



Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards: Overview

Chemicals are vital to our economy. They are used to develop medicines that maintain our health, provide refrigeration for our food supply, manufacture fuel for our vehicles and build the microchip that runs our smartphones. But in the hands of a terrorist, some chemicals could potentially be weaponized.

What Is CFATS?

In 2006, Congress authorized the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to establish the Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards (CFATS) program. Managed by the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), the CFATS program identifies and regulates high-risk chemical facilities to ensure they have security measures in place that reduce the risk of certain hazardous chemicals from being weaponized. In 2014, Congress reauthorized and amended the program through the Protecting and Securing Chemical Facilities from Terrorist Attacks Act of 2014 (6 U.S.C. § 621, et seq.). In 2019, Congress extended the four-year authorization through April 2020 via the Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards Program Extension Act.

The CFATS regulation applies to facilities across many industries, including, but not limited to:

- Chemical manufacturing, storage, and distribution
- Energy utilities
- Agriculture and food
- Explosives
- Pulp and paper
- Electronics
- Plastics
- Universities and laboratories
- Paint and coatings
- Healthcare and pharmaceuticals
- Metal production and finishing



Appendix A and Chemicals of Interest (COI)

Appendix A of the CFATS regulation lists more than 300 COI and their respective screening threshold quantities (STQ) and concentrations. The COI are categorized into three main security issues:

- **Release:** Toxic, flammable, or explosive chemicals or materials that can be released at a facility.
- **Theft or Diversion:** Chemicals or materials that, if stolen or diverted, can be converted into weapons using simple chemistry, equipment, or techniques.
- **Sabotage:** Chemicals or materials that can be mixed with readily available materials.

Any facility that manufactures, stores, or distributes COI at or above the STQ and concentration is required to report their holdings to CISA via an online survey called a Top-Screen. Facilities must submit a Top Screen within 60 days of coming into possession of the COI.



CFATS Process

1. If not statutorily excluded from CFATS,¹ read the Appendix A COI List: www.dhs.gov/publication/cfats-coi-list
2. If your facility possesses COI at or above the STQ and concentration, submit a Top-Screen via the Chemical Security Assessment Tool (CSAT): www.dhs.gov/csat-top-screen.
 - To access CSAT, complete the Chemical-terrorism Vulnerability Information (CVI) training: www.dhs.gov/cfats-cvi.
 - Register yourself and your facility in CSAT to get access to the Top-Screen survey: csat-registration.dhs.gov/.
3. CISA reviews Top-Screens using a risk-based methodology. Facilities are notified if they are:
 - Determined to be a high-risk facility and ranked into Tiers 1, 2, 3, and 4, with Tier 1 being the highest risk.
 - Determined not to be a high-risk facility and not regulated under CFATS.
4. If your facility is tiered, your facility must submit a Security Vulnerability Assessment (SVA) and a Site Security Plan (SSP)—or an Alternative Security Program (ASP)—that meets the risk-based performance standards (RBPS): www.dhs.gov/cfats-risk-based-performance-standards.
 - The 18 RBPS address security issues such as perimeter security, access control, personnel security, cybersecurity, etc.
 - Your facility's security plan is tailored to its tier level, risk, and unique circumstances.
5. CISA Chemical Security Inspectors perform an authorization inspection at your facility prior to approving the SSP or ASP.
 - Once the plan is approved, inspectors conduct regular compliance inspections to verify your facility implements the agreed-upon security measures.



CFATS Enforcement Actions

CISA is committed to helping facility personnel understand and comply with CFATS by providing technical assistance or onsite consultation. However, CISA is authorized to pursue civil enforcement action against any facility found in violation of CFATS, which could result in the imposition of a civil fine and/or the issuance of an order to cease operations. Violations vary from a facility refusing to report its COI holdings, failing to implement certain security measures, or knowingly providing false information.



Tools and Resources

- CFATS Resources: www.dhs.gov/cfats-resources
- CFATS Process: www.dhs.gov/cfats-process
- Request a CFATS Presentation: www.dhs.gov/request-cfats-presentation
- Request a Compliance Assistance Visit: www.dhs.gov/cfats-request-compliance-assistance-visit
- CFATS Knowledge Center: csat-help.dhs.gov
- CSAT Help Desk (technical assistance): Call 1-866-323-2957 or email csat@hq.dhs.gov



Contact Information

For any questions or comments, email CFATS@hq.dhs.gov or visit www.dhs.gov/cfats.

¹ Section 2101 of the CFATS Act of 2014 defined excluded facility as: a facility regulated under the Maritime Transportation Security Act of 2002; a public water systems as defined in the Safe Drinking Water Act; a Treatment Works as defined in the Federal Water Pollution Control Act; a facility owned or operated by the Department of Defense or the Department of Energy; and a facility subject to regulation by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.