



# Enforcement & Compliance Assistance Program

U.S. EPA | ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AT EPA NEW ENGLAND

**EPA NEW ENGLAND'S ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE PROGRAM** works to protect all people, regardless of race, color, national origin or income, from environmental harms and risks, and to involve all citizens in making decisions that affect their environment. The program is designed to achieve environmental and public health improvements for communities disproportionately burdened by the impacts of pollution.



## INTRO:

EPA New England enforces environmental laws and regulations in order to protect human health and the environment. By inspecting facilities, sampling, and monitoring, EPA determines if potential polluters are complying with environmental laws. When EPA discovers violations, it may issue an administrative order with or without civil penalties. The most significant violations may lead to the filing of a complaint in federal court or, in extreme cases, criminal prosecutions which result in imprisonment, fines or both. EPA also recognizes the need to help the regulated community. Compliance assistance helps businesses, industry, institutions, and government follow environmental obligations.

## OVERVIEW:

EPA New England's enforcement program targets violations that pose the most serious risks to the environment and public health. The agency focuses on areas where the role of a federal agency is most important. These include cases where the impacts cross state lines; cases involving national environmental priorities (such as coal-fired power plants and sewer overflows); and cases involving public entities. Many of these cases are in communities disproportionately burdened by pollution. Maintaining a strong presence in the field deters violators, which improves environmental compliance and prevents environmental threats. Penalizing violators also levels the playing field, so that companies that comply with the environmental laws are not at a competitive disadvantage.

EPA New England's close working relationships with state environmental agencies helps EPA set its environmental priorities. Coordination between the federal and state governments is critical to achieving an effective enforcement program across the region.

EPA's enforcement program faces complex environmental problems. New England's office has been a national leader in developing creative enforcement approaches. For example, EPA New England has pioneered the use of "integrated strategies" that combine enforcement, compliance assistance, environmental auditing, and other programs to

achieve the greatest possible improvement in environmental performance.

Compliance assistance helps the regulated community (business, industry, government, etc.) understand and meet its environmental obligations. Assistance can also help the regulated community find cost-effective ways to go "beyond compliance" or reduce its regulatory burden by preventing pollution, better managing its environmental systems, or using new environmental technologies.

EPA works with state and local governments, trade associations and non-profit organizations to develop and provide assistance activities and tools. EPA New England offers workshops, on-site visits, and training manuals. Assistance may be specific to a certain regulatory requirement (e.g. stormwater management; limits to diesel idling; compliance with new Renovation, Repair and Painting rule) or program (e.g., Smart Way, Resource Conservation Challenge), or it may address the issues of a particular sector: auto body, healthcare, solid waste, wastewater collection systems.

To report a violation, visit the following websites: [www.epa.gov/compliance/complaints/index.html](http://www.epa.gov/compliance/complaints/index.html) (environmental violations), [www.epa.gov/region1/enforcement/leadpaint/report-violations.html](http://www.epa.gov/region1/enforcement/leadpaint/report-violations.html) (lead paint violations), [www.epa.gov/region1/enforcement/wetlands/wetlandsform.html](http://www.epa.gov/region1/enforcement/wetlands/wetlandsform.html) (wetlands violations), or call 800-424-8802 for oil or chemical spills.

## KEY CONTACTS:

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1-888-EPA 7341

**LEARN MORE AT:**  
[www.epa.gov/region1/enforcement](http://www.epa.gov/region1/enforcement)