

Oklahoma Kill Response Management Team (OKRMT)

Our Mission

The mission of OKRMT is to facilitate communication and collaboration between government entities regarding fish kills, and to provide a framework for coordinated, consistent, and effective fish kill response. Fish kills may include other wildlife, such as freshwater mussels.

Effective Response

Effective response is essential to identify the causes of fish kills and responsible parties, if they exist. These efforts also allow for informed policy decisions that protect fish and wildlife resources, waters of the state and human health.

Member Agencies and Tribal Partners

- Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality
- Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation
- Oklahoma Water Resources Board
- Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry
- Oklahoma Corporation Commission
- Oklahoma Conservation Commission
- Cherokee Nation
- Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes
- Chickasaw Nation
- Choctaw Nation
- Delaware Nation
- Iowa Tribe
- Ponca Tribe
- Sac and Fox Nation
- Wyandotte Nation
- Grand River Dam Authority
- U.S. Army Corp of Engineers
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- U.S. Geological Survey



Above: OKRMT logo
Below: Discovery of dead fish.



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Q: Why a Consolidated Approach?

A consolidated approach to the management of fish kills in Oklahoma results in more organized and timely response, and allows for better communication between front line and office staff. A consolidated approach provides for the following important opportunities:

- Opportunity for participating agencies to share expertise and resources
- Shared training opportunities
- Standardization of fish kill reporting
- Increased awareness of fish kill events

Q: Who is a first responder?

- First responders are those individuals first arriving at the scene of a fish kill.
- May be an agency with jurisdiction.
- May be an agency without jurisdiction, but first on the scene.

Q: Who is a second responder?

- Second responders are individuals arriving second at the scene of a fish kill. They may be notified by the first responder and/or the first responder's designated contact (or supervisor).
- Second responders prevent further damages, loss of natural resources, prevent health risk to humans, determine the responsible party, and can enforce penalties.

Communication Flow

An Inter-Agency Fish Kill Alert Distribution List has been initiated by DEQ. This list contains members of other agencies who wish to be notified in the event of a fish kill including OKRMT agencies, the Oklahoma Attorney General's Office, tribal contacts and key DEQ staff. It is the responsibility of each agency to ensure and maintain the accuracy of their contact information on the distribution list. Changes should be sent to DEQ. DEQ will send updates periodically to participating agencies. The Inter-Agency Fish Kill Alert Distribution List (FishKillAlerts@deq.ok.gov) should be used in the following ways:

- DEQ will send a notification to the fish kill alert list upon receiving notification of a fish kill through the Complaints Hotline.
- The email address of the fish kill alert list is not for public use. It is reserved for OKRMT member agencies and tribal partners. The public should direct complaints/notifications to the DEQ hotline at (800) 522-0206.
- When receiving an alert, other agencies may distribute notification to relevant staff (if they are not already on list).



Figure 1 demonstrates the general communication flow upon notification or observation of a fish kill. Fish kill events should be called into the DEQ hotline so that it can be entered into the DEQ Event Management System (EMS). This will allow for a central location to store data associated with events across the state and jurisdictions. DEQ will notify the jurisdictional agency. Non-jurisdictional agencies may be notified and their assistance requested depending on the nature and extent of the event. Tribal jurisdiction includes events that are contained on tribal land. This does not prevent a tribe from requesting assistance or preclude tribes from notifying the state in the event of a fish kill that could affect waters of the State of Oklahoma.

First responders are essential in potentially identifying a source, responsible party and collecting critical information about the scene. Figure 2 reflects the first responder's role in effective communication. In addition to assessing the scene, a first responder should do the following when approaching a fish kill:

- CALL THE DEQ HOTLINE at (800) 522-0206.
- DEQ will send appropriate emails and notify the jurisdictional agency.
- Proceed with their agency response protocol (agency protocols may vary).
- Conduct an initial investigation.
- Complete the Oklahoma Inter-Agency Fish Kill Report.
- Submit the Fish Kill Report to DEQ by email to ECLSCOMPOFF@deq.ok.gov *.

***ECLS staff may complete the EMS fillable form once back in the office. All other forms will be uploaded into EMS and associated with the appropriate EMS record.**

Figure 1. General communication flow

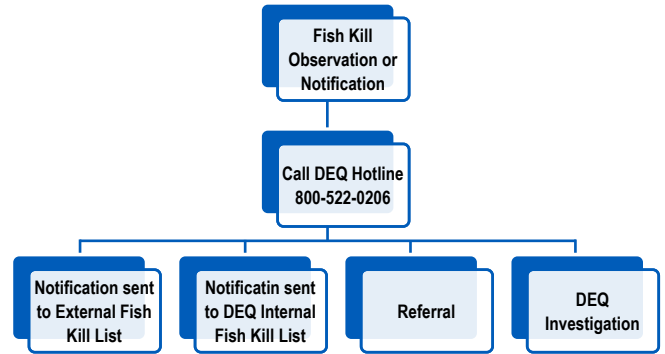


Figure 2. First responder communication flow

