

Environmental Complaints and Local Services Division

Environmental Complaints Program

As one of DEQ's highest priorities and the centerpiece of its mission, 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 lodges a complaint.

Some of the elements of the Environmental Complaints Program are:

- A toll-free hotline for Oklahomans to report environmental complaints. The hotline is manned 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The number is **800-522-0206**.
- 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.
- Few property owners are not financially able to make corrections to their own on-site disposal systems. ECLS established a grant program whereby approved owners can obtain needed funds.
- When compliance is reached, the citizen will receive written notification.
- After the final notification, a citizen will receive a customer performance survey.
- Citizens are provided access to an alternative dispute resolution system, more commonly known as mediation, which is voluntary and confidential.

Each year DEQ receives an average of 6,200 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 days 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.