



# Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act

## FACTS AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

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This fact sheet provides a summary of the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*. The official Statutes and Regulations must be consulted for all purposes of interpreting and applying the law.

For a copy of the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*, visit the Queen's Printer at [www.qp.gov.ab.ca](http://www.qp.gov.ab.ca) or call 310-0000 (toll-free across Alberta)

The *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*, proclaimed in 1993, supports and promotes the protection, enhancement and wise use of Alberta's environment.

The *Act* is built on several key principles, including:

- Recognition of the role a high quality environment plays in the integrity of ecosystems, human health and the well-being of society
- Environmental responsibility that ensures economic growth today does not harm the environment for future generations
- Shared responsibility for all Albertans to ensure the protection and wise use of the environment through individual actions
- Government leadership in research, technology and standard development
- Polluter responsibility for their actions

### STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

The *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act* allows Alberta Environment to develop regulations, standards, guidelines and ambient objectives to protect Alberta's air, land and water.

### INVOLVING ALBERTANS

A cornerstone of the *Act* is public involvement in decisions affecting the environment.

Public involvement ranges from participation in environmental assessment and approval processes to the right to appeal certain Alberta Environment decisions to the Environmental Appeals Board.

### REVIEWS, APPROVALS AND REGISTRATIONS

Alberta's environmental assessment process ensures environmental protection is considered in the early stages of planning. This process helps predict potential environmental consequences of an activity and minimize any adverse impacts before they occur.

Alberta Environment regulates a wide range of activities under the *Act* through conditions set out in Regulations, approvals and codes of practice.

Conditions detail specific construction, operating and reclamation requirements that activities must meet, such as emission limits, and the type of monitoring and reporting required.

### REPORTING RELEASES

Anyone who releases a substance into the environment that could cause environmental harm is required to immediately report the release to Alberta Environment by phoning 1-800-222-6514 or by visiting an Alberta Environment office.

Immediate reporting allows Alberta Environment, and local first response teams, to respond quickly and provide advice on clean up and containment.

### COMPLIANCE

Alberta Environment uses a balance of education, prevention and enforcement to ensure compliance with the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*.

Regular inspections and monitoring ensure activities comply with environmental standards and conditions set out in Regulations, approvals and codes of practice during and after operation.

Every suspected violation that comes to the attention of Alberta Environment is assessed and responded to in an appropriate and timely manner.

Various education, prevention and enforcement tools are available under the *Act*, including administrative penalties, enforcement orders, environmental protection orders and prosecutions.

### ENVIRONMENTAL APPEALS BOARD

The Environmental Appeals Board (EAB) is an independent tribunal established to hear appeals of certain Alberta Environment decisions made under the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*. For more information on the EAB, visit [www.gov.ab.ca/eab](http://www.gov.ab.ca/eab).