



Several programs within the Oregon Department of Agriculture receive information about environmental and pesticide impacts and concerns. These programs include:

- Agricultural Water Quality
- Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO)
- Fertilizer
- Pesticides
- Pesticide Analytical and Response Center (PARC)

When questions or concerns arise, it's best to contact us as soon as possible. Many environmental and pesticide concerns are time-sensitive. If ODA staff are unable to gather samples and document conditions immediately, we may miss the opportunity. Providing as much detailed information as you can will help us provide a timely response, will assist us in conducting a thorough assessment, and allows us to coordinate with other appropriate agencies.

You can contact us with a complaint in several ways, including:

- Phone (open M-F): 503-986-4635
- Online: <https://oda.direct/Complaints>
- Email: naturalresource-complaints@oda.state.or.us
- Notifying the Oregon Emergency Response System (OERS); available 24-7
- Calling 211 (for pesticide concerns); available 24-7

Anonymous Complaints

Please understand some programs can accept anonymous complaints, while others cannot. Some programs can take your contact information and take measures to keep it anonymous. Ask about these options when you contact us about your complaint.

Referrals

ODA will evaluate whether the complaint relates to issues that we have authority to respond to. In some cases, we may direct you to another agency or program such as the Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Division (OR-OSHA), Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), or Oregon Health Authority (OHA). In other cases, we may refer you to other resources such as informational materials or the ODA Farm Mediation Program.

Investigations

If ODA has the authority and enough information to follow-up, an investigation will be initiated. We conduct investigations in a manner consistent with Oregon law and with a respect for private property rights.

We will assign a point of contact at ODA to communicate with you regarding your complaint. The point person will provide a timeline of the investigative process and when you can expect a status update from us about the complaint. We also welcome hearing from you if you would like to check on the status of the investigation or have additional questions.



Depending on the program, we may gather a variety of information during our investigation. This can include:

- Samples (e.g. water, soil, plant, manure)
- Photographs
- Application or other records
- Interview notes
- Field measurements

Sampling

When we gather samples, we use a chain of custody process to send samples to a laboratory for analysis. We must tell the lab exactly what to look for when analyzing the samples. Depending on the program, this can include bacteria (for manure-related concerns), specific pesticide active ingredients, and/or nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorus. If the complaint involves other concerns, we may refer those concerns to another agency if they are outside the scope of our authority.

Notification

Once our investigation is complete, we will notify you. You will also be given information on how to request the public record of the investigation. Public records may include the investigation report and any supporting documents that were collected during the course of the investigation.

ODA welcomes feedback on your experience and we continue to look for ways to improve our process and communication. If you are not satisfied with our process or outcome, or if you had a positive experience, we value your comments and would like to hear from you.

Oregon Department of Agriculture
Natural Resource Programs
635 Capitol St NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-4635
<https://oda.direct/Complaints>

Created 9/2020