



## Fact sheet



Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA Victoria) is the state's independent environmental regulator. Under the powers of the *Environment Protection Act 1970*, EPA is responsible for protecting the environment and the community through effective regulation of industry and pollution. EPA's vision is a healthy environment that supports a liveable and prosperous Victoria. As part of its *5 Year Plan* EPA is committed to reducing disturbances from odour for all Victorians.

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### What is odour pollution?

Poor odour is any smell offensive to the human nose. Most odour sources are man-made. The most common sources are landfill operations, food processing plants, chemical and petrochemical industries or the improper treatment of sewage.

In most cases, odour pollution does not have a long-term health affect, but it can lead to headaches, nausea and vomiting. Odours can also restrict outdoor activities, limit the opening of windows and generally create an unpleasant environment. The greater the frequency, intensity, duration and offensiveness of an odour, the greater the impact on the community.

If you feel unwell from exposure to poor odour please contact a health professional immediately.

### EPA's role in regulating odour pollution

EPA has a key role in protecting the community from odour pollution through:

- the inclusion of licence conditions for companies such as landfills or composting facilities that offensive odours must not be discharged beyond the boundaries of the premises
- responding to odour pollution complaints from the community by investigating the source and cause

of the odour, as well as determining potential harm to human health

- working with other government agencies and local councils to ensure planning decisions for future development take into consideration environmental impacts, including odour impacts, of surrounding industry.

### How EPA responds to reports of odour pollution

EPA relies on help from the community to assist in detecting odour pollution. If you make an odour report, an EPA officer will ask you for information including your name and address, the time, location and strength of the odour, where you believe it is coming from, whether you have smelt it before and what impact it is having on you.

EPA can only take action when an odour has been verified and sourced by one of its Environment Protection Officers with the expertise to assess odours and take statements from reporters.

It is recommended you record any odour pollution immediately either by phoning EPA's Pollution Hotline, or recording the pollution in an EPA odour diary.

Odour diaries are available to assist those affected by odour to keep an ongoing record of the issue. Odour diaries can be used as a tool in compliance and enforcement action.

The more reports EPA gets from Victorians affected by odour in a particular area, the greater chance of confirming the right source and doing something about it.

## REPORTING ODOUR POLLUTION

To report odour pollution call EPA's 24-hour Pollution Hotline on **1300 EPA VIC (1300 372 842)**.

Recording and reporting odour pollution helps EPA to detect problems and enforce the law.

Visit [epa.vic.gov.au](http://epa.vic.gov.au) for more information on odour pollution.

