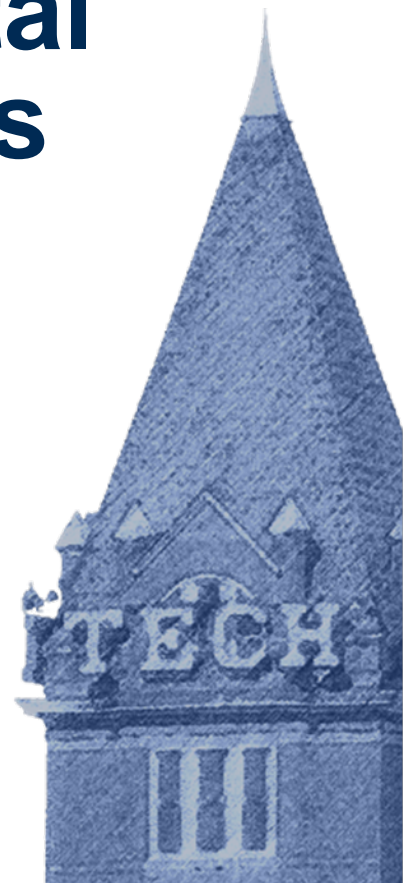# Re-tooling Environmental Assistance for Georgia's Manufacturers

Ann Carpenter

Monti Staton

Georgia Environmental Compliance Assistance Program (GECAP)

Overview

- **How can technical assistance better respond to the changing needs of businesses?**

- **Project was a SWOT analysis of Georgia environmental regulations**

  - **GECAP background**

  - **Survey**

  - **Results**

Background

- **Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI)**

  - **GECAP Program Manager since 2000**

  - **Provides _free_ environmental compliance technical assistance to GA industries**

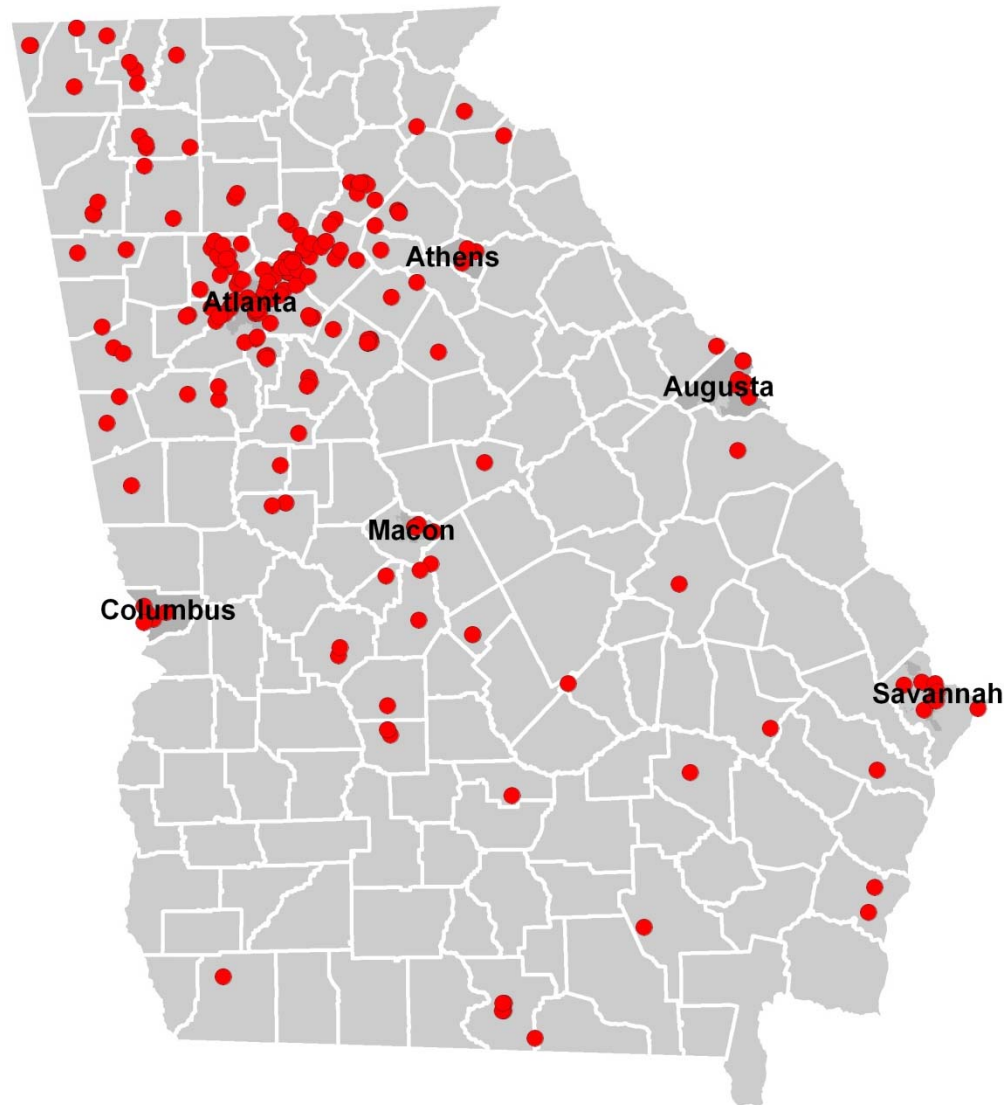   - **Funded by economic grant from state of GA**

GECAP Services

- **Telephone & Email Assistance**
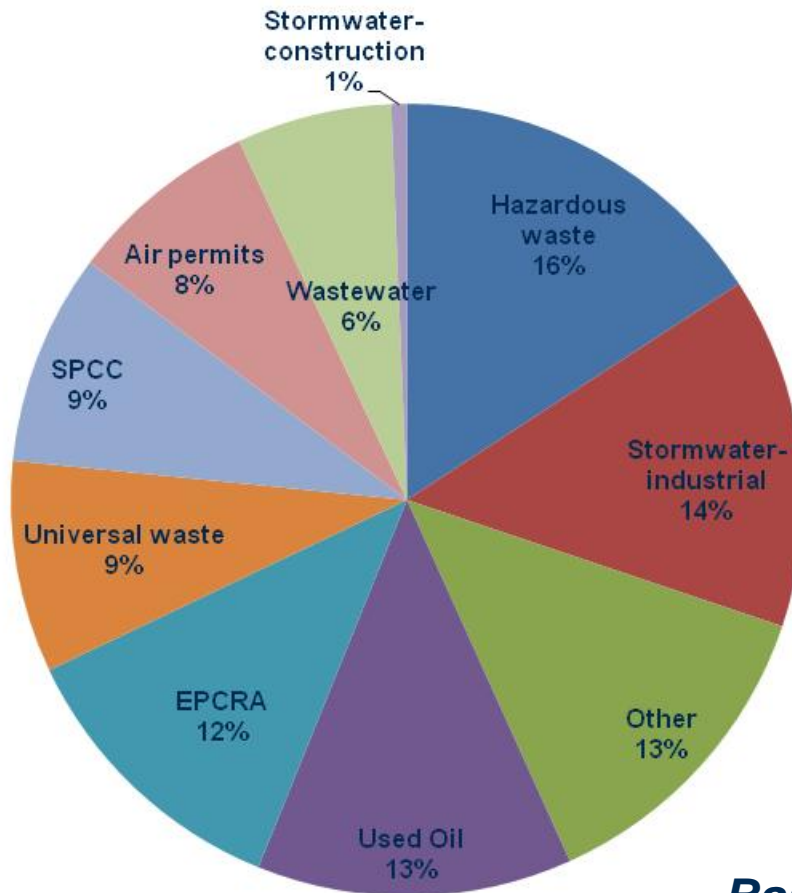
- **On-Site Inspections with Summary Reports**

- **Website with resources: www.GECAP.org**

  - **Tech Guides (Regulation Fact Sheets)**

  - **Forms**

  - **Technical Assistance Publications from outside resources**

  - **Tools**

GECAP Companies

- **245 firms served in Georgia**

- **77% manufacturing firms**

- **230 employees on average**

Map of Georgia showing locations of GECAP companies as red dots, with labeled cities: Atlanta, Athens, Augusta, Macon, Columbus, Savannah.

Assistance Requests

- **Hazardous waste is the #1 concern, followed closely by industrial storm water**

Based on 474 requests, 2006-2010

Purpose of Survey

- **To understand the evolving needs of the business community in Georgia with respect to environmental regulations by gauging the challenges and opportunities in the regulated community**

- **To back up anecdotal evidence with empirical data**

- **Online survey sent to GECAP mailing list**

- **Response rate of ~18%**

GECAP Environmental Compliance Survey

Thanks for taking the time to respond to this research survey. The purpose is to understand the evolving needs of the business community in Georgia with respect to environmental regulations. Your individual responses will be completely confidential and will be used to better understand the needs of GECAP companies in order to provide the highest quality assistance for Georgia's small- and medium-sized businesses. Please answer as many questions as possible, the survey should take only 5-10 minutes.

Questions marked with an asterisk (*) are required.

✱ 1. What is the facility's zip code?

2. Enter either your SIC code (4 digit) or your NAICS code (6 digits)

SIC code:

NAICS code:

3. Briefly describe your products and/or services:

4. How many employees work at this facility (approximate if needed)?

5. Approximately what year was the business established?

6. What have HISTORICALLY been the most significant environmental concerns for your business (select all that apply)?

- ☐ Toxic/hazardous waste
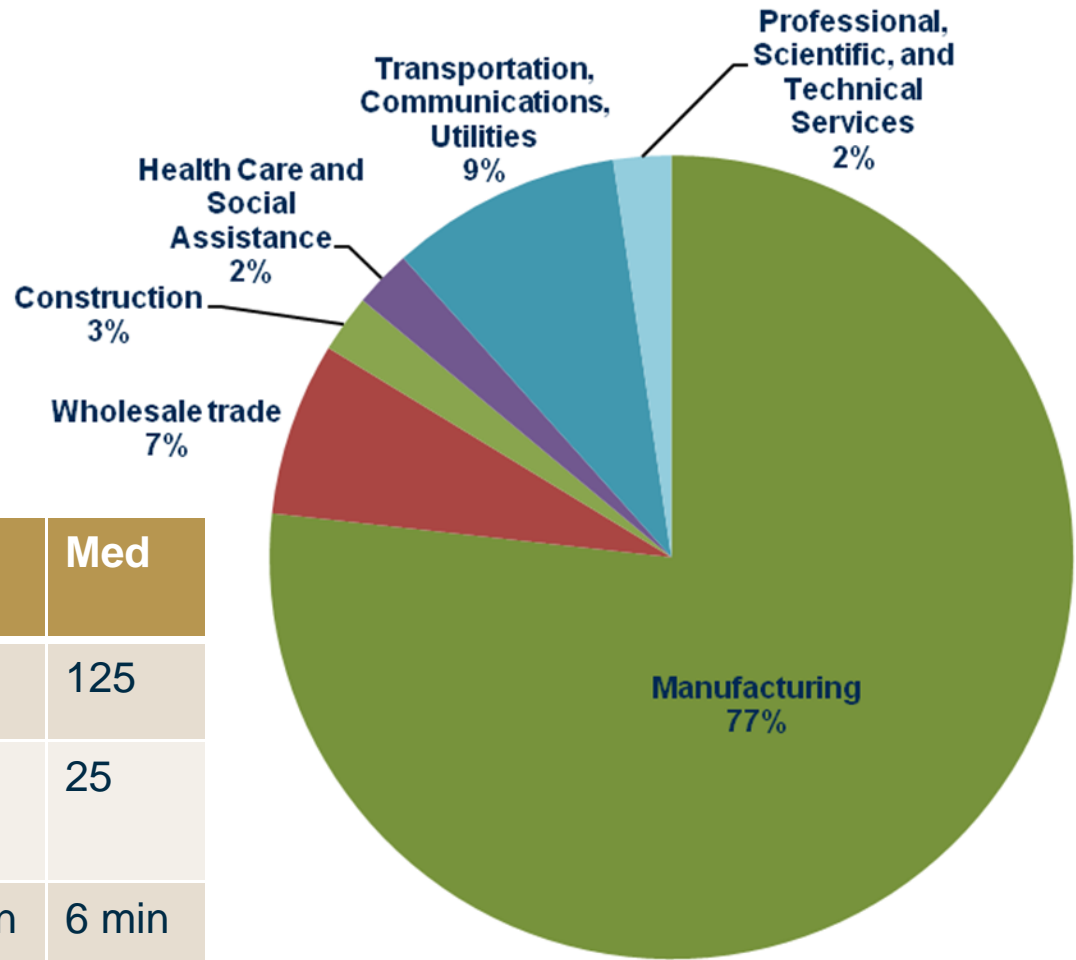- ☐ Universal waste
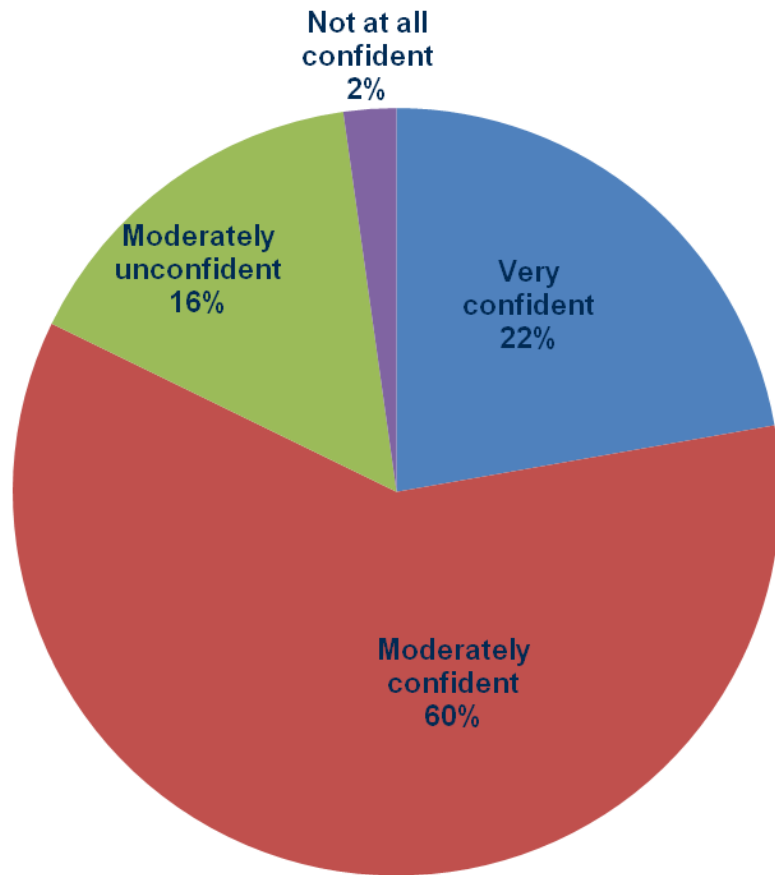- ☐ Recycling
- ☐ Energy efficiency
- ☐ Water efficiency

Done

Survey Respondents

45 surveys returned total

	Min	Max	Avg	Med
Employees	1	4700	318	125
Years in operation	5	94	32	25
Time spent on survey	2 min	3 hrs	13 min	6 min

Pie chart of survey respondents by industry:
- Manufacturing 77%
- Transportation, Communications, Utilities 9%
- Wholesale trade 7%
- Construction 3%
- Health Care and Social Assistance 2%
- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services 2%

How confident are Georgia businesses in their knowledge of relevant environmental regulations?
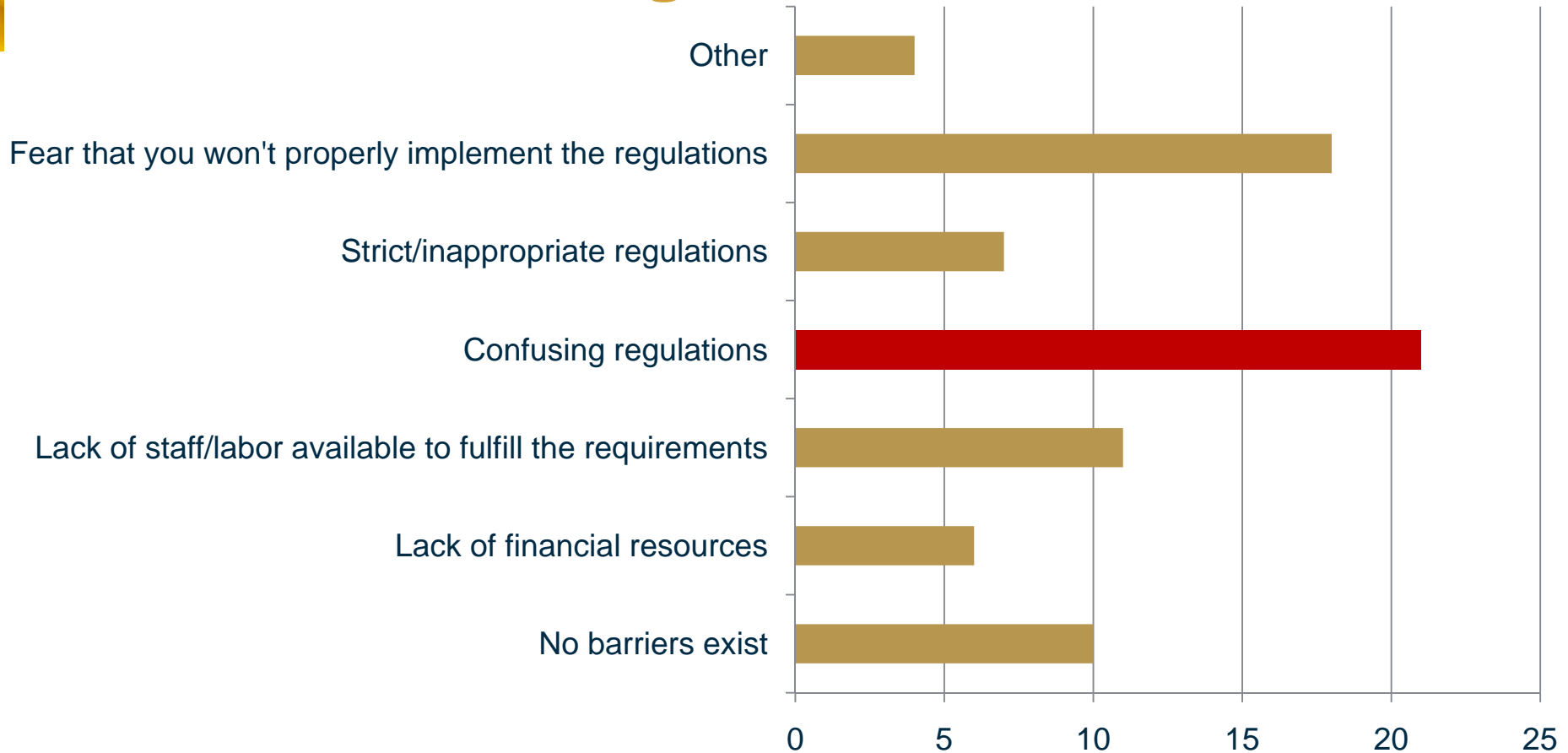

- **Survey oversampled savvy and conscientious firms**

- **GECAP companies are well served by the free assistance**

- **18% still not confident**

What are the most significant environmental concerns for Georgia businesses?
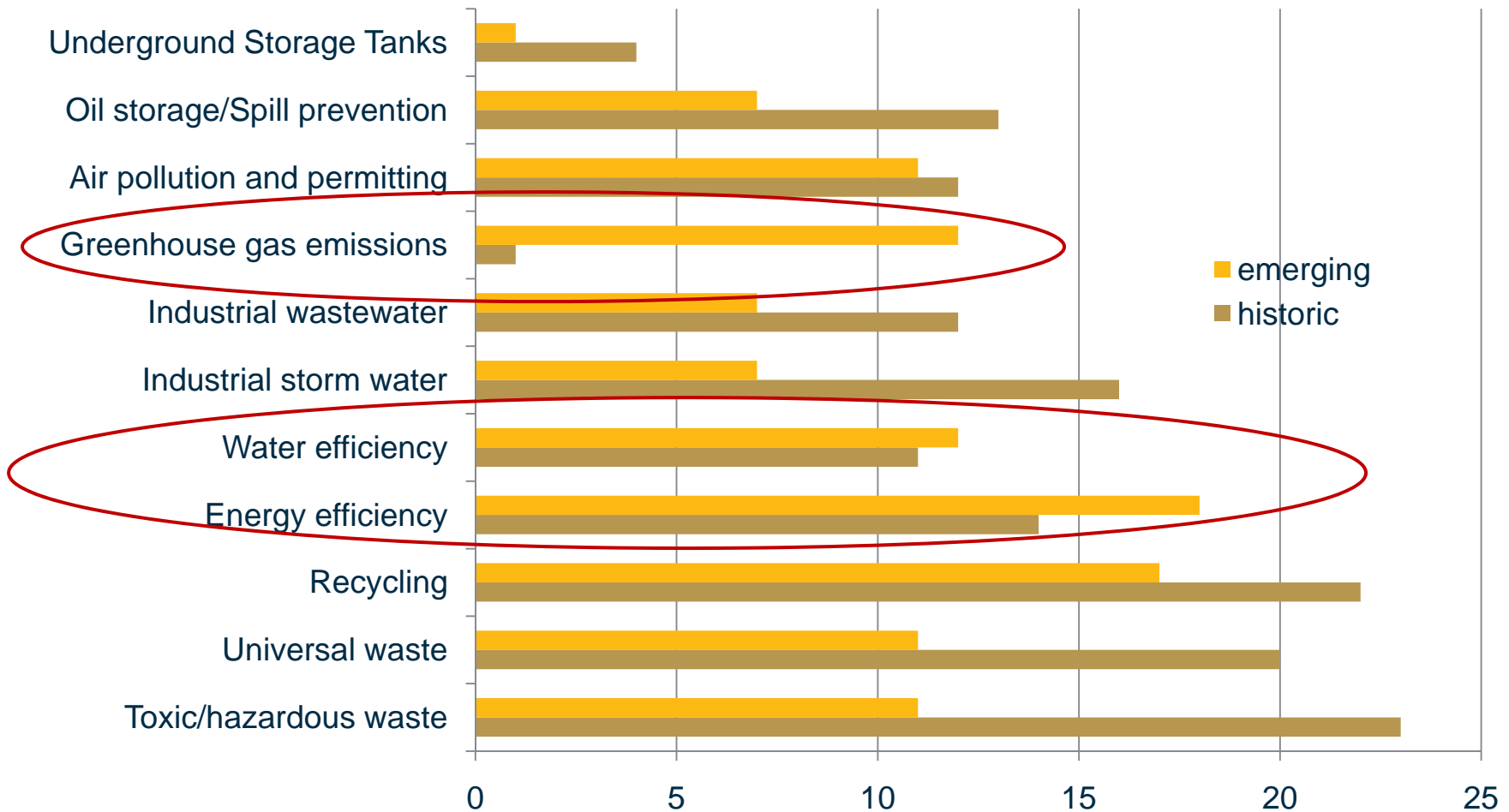
What are the main barriers to compliance for Georgia businesses?

78% feel there are at least some barriers to compliance, confusing regulations were the most cited reason (47%)

Additional Findings

- **69% feel they have adequate resources to be in compliance**

  - **24% are "not sure"**

- **36% feel pressured to meet certain non-regulatory environmental standards**

  - **(57% of these firms specifically cited ISO 14001)**

Implications

- **Environmental regulation has a positive effect on competitiveness of domestic firms by stimulating innovation**

- **Public's increasing demand for environmental protection drives increased environmental regulation**

- **GA firms are feeling pressure to adopt ISO 14001**

- **Should GA move toward adopting formal standards?**

- **Survey results helped GECAP recalibrate our focus in order to better provide technical assistance**

- **Next steps: educational materials, training, etc.**

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