How do I report odours?

When reporting odour and air pollution incidents, there is some simple information to consider to help EPA Officers investigate.

Key points

- Reports from the community can play an important role in investigating odour and air pollution incidents.
- The EPA needs a certain level of detail from the community to be able to investigate effectively.
- Your information may not always lead to an EPA Officer going out to investigate, but the EPA uses information it receives to plan investigations and allocate resources.
- It is important that community members only collect information if it is safe and lawful to do so.

For your personal safety

- Do not deliberately inhale any odour.
- Your safety is more important than collecting information.

What information helps the EPA?

There is a certain level of information that is required to help the EPA investigate an incident. The better prepared you are before you make the call, the better we can respond to your concerns.

Over the page there is an example log that can be used to record your observations.

The time of the incident is critical in determining the source of the odour, so make sure you note that down.

What

What does the odour smell like? How would you rate it? Refer to the odour log on the next page for odour descriptors and strength ratings.

When

When and for how long has the odour been there? Has this happened before, and have you kept a log? What are the weather conditions?

Where

Where can you smell the odour? Can you identify the source?

How

Has the odour impacted your health or comfort? Is it offensive?

Contacting the EPA

EPA Environment Line
Phone: 131 555
Email: info@epa.nsw.gov.au

More information on reporting pollution can be found on the EPA website (details below).

If you smell something and you know where it is coming from, call the licensed site directly. The manager may be able to take immediate action.
Licence holders are required to have a complaints line.
You should also report to the EPA Environment Line.

NSW Environment Protection Authority
Email: info@epa.nsw.gov.au
Website: www.epa.nsw.gov.au
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March 2020
The EPA disclaimer and copyright information is available on the EPA website.
# Odour log sheet

Only collect information if it is safe to do so. Do not deliberately inhale any odour. Your safety is more important than collecting information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location of observations (e.g. work or home address)</th>
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<tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time odour first noticed</th>
<th>Duration of odour event (hours)</th>
<th>Continuity of odour (tick one)</th>
<th>Character of odour (see list below)</th>
<th>Strength of odour (see list below)</th>
<th>Other comments. How did the odour affect you?</th>
<th>Wind direction (optional)</th>
<th>Wind strength (optional)</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Constant</td>
<td>Most of the time (&gt; 50%)</td>
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Please note any other observations or details.

## Odour character descriptors

1. fragrant
2. household gas
3. burnt, smoky
4. herbal, green, cut grass
5. oily, fatty
6. rotten eggs or sulfide
7. sour or body-odour type smell
8. meaty
9. faecal, manure, sewer
10. fishy
11. diesel or car fumes
12. seaweed or mangroves
13. compost
14. musty, earthy or mouldy
15. other (add descriptors)

## Odour strength descriptors

1. very weak
2. weak
3. distinct
4. strong
5. very strong

## Wind strength descriptors

0. smoke rises vertically
1. smoke drift indicates wind direction
2. wind felt on face; leaves rustle
3. leaves, small twigs in motion
4. dust and leaves raised up; branches move
5. small trees begin to sway
6. large branches of trees in motion