




ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

What to do when you suspect Nova Scotia's environmental laws have been broken

You can make an “environmental complaint”

Nova Scotia has a policy for responding to environmental complaints under the *Environment Act*. A well-managed system for handling complaints will help protect our people, land, and water. It will also help Nova Scotians understand how their complaint has been considered and addressed.



HOW TO MAKE AN ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLAINT

WHAT TO DO

1 Contact the office nearest you

Any member of the public can make an environmental complaint if they believe that an activity violates Nova Scotia's Environment Act and regulations.

You can call, e-mail, mail, or visit in person. See the information you need to provide and office list on the following page.

WHAT TO EXPECT

2 We review your complaint

Staff review the complaint to determine if it can be addressed within the department's mandate under the *Environment Act*.

3 We advise you within 2 business days whether we can follow-up

If your complaint is within our mandate and you can provide a date, time, and precise location, then we can accept it for processing. If your complaint is not within our mandate and/or you are not able to provide enough details for the department to act, it will not be accepted.

If your complaint is within the mandate of another department or government agency, we will do our best to direct you to the right contact.

In all these situations, we will let you know within two business days what we can do.

4 We decide on how to respond

If your complaint is within the department's mandate, we determine the level of response needed, based on the type and level of risk to the environment and public health. We also consider when the activity occurred. These factors determine if an inspection is needed immediately or if an inspection can be scheduled for a later date.

We may also determine that an inspection is not warranted, and instead send a letter from the department bringing the reported activity to the attention of the property owner and outline the property owner's responsibilities.

5 We can provide an update within 25 business days

If you have requested a follow-up, we will contact you within 25 business days from the date you made your complaint. An officer will let you know how your complaint was addressed. For example, staff may determine that a violation is suspected, and the matter is under further review. Or they may determine that there was no adverse effect and/or violation of the environmental laws.

If you need to better understand the reason for the decision, you may ask to speak to the manager of the office where you made your original complaint.

Here's the information you need to provide

WHAT

- Nature of the activity

WHEN

- Date and time when you observed the activity

WHERE

- Precise location of the activity and directions to get there. Include a civic address or PID (property identification number), if available.

WHO

- Name of each person alleged to be involved in the activity being complained about, if possible.
- Your name and contact information, if possible. We can accept anonymous complaints, but we can do more if we can contact you. We may need to ask you for more information. We can also let you know what we are able to do about your complaint.

Nova Scotia Environment and Climate Change Office Locations and Contact Information

CENTRAL REGION

HRM, East Hants

30 Damascus Road, Suite 115
Bedford NS B4A 0C1
Phone: 902-424-7773

Colchester

36 Inglis Place
Truro NS B2N 4B4
Phone: 902-893-5880

Cumberland

71 East Victoria Street
Amherst NS B4H 1X7
Phone: 902-667-6205

EASTERN REGION

Sydney

1030 Upper Prince Street, Suite 2
Sydney, NS B1P 5P6
Phone: 902-563-2100

Port Hawkesbury

218 MacSween, Suite 12 -
Provincial Building,
Port Hawkesbury, NS B9A 2J8
Phone: 902-625-0791

Antigonish

155 Main Street, Suite 205
Antigonish NS B2G 2B6
Phone: 902-863-7389

Pictou

20 Pumphouse Road
Granton, NS B2H 5C6
Phone: 902-396-4194

WESTERN REGION

Kings County, Annapolis County & West Hants

136 Exhibition Street
Kentville, NS B4N 4E5
Phone: 902-679-6086

Lunenburg & Queens Counties

81 Logan Road
Bridgewater, NS B4V 3T3
Phone: 902-543-4685

Digby, Yarmouth & Shelburne Counties

55 Starrs Road, Unit 9
Yarmouth, NS B5A 2T2
Phone: 902-742-8985

Environmental Emergency?

If you see something that could be a serious threat to the environment such as an oil spill, or the release of other toxic substances into the environment, including silt into watercourses or wetlands, contact the nearest office as soon as possible.

If the emergency is after-hours, call the toll-free phone line: **1-800-565-1633**

The information provided outlines what to do for environment complaints that are not emergencies.

ANY QUESTIONS?

Visit novascotia.ca/nse/contact
or call 1-800-936-8476
(1-800-9ENVIRO)