



# FACT SHEET: Ohio Department of Agriculture

## LIVESTOCK ENVIRONMENTAL PERMITTING PROGRAM



**Governor** Bob Taft  
**Lieutenant Governor** Maureen O'Connor  
**Director** Fred L. Dailey

**Livestock Environmental Permitting Program**  
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ODA home page: [www.state.oh.us/agr/](http://www.state.oh.us/agr/) • e-mail: [agri@odant.agri.state.oh.us](mailto:agri@odant.agri.state.oh.us)

## How do I make a complaint?

### Who should I call?

If the farm has more than 1,000 animal units, the regulating agency is the Ohio Department of Agriculture. If the farm has less than 1,000 animal units, the regulating agency is the local Soil and Water Conservation District office. If there is a fish kill or foreign material in the stream, contact ODNR's Division of Wildlife office. Contact information is listed below.

- Ohio Department of Agriculture's Livestock Environmental Permitting Program, 8995 East Main Street, Reynoldsburg, Ohio 43068. Main telephone number: 614-387-0470; toll-free 1-800-282-1955; Fax number: 614-728-6335; [lepp@odant.agri.state.oh.us](mailto:lepp@odant.agri.state.oh.us)
- ODNR's Division of Soil and Water Conservation, 4383 Fountain Sq Dr., Building B-3, Columbus, OH 43224. Telephone: 614-265-6610; Fax number 614-262-2064; e-mail: [dswc@dnr.state.oh.us](mailto:dswc@dnr.state.oh.us)
- A complete list of county soil and water conservation district offices with contact information can be found at [www.dnr.state.oh.us/soilandwater](http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/soilandwater).
- ODNR Division of Wildlife Headquarters, 1840 Belcher Dr., Columbus, Ohio 43224-1329. Main telephone number: 614-265-6300 or 1-800-WILDLIFE.

### How can I make a complaint against a large-scale farm?

If you have a complaint against a livestock facility regulated by the Ohio Department of Agriculture, you can make that complaint in writing or orally (by telephone). However, written and oral complaints may be handled differently.

If you make a complaint in **writing**, it must contain the following information:

- Your name and signature
- The date
- The address of the facility
- The nature of the complaint

The agency must do a follow-up investigation of a written complaint to determine if the operation is in compliance with their permit or review compliance certificate. If the person making the complaint wishes to discover the outcome of the follow-up investigation, he or she should also include their address.

If you make a complaint **orally**, it should include:

- The address of the facility
- The nature of the complaint

Oral complaints can receive a follow-up investigation, but the director is not required to act on these complaints. The name and address of a person making an oral complaint is

optional, but if the agency does not have that information, the person making the complaint may not be notified of any follow-up actions.

**What happens next?**

If the complaint sparks an investigation, the director will determine if the owner or operator is in compliance with their permit or review compliance certificate. If they are in compliance, the director will dismiss the complaint and notify all parties. If there is a private civil action for nuisances involved in this complaint, the positive investigation may be considered an “affirmative defense” that the person owning, operating, or responsible for the facility is not violating federal, state, and local laws governing nuisances.

If the investigation determines the owner or operator is not in compliance with its permit or review compliance certificate, they move into “enforcement procedures” designed to bring the farm back in “compliance” with state and/or federal regulations. Sometimes, operators will do this quickly with no harm to the public or environment, resulting in a better operation. Other times, the agency must force the operators to comply with the law, which may include penalties.