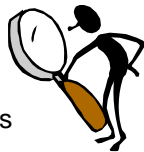


More tips...

- **GA EPD** is different from **US EPA**. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) is a **federal agency**. It develops and enforces regulations that carry out environmental laws enacted by Congress.
 - US EPA gives GA EPD the guidelines.
 - GA EPD takes the US EPA guidelines and, by working with stakeholders, creates state rules; these rules are then applied on a state level.
 - GA EPD can also work with local communities to identify potential local control measures.
- **GA EPD's authority is limited by law.** Many issues, such as vehicle traffic, noise and site suitability are local ordinance issues and are not under EPD's authority.
- **EPD encourages you to learn more about the rule-making and permitting process.** Keep updated on air quality issues by visiting the Air Protection Branch's website at:
<http://www.georgiaair.org>



We are here to serve.

By working together, through regulations and voluntary measures, we can improve the air quality in Georgia, making it healthier for everyone to breathe.

Citizens, environmental groups, business, industry and government all have a role to play.

After all, we all breathe the same air.

Understanding and Working with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD)

The Permitting Process



Georgia Environmental Protection Division
Air Protection Branch
4244 International Parkway
Suite 120
Atlanta, GA 30354
Phone: 404-363-7000
www.georgiaair.org

GA EPD Air Protection Branch

EPD's Mission

"We help provide Georgia's citizens with clean air, clean water, healthy lives and productive land by assuring compliance with environmental laws and by assisting others to do their part for a better environment."



What is Georgia EPD?

gaepd.org/

EPD is a Division within the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (www.gadnr.org). Other Divisions and Programs include:

- Coastal Resources Division
- Historic Preservation Division
- Sustainability Program
- State Parks and Historic Sites Division
- Wildlife Resources Division

EPD protects Georgia's air, land and water resources using rules passed through the authority of state and federal environmental legislation. These laws and rules regulate public and private facilities in the areas of air quality, water quality, hazardous waste, water supply, solid waste, surface mining, underground storage tanks, and others.

EPD is divided into three branches, each responsible for specific environmental issues:

- Air Protection Branch - 404-363-7000
- Land Protection Branch - 404-362-2537
- Watershed Protection Branch - 404-675-6232

The Air Protection Branch (APB)

www.georgiaair.org

The APB protects Georgia's air quality by regulating emissions from mobile, area and stationary sources through permits and control measures. The Branch also monitors levels of air pollutants using a network of air samplers located throughout the state.

The APB has a Public Affairs Unit and 6 Programs:

- Ambient Monitoring
- Stationary Source Permitting
- Stationary Source Compliance
- Industrial Source Monitoring
- Mobile and Area Sources
- Planning and Support

What is an Air Quality Permit?

An air quality permit is a document that lists what an industry must do in order to comply with the state and federal air pollution laws. Air permits may contain emission limitations, work practice standards, record keeping requirements, equipment monitoring requirements, and reporting obligations. The APB Stationary Source Permitting Program issues all air quality permits for sources of air pollution in Georgia.

If a source applies for a new air quality permit or if they apply to amend to expand their current air quality permit, a public process begins:

Public Notification:

EPD issues a weekly **Public Advisory** of all industries that have applied for permits each week. This is distributed via email to interested parties. (You may sign up to receive public a weekly advisory at <http://www.georgiaair.org/airpermit/listservers.htm>.) The information is also found on GAEPD.org.

30-Day Comment Period:

The advisory provides a **30-day comment period** that allows citizens to provide written comments to EPD regarding the permit application.

Public Hearing Request:

A citizen may also request a public hearing within this 30-day period. EPD will decide if a hearing is necessary and warranted.

Public Notice:

If EPD decides that a requested public hearing is warranted, EPD will schedule a public hearing. Details of the upcoming hearing will be published in the county's legal organ approximately 20 - 30 days prior to the hearing date. A press release is sent to the local newspaper and details will also be published on the EPD website.

Comments become part of the permit file:

Official comments, *relative to air quality issues and the permit application* received during the hearing and during the comment period become part of the permit application file and are addressed in the approval or denial of the permit.

EPD may also choose to schedule a "Question and Answer (Q & A) Session" prior to a "Public Hearing" if there are many questions regarding the permit.

"Public Hearing" vs a "Q&A Session"

What is a Public Hearing?

An Air Quality Public Hearing is a formal proceeding designed to incorporate public comments into the air permit application or rule-making review. Because the Public Hearing is a formal process, EPD officials cannot answer questions during the hearing. EPD schedules a Public Hearing as needed or in response to a request during the public comment period. Citizens may sign up to make oral comments during the hearing. Comments may also be submitted in writing. These comments then become a part of the official record.

Because Public Hearings are focused on receiving comments rather than entertaining questions, the APB often hosts an Air Quality "Question and Answer (Q&A) Session" prior to the Public Hearing to encourage dialogue and discussion regarding a particular facility or issue.

What is a "Q&A Session" or "Public Meeting" ?

An Air Quality Question and Answer (Q&A) Session or Public Meeting is designed to help citizens understand the specifics of an air quality permit application or a proposed air quality rule as well as to encourage open dialogue. It is not a required meeting under state or federal law. For permit applications, the APB typically invites the permit applicant to participate in this meeting, but they are not required to do so. This meeting begins with short presentations by an APB representative and the permit applicant's representative, but the majority of the meeting is dedicated to answering citizens' questions and listening to concerns.