the Oneida Reservation and other tribal nations as approved by Region 5, with the goal of increasing the rate of significant operational compliance.

## Project Details

By providing compliance assistance, Oneida teaches owners and operators to recognize potential non-compliance issues and correct them prior to federal inspection. Additionally, Oneida has trained staff and has gone through the process of securing the federal credentials necessary for conducting Underground Storage Tank (UST) inspections on behalf of EPA. The Oneida Nation also conducts UST Bootcamp classes that provide training to a broader spectrum of tribal environmental and business staff.

Although the Oneida grant started with GAP funds when it originated in 2005, the source for their DITCA has expanded to UST prevention grant funding. This is in keeping with GAP goals to help tribes increase their ability to build programs that can be sustained beyond GAP.

## Community Response

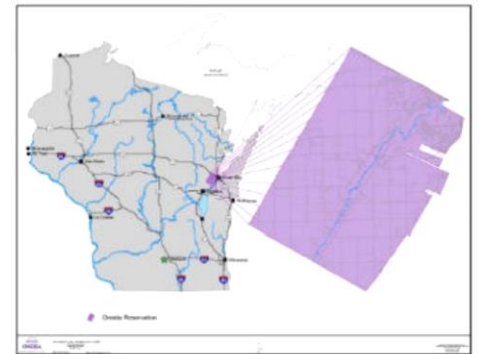
The UST Bootcamp has attracted tribal staff, owners and operators from across the country, EPA Regional Headquarters and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. It has been supported through scholarships to attendees from the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Council, and the Institute of Tribal Environmental Professionals has sponsored two Oneida led UST Boot Camps in Region 9 and Region 6. Since 2010, over 400 people representing approximately 75 tribal nations and 6 non-tribal businesses have attended the Boot Camps. Other UST DITCA Recipients have partnered with the Oneida Compliance Assistance Program to reach more owners and operators.

## Innovation

Since the program began, understanding of UST requirements at the owner/operator level and compliance rates have improved. Tribal capacity for dealing with UST issues has also increased. As a result, problems that could result in a release to the environment are found sooner and are dealt with more effectively.

## Next Steps

The Oneida Nation will continue to work with its tribal, state, and EPA partners to protect the environment and human health from potential releases.



## Map of the Oneida Reservation

*The Oneida Reservation is 65,400 acres located in northeastern Wisconsin. It is the second largest employer in the area and adds \$744 million annually to the local economy, according to an economic impact study conduct by St. Norbert College.*

