

## Becoming Involved in Ohio EPA's Solid Waste Permitting Process

### Why should I get involved?

Public participation is a high priority at Ohio EPA and many efforts are made to involve citizens in the decision-making process. These efforts give interested citizens the opportunity to learn about Ohio EPA's permitting process, to gain an understanding of the permit application and the technical requirements that must be met, and to voice their concerns.

Ohio EPA encourages citizens, whether supporting or opposing the proposal, to get involved. Not only do citizens benefit by becoming involved, but so does Ohio EPA. In many instances, citizens have played a very important role by providing valuable information used in the decision-making process.

### When should I get involved?

Ohio EPA encourages public involvement throughout the permitting process.

Ohio EPA holds information sessions to present pertinent information about the permit application and answer questions from the audience.

The presentations include an explanation of the permitting process, the design and siting criteria and an overview of the permit application. Information sessions are an effective method to prepare citizens to comment on relevant issues at the public hearing.

A public hearing is the public's opportunity to comment for the administrative record. This record is included in the information the Ohio EPA director considers in deciding to issue or deny a permit.

A court reporter will be present to take a stenographic record of the proceedings. Citizens who choose not to offer oral testimony are encouraged to submit their comments in writing.

All relevant oral and written comments will be addressed in a response to comments summary prepared by the division. The director of Ohio EPA will review the response to comments summary before deciding to issue or deny a permit.

The response to comments, along with the director's decision, is made available online or in hard copy.

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### How can I educate myself?

The Agency realizes most citizens are not engineers or scientists. Ohio EPA will provide information about the permit review process and the technical criteria used in making a decision.

Staff members from Ohio EPA's Division of Solid and Infectious Waste Management and the Public Interest Center are available to assist you. Please call throughout the review process if you have questions or would like additional information.

### Will my comments matter?

Yes. If your comments are relevant to Ohio EPA's technical review of the permit application, then your comments can make a difference. Therefore, it is important for you to learn about the technical criteria on which Ohio EPA bases its final decision.

Ohio EPA actions are dictated by the laws of the state. Your participation in the decision-making process will be most effective if you know what the Agency can and cannot consider.

### Does Ohio EPA select proposed facility locations?

Ohio EPA does not have the authority to dictate the location of a solid waste facility. The choice and purchase of a solid waste facility site is a private property transaction. Ohio EPA's role is to review the proposed site to determine if it meets the technical requirements for siting and design, and determine whether a solid waste facility can be safely constructed and operated on the site chosen by the developer.

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## What can Ohio EPA consider or require?

The Agency reviews each solid waste permit-to-install (PTI) application based on its technical merit, according to Agency rules and state law. The Agency's concerns in reviewing a PTI are to ensure the protection of human health and the environment.

Current requirements establish standards for siting, design, construction, operations, closure and post-closure care, financial assurance and monitoring.

For all new solid waste facilities, the Ohio Attorney General's Office conducts a background check to verify the permit applicant's reliability, expertise and competence to operate the solid waste facility. It also prohibits individuals convicted of certain crimes from being involved with solid waste facilities.

## What can Ohio EPA not consider?

Ohio EPA's regulatory authority is limited to the specific pollution control laws and regulations administered by the Agency. Under current state law, Ohio EPA does not have the authority to consider:

- zoning issues;
- potential increase in road usage;
- possible effects on property value;
- how popular or unpopular the facility may be; and
- if the waste comes from within or outside Ohio.

## How can I stay informed?

The Agency will do its best to keep you and your local media updated on future developments. The media will be notified when a public comment period or meeting is scheduled or a permit decision made. For public meetings, a public notice will be published in newspapers of general circulation in the county. Ohio EPA also updates interested citizens and citizens' groups. Please contact the Public Interest Center if you would like to be included on a mailing list for a particular site.

## Who can I contact for assistance?



The Public Interest Center's objective is to provide information to citizens, the media and permit applicants. For a list of contacts in your area, go to [www.epa.ohio.gov/pic/contacts.aspx](http://www.epa.ohio.gov/pic/contacts.aspx). For more information about the solid waste permitting process, go to [www.epa.ohio.gov/dsiwm/](http://www.epa.ohio.gov/dsiwm/) or contact the solid waste division listed below.

Southwest District  
Dayton, Ohio  
[www.epa.ohio.gov/swdo/](http://www.epa.ohio.gov/swdo/)  
(937) 285-6357

Northeast District  
Twinsburg, Ohio  
[www.epa.ohio.gov/nedo/](http://www.epa.ohio.gov/nedo/)  
(330) 963-1200

Southeast District  
Logan, Ohio  
[www.epa.ohio.gov/sedo/](http://www.epa.ohio.gov/sedo/)  
(740) 385-8501

Central District  
Columbus, Ohio  
[www.epa.ohio.gov/cdo/](http://www.epa.ohio.gov/cdo/)  
(614) 728-3778

Northwest District  
Bowling Green, Ohio  
[www.epa.ohio.gov/nwdo/](http://www.epa.ohio.gov/nwdo/)  
(419) 352-8461