

## Environmental Complaints and Local Services Division

### Environmental Complaints Program

One of DEQ's highest priorities and the centerpiece of its mission is investigating environmental complaints. The Environmental Complaints Program is a customer-oriented program designed to address citizens' environmental complaints.

The Environmental Complaints Program is unlike any other complaint program in the nation in that specific timelines for communication with the complainant are set in the Department's regulations. The program has a uniform investigation process, a central repository for all complaints and direct involvement with each citizen who files a complaint.

Some of the elements of the Environmental Complaints Program are:

- A toll-free hotline, **(800) 522-0206**, for Oklahomans to report environmental complaints. The hotline is manned 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Complaints can also be filed online using the Agency's website at Environmental Complaints. <https://tinyurl.com/38w57m4n>
- No more than two working days will elapse between receipt of the complaint and a response to the citizen from the investigator.
- Within seven days, correspondence from the investigator to the citizen lodging the complaint will be sent.
- If resolution of the complaint is long-term, the citizen will be kept informed during the entire process.
- Complaints will be vigorously pursued to resolution or closure within 90 days.
- For complaints on property owners with failing on-site sewage systems, ECLS established a grant program whereby owners meeting specific income qualifications may obtain funding.
- When compliance is reached, the citizen will receive written notification.

Each year DEQ receives around 4,000 complaints within its jurisdiction. Since December 1996 all complaints have either been resolved or were under an enforcement action from the agency within 90 days.

Through the implementation of two-day personal contact, keeping citizens informed, setting a goal to resolve complaints within 90 days and providing technical assistance to the responsible party, the Environmental Complaints Program continues to be diligent in its pursuit to view the public as the customer. We strive daily to meet DEQ's charge of providing outstanding service to the public.



### The program's two main goals are:

1. To provide rapid response to each environmental complaint; and
2. To bring about regulatory compliance through a consistent and structured process.