



CENTER FOR COALFIELD JUSTICE

PO Box 4023 • 31 East Chestnut Street • Washington, PA 15301 • 724.229.3550

www.coalfieldjustice.com • info@coalfieldjustice.org

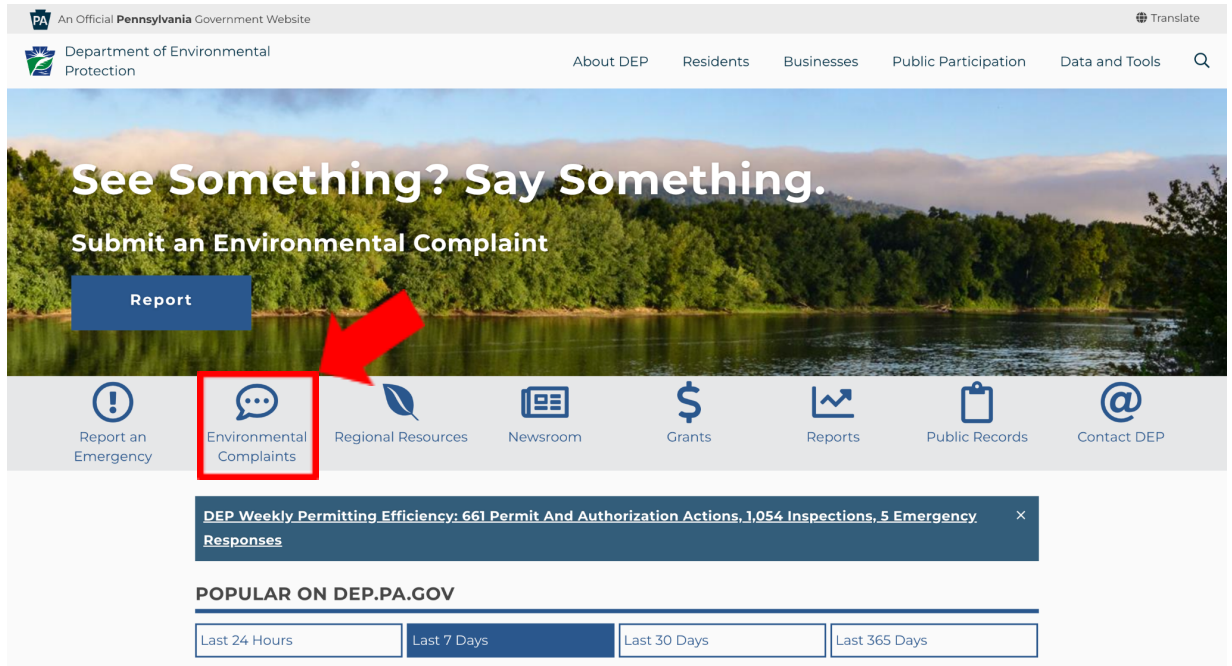
HOW TO: Report an Environmental Emergency/File an Environmental Complaint with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection ("DEP")

DISCLOSER: This guide is not, and is not a substitute for, legal advice nor a solicitation to provide legal advice. In some instances, a community member may want to contact their attorney for further counsel.

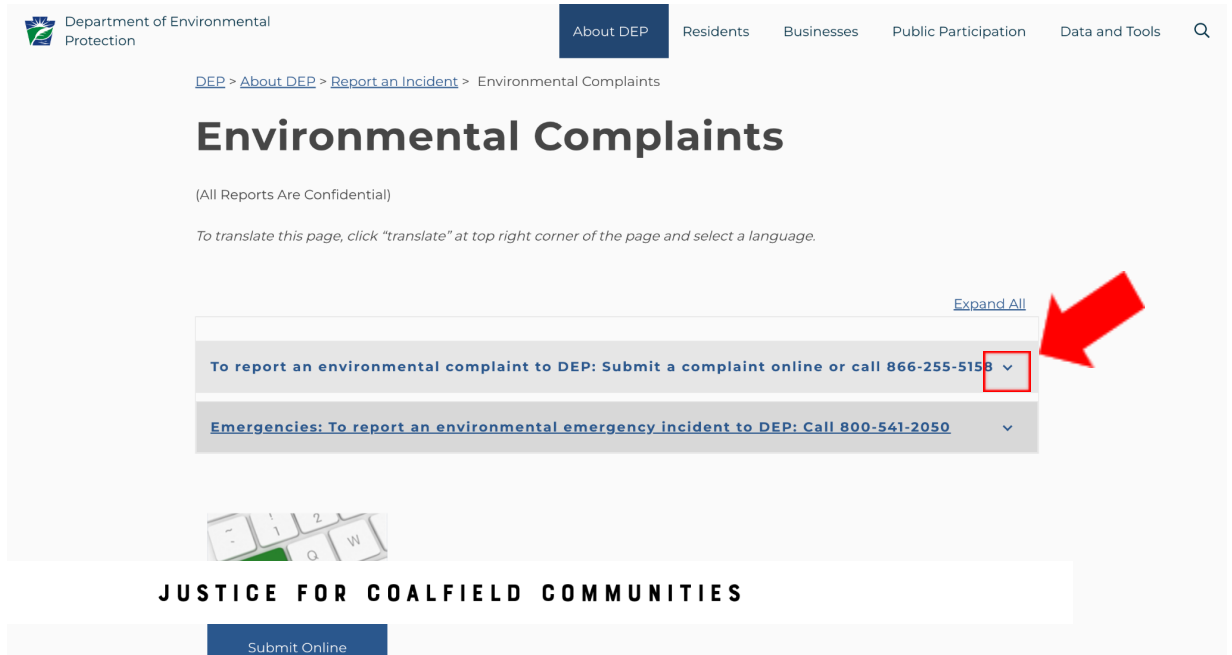
1. If you experienced or witnessed an **environmental emergency**, call the Southwest Regional Office at 412-442-4000. Someone should be available to take your call 24 hours a day.
 - a. "An **environmental emergency** is a situation requiring an immediate response. This may include discoloration of a waterway, a fish kill, spilled material, or other situation threatening public health and safety or the environment in some way that must be addressed in real time."
 - b. Describe to the service representative what the emergency is and where it is located.
 - i. It might help to think about the five senses when providing a description. Ex. What do you see, hear, or smell?
 - c. Request a complaint number from the service representative to have for reference.
 - d. DEP will usually dispatch a highly trained, experienced emergency first responder who is a member of the Environmental Emergency Response Team.

2. If you are reporting an **environmental complaint**, you can call or file a complaint online:
 - a. Call **866-255-5158**, then **press 5** to speak with a service representative from the Southwest Regional Office.
 - i. A service representative should answer your call, but you can also file a complaint via voicemail if the agent is unable to answer at that time.
 1. Speaking with a service agent
 - a. The agent will gather your contact information and information on the specifics of your complaint.
If you would like to remain anonymous, you can. Know that DEP will not be able to follow up with you regarding the complaint if you remain anonymous.
 2. Leaving a voicemail:
 - a. provide your name, phone number and/or email address to reach you.
 - i. You do not have to provide this information if you would like to stay anonymous, but know that DEP will not be able to follow up. However, all complaints are kept confidential.

- b. Identify the location of the problem as best you can: such as the city, county, township, name of road or stream or river, etc. If you are unsure of the location, you may be able to identify it using a mobile app, such as Google or Apple Maps.
 - c. Describe the problem in a detailed but brief fashion - remember you only have three minutes when leaving a voicemail.
 - i. It might help to think about the five senses when providing a description. Ex. What do you see, hear, or smell?
- b. File a complaint online
- i. Navigate to the Department of Environmental Protection Website.
 1. Dep.pa.gov
 2. Click on “Environmental Complaints”



3. Click on the drop-down arrow to expand the “To report an environmental complaint . . .” text box



4. Click on “Submit a complaint online”

Department of Environmental Protection

About DEP Residents Businesses Public Participation Data and Tools

To translate this page, click “translate” at top right corner of the page and select a language.

[Expand All](#)

To report an environmental complaint to DEP: [Submit a complaint online](#) or call 866-255-5158

Anyone can report an environmental complaint. All reports are confidential. DEP responds promptly and professionally to any complaint.

Online complaints are reviewed during business hours. Monday through Friday, 8:00 am – 4:00 pm.

[Submit a complaint online](#)

What happens when you submit the online complaint form:

1. The form asks for your name and a phone number and/or email address to reach you. The electronic form requires an email address, but to make an anonymous complaint, sign up for a free e-mail account. This will enable you to remain anonymous while still providing DEP with the ability to contact you.
2. It asks you to identify the location of the problem as best you can: such as the city, county, township, name of road or stream or river, etc. If you are unsure of the location you may be able to identify your location using a mobile device mapping application, such as Google or Apple Maps. It also asks for a description of the problem; please provide detailed information where possible.
3. You will get an email confirming that your complaint was received. When the investigation is completed, you will receive a follow-up email or phone call.

What happens when you call?

5. Put in your contact information

- a. NOTE: A complaint submitted to the DEP may be submitted anonymously, so you do not have to provide this information.
- b. However, an email address is required to submit a complaint electronically. If you wish to remain anonymous, you may use complaints@centerforcoalfieldjustice.org to submit your complaint.



Environmental Complaint Form

To better assist DEP in the investigation of your complaint, please provide your name and contact information should further information be necessary. Please note, your information is considered confidential and will not be shared with any party outside DEP Note: Fields marked with an asterisk * are required

Your Information

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|--|
| Name Jane Doe | State PA | Home Telephone |
| Street Address 123 A Street | | Work Telephone |
| City Washington | | Cell phone (000)000-0000 |
| Zip 15301 | | E-mail Address * example@example.com |

Contact me via email * Yes No

Complaint Information

* Please use the drop-down menu to select a County from the list *

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| County of problem * | Location of problem - Township/Borough/City * |
| | |

6. Provide the complaint information

- a. Use the dropdown menu to select the county where the complaint occurred

Contact me via email * Yes No

Complaint Information

* Please use the drop-down menu to select a County from the list *

County of problem * Location of problem - Township/Borough/City *

Do you know who is responsible? *

Yes No

Responsible Party

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Name <input type="text"/> | Phone <input type="text"/> |
| Address <input type="text"/> | State <input type="text"/> |
| City <input type="text"/> | Zip <input type="text"/> |



- b. Use the next dropdown menu to select the municipality where the complaint occurred

Contact me via email * Yes No

Complaint Information

* Please use the drop-down menu to select a County from the list *

County of problem * Location of problem - Township/Borough/City *

Do you know who is responsible? *

Yes No

Responsible Party

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Name <input type="text"/> | Phone <input type="text"/> |
| Address <input type="text"/> | State <input type="text"/> |
| City <input type="text"/> | Zip <input type="text"/> |



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c. If you know the responsible party, select yes and provide as much information as you can

Contact me via email * Yes No

Complaint Information

* Please use the drop-down menu to select a County from the list *

County of problem * Location of problem - Township/Borough/City *

Do you know who is responsible? *
 Yes No

Responsible Party

| | |
|---|--|
| Name <input type="text" value="ABC Production Company"/> | Phone <input type="text" value="(000) 000-0000"/> |
| Address <input type="text"/> | State <input type="text" value="PA"/> |
| City <input type="text" value="Washington"/> | Zip <input type="text" value="15301"/> |

Problem Description - Please be as specific as possible and include stream names, road names and other information that you think would be helpful

Problem Description

Try to Fill Out As Much As You Can

d. If you do not know the responsible party, select no

Contact me via email * Yes No

Complaint Information

* Please use the drop-down menu to select a County from the list *

County of problem * Location of problem - Township/Borough/City *

Do you know who is responsible? *
 Yes No

Responsible Party

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Name <input type="text"/> | Phone <input type="text" value="(000) 000-0000"/> |
| Address <input type="text"/> | State <input type="text"/> |
| City <input type="text"/> | Zip <input type="text" value="-----"/> |

Problem Description - Please be as specific as possible and include stream names, road names and other information that you think would be helpful

Problem Description

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7. Provide the problem description

- a. In the “Problem Description” box, describe the complaint. Where its located, what it is, etc.
 - i. It might help to think about the five senses when providing a description. Ex. What do you see, hear, or smell?

Responsible Party

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Name ABC Production Company | Phone (000) 000-0000 |
| Address | State PA |
| City Washington | Zip 15301 |

Problem Description - Please be as specific as possible and include stream names, road names and other information that you think would be helpful

Problem Description

saw . . .
heard . . .
smelled . . .

Directions

Directions.....

TIP!
If you click the little triangle in the corner of these boxes, you can expand them to see more of your text.

Submit

- b. In the “Directions” box, describe how to get to the location where the complaint occurred.
 - i. It may be helpful to use Google Maps or Apple Maps to get directions from the DEP Southwest Regional Office’s Address to the location of the complaint.
 1. The Southwest Regional Office’s address is: 400 Waterfront Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Problem Description - Please be as specific as possible and include stream names, road names and other information that you think would be helpful

Problem Description

I saw . . .
I heard . . .
I smelled . . .

Directions

How to get to the location where the complaint occurred . . .

Submit

8. Submit the complaint


Problem Description - Please be as specific as possible and include stream names, road names and other information that you think would be helpful

Problem Description

I saw . . .
I heard . . .
I smelled . . .

Directions

How to get to the location where the complaint occurred . . .



9. Receive email confirmation

- a. Check the email you provided in the contact information portion of the complaint, you should receive a confirmation message that your complaint has been filed.
- b. If you used the complaints@centerforcoalfieldjustice.org email address to remain anonymous, please give the Center for Coalfield Justice a call at 724-229-3550 so we can forward your email confirmation to you.

10. Appeal of Final Determination

- a. After your complaint is submitted, DEP will conduct an investigation.
- b. When the investigation is complete, DEP will issue a Final Determination.
 - i. NOTE: Not all Final Determinations are shared with the person who made the initial complaint; however, you may request it from DEP.
 - ii. If the incident occurred on your property, DEP will share the Final Determination with you
- c. **If you do not agree with the results of the Final Determination, YOU HAVE 30 DAYS FROM THE DATE ON THE DETERMINATION TO APPEAL to the PA Environmental Hearing Board.**