



MANAGING COMPLAINTS AT THE EPA

Operations, whether authorized or unauthorized will at some time release unwanted materials into the environment. It is the duty of the EPA to take a number of steps to control pollution, including *conducting investigations and inspections to ensure compliance* with the Environmental Protection Act and regulations, and *providing information and education to the public* regarding the needs for and methods of protection of the environment. The Complaints Unit and to a lesser extent the Communications Department at the EPA oversees the process of complaints management by ensuring that the functions listed above are executed.

Nature of complaints

The nature of complaints received by the EPA encompasses every sector and scale from manufacturing to mining. The majority of complaints received are related to noise, air (fumes, odour) and solid waste management, and occur mostly on Guyana's coast in Regions 2, 3, 4, and 6. These instances of pollution usually stem from small operations such as furniture manufacturing, mechanic and auto-body shops, animal rearing, and dumping of household waste within residential areas.

In addition to investigating complaints the more than 2000 inherited complaints, the EPA has commenced a series of capacity building workshops for Neighbourhood Democratic Councils, which also have a mandate to manage complaints under their regulations. The intention of these capacity building sessions is to equip the NDCs with the requisite knowledge and guiding best practices to respond to environmental complaints efficiently. The Agency has also taken steps to forge new and existing relationships with the Ministry of Home Affairs and Mayor and City Council to tackle issues such as noise nuisances, and waste management and littering in the capital city.

144 - Total received since September 2021

53 - Investigated

45 - Referred

6 - Closed

3 - Transferred

37 - Not investigated

Standard Operating Procedure for complaints management

The flowchart depicts the process of the Agency receiving a complaint which is screened and investigated followed by enforcement actions.



Enforcement actions

The EPA makes every effort to work with operators to ensure that their business causes little to no environmental damage; there are some instances however where hard enforcement becomes a necessity. The various types of enforcement actions which the EP Act suggests may include:

- ***Warning Letter***
- ***Compliance Schedules***
- ***Enforcement Notice***
- ***Prohibition Notice***
- ***Cease Order***
- ***Prosecution***

Remember your first line of action should be to make contact with your local government authority (Regional Democratic Council/Neighbourhood Democratic Council) on the matter. **Please be assured the Agency will treat all information received from the public with strictest confidence.** Complainants, however, should be willing to attend court and testify should the matter require legal action.

How to make a complaint to the EPA?

Members of the public can report environmental complaints utilizing any of the following methods:

- Complaints 24-hour hotline number: 592-225-5469; or
- E-mail: complaint@epaguyana.org.

Please note, complaint reports MUST include:

- i. Nature of the complaint;
- ii. Name and address of business/entity/person causing the pollution;
- iii. Name of the complainant (person making the complaint); and
- iv. Contact information and address of complainant.

You can also message us on Facebook or Instagram.

Complaints can also be made to our regional offices in Whim, Berbice - 337-2201, and McKenzie, Linden - 444-2313.

You can share your ideas and questions by sending letters to: “Our Earth, Our Environment”, C/O Communications, Environmental Protection Agency, Ganges Street, Sophia, GEORGETOWN, or email us at: eit.epaguyana@gmail.com. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram and subscribe to our YouTube channel.