

South Carolina has more than 300 special purpose districts (SPDs) that provide specific local government services across the state. These districts are governmental entities created by the South Carolina General Assembly or under general law to carry out functions such as fire protection, water and sewer services, natural gas distribution, and recreation. Many were originally established before counties gained home rule authority in the 1970s, helping fill gaps in local services and infrastructure.

Most districts focus on one primary service, such as fire protection, utilities, recreation, or transportation. They are typically governed by boards or commissions whose members may be elected or appointed, depending on the law that created the district. Funding generally comes from service fees, taxes, or bonds, and districts range from small rural systems to large utilities serving thousands of residents.



309

Special District
Governments



15%

Of Local Government
Revenue



43%

Of All Local
Governments are
Special Districts

MOST COMMON SPECIAL DISTRICTS

Fire Protection		124
Water and Sewer		82
Recreation		28
Utility		26
Drainage and Conservation		20