

An aerial photograph of a Vermont town, showing a mix of colorful autumn foliage in shades of orange, yellow, and red, interspersed with green trees. The town features several houses with gabled roofs and dormers, some with red siding and others with white or light blue. The background shows a dense forest of trees with vibrant autumn colors. A large, semi-transparent geometric graphic, consisting of overlapping triangles in shades of brown and tan, is overlaid on the right side of the image. The title text is centered within this graphic area.

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESOURCES

# Table of Contents

3	Permitting Process	12	Civil Rights Complaints
7	Air Pollution Permits	14	Rulemaking
8	Environmental Complaints	17	Drinking Water Data & Resources



Prepared by:

**ENVIRONMENTAL  
JUSTICE CLINIC**

Vermont Law School



White River  
Natural  
Resources  
Conservation  
District

[www.environmentaljusticevt.org](http://www.environmentaljusticevt.org)

[www.whiterivernrcd.org](http://www.whiterivernrcd.org)

# PERMITTING PROCESS

## What is a permit?

A permit is written permission from the State of Vermont to construct or operate a facility in your area. The permit sets the environmental rules the facility must follow, including how much pollution is allowed.

- **Permits to Construct** required prior to construction or modification
- **Permits to Operate** deal with all the requirements a facility is subject to, must be renewed every 5 years

## Why is the permitting process important for you?

The permitting process allows people the opportunity to participate in deciding what facilities or infrastructure will be placed and operated in their community, and how a facility or will be operated (noise levels, allowable air and water pollutants, hours of operation)

## How to Participate?

By commenting on draft permits, attending public hearings, or requesting public hearings if one is not provided. All environmental permits are listed on the Environmental Notice Bulletin.



<https://enb.vermont.gov/>

**SCAN  
THIS**

**TO FIND ALL PERMITS  
IN YOUR AREA**



# PERMIT NAVIGATOR - FOR ALL RECORDS

## What you need to know:

- Program (Type): ex. public drinking water system
- Related permit: ex. source permit
- Location of project: select on map

## How to search:

- Search by date
  - populates all permits created on that day
- Search by permit name
  - ex: PNR-#### #####

## Information provided:

- Permit explanation
- Application Fee
- Link to permit handbook & website
- Program contact



[https://permitnavigator.  
my.vermont.gov/s/](https://permitnavigator.my.vermont.gov/s/)



## Public Comment Period

- A company seeking a permit must notify neighbors with connecting property about their permit request
  - This applies to permits for new construction or modification
- If you are not a neighbor with connecting property you will NOT get an automatic notification. You need to subscribe to permit notifications (see next page).
- For most permits there is a 30 day window for a comments after draft is posted. **You must make comments during this window for the state to review and respond to your comment and/or to reserve your right to request a hearing.**

### Resources

- Current Air Pollution Control Permits



<https://dec.vermont.gov/air-quality/permits/issued-permits>

#### Public Training Manual



<https://anrweb.vt.gov/PubDocs/DEC/ENB/SiteDocs/Environmental-Notice-Bulletin-User-Guide.pdf>

- All Public Notifications



<https://dec.vermont.gov/permits/public-notice>

# Sign up for notifications of permits in your area:



To register on the ENB and set up your subscription: please go through the following steps. There are illustrated instructions on Page 12 of [the ENB User Guide](#):

1. Go to [ENB.VERMONT.GOV](http://ENB.VERMONT.GOV)
2. Click **Register** on the upper right-hand side of the home page
3. Enter the required information (name, email address and create password) and click Register
4. You will receive an email confirmation for your email address. Once confirmed you will be able to log-in and set up your subscription.
5. Log into ENB and then click **My Subscription** at the top left-hand side of the home page
6. Click **Modify Alerts** on the My Subscription page
7. Click **Edit** for Alert #1
8. Choose the permits being applied for from the **Activity Types of Interest** list by checking the check boxes.
9. Next, choose the location using **Distance from a Point** and click the map icon to set your location.
10. Enter your own address, including Town in the **Search Address** field and set the distance large enough to capture the project activity (1 mile, 5 miles, etc.)
11. Click **OK** once the radius has been set
12. Click **SAVE** on the next page, then Click **OK** to return the main subscription page.
13. Once you receive an alert for an activity, you can choose to **Follow** the activity from your subscription page.
14. For additional instructions see the **User Guide** on [ENB.VERMONT.GOV](http://ENB.VERMONT.GOV).
15. For help with registration please contact the ENB Administrator: [ANR.ENBAdministrator@vermont.gov](mailto:ANR.ENBAdministrator@vermont.gov).

# AIR POLLUTION PERMITS

## AIR POLLUTION CONTROL PERMIT

### ◆ General Information

- Facilities only need to get state air permits – they are not required to get permits from the federal government (EPA)
- Allowed Air Polluting Permits
  - incinerators
  - boilers
  - stationary diesel engines
  - electric utility power plants
  - bulk gasoline storage
  - industrial processes
    - spray coating operations, dust generating activities, mineral mining

### ◆ Air Permit Data Base

<https://anrweb.vt.gov/DEC/AirFacilities/PublicSearch.aspx>

- Step 1: Know the company you are looking for
- Step 2: Find the company in the pull down menu
- Step 3: Click on the permit link



#### Information that is available:

- Findings of Fact
  - Description of the facility and what they are emitting
- Permit Conditions
  - List of conditions the company has to meet
    - Includes record keeping requirements
- Operating Permit Expiration Dates
  - Located on the front page



# COMPLAINT PROCESS

## What is a complaint?

You have the right to file a complaint if you are concerned with how a facility is operating. A complaint starts an investigation of a permit violation or nuisance (example: odors, noise, water pollution, hours of operation, etc.)

## Why is the complaint process important?

Filing a complaint alerts agencies to help resolve violations. This is a method of communicating your concerns to state agencies, any time of the year.

## ENVIRONMENTAL VIOLATIONS

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## How do you file an environmental violation complaint?

### Online



<https://dec.vermont.gov/content/environmental-violation-report>

### Phone

(802)-828-1254

### Mail



<https://dec.vermont.gov/sites/dec/files/ced/EC-D%20Violation%20Report%20Form.pdf>

## Complaint Investigation Process

- After investigation, the agency or town may file the complaint with the Environmental Court on the individual or community's behalf
  - Contact your town health officers to keep up with the investigation
  - Scan below to find your town health officers and how to reach them



<https://dec.vermont.gov/air-quality/compliance/complaints>

## Civil Complaints

- Once a civil complaint is filed with the Environmental Court and mailed to the respondent (the one whom the complaint is against) the respondent must answer within 15 days of getting the complaint
  - If not, a ruling is made by the judge
- Penalties may include
  - Penalty fees for continued violation
  - Injunctive relief (halts the violator's conduct)
  - Any economic benefit that the respondent obtained from the violation



## What happens after a complaint is filed?

### ENFORCEMENT ACTION

The State may post a draft response or "enforcement action"

### 30 DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Public Notice is the opportunity for people to comment on their opinions about the proposed action or solution for that complaint. After comment period, the comments are evaluated by the environmental enforcement staff. They will propose a Final Action.

### What if I am not satisfied with the resolution?

You have 14 days to ask for a hearing IF:

- you filed a comment during the open comment period
- you are considered an "aggrieved person", meaning the decision directly affects your health and wellbeing



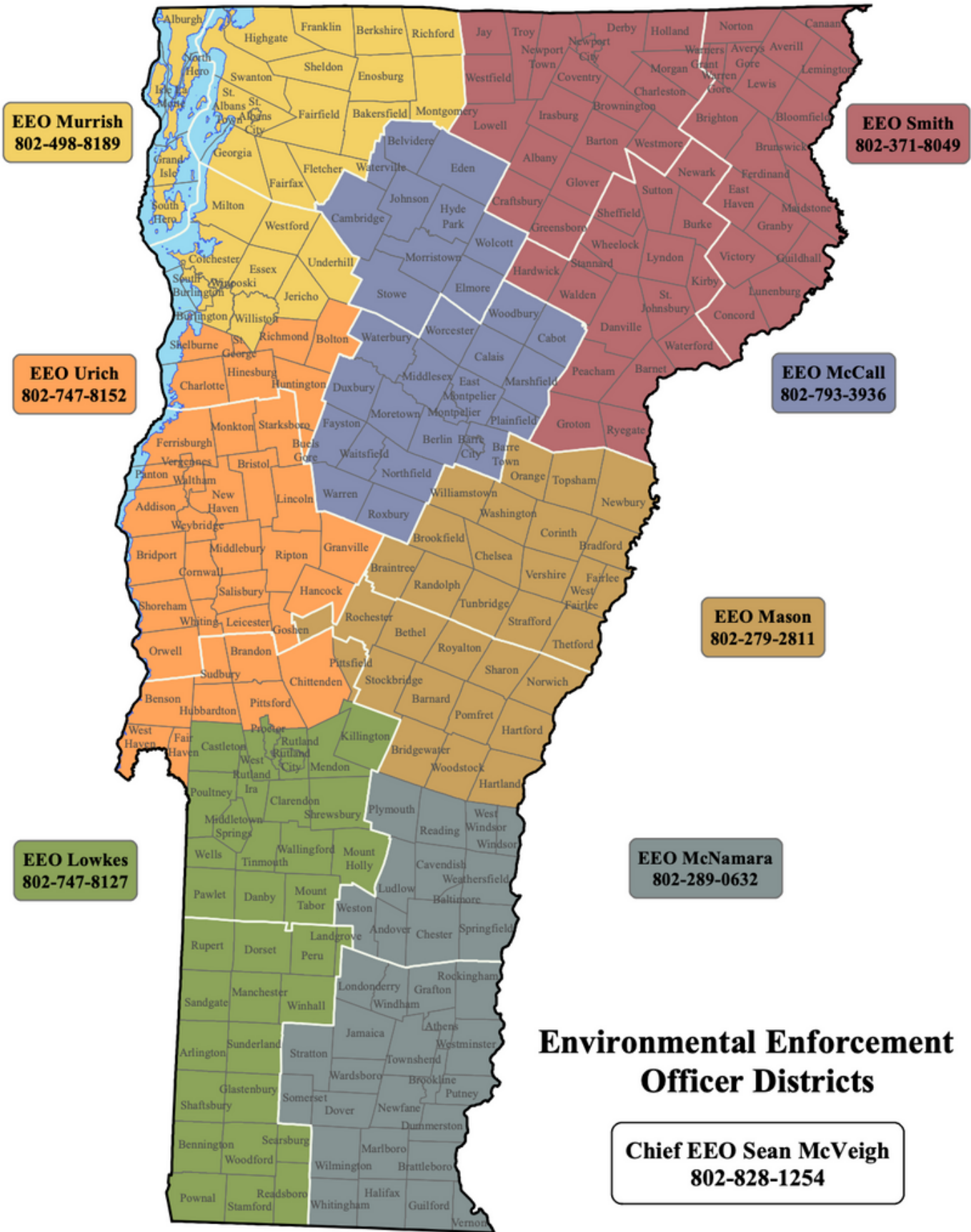
**SCAN  
THIS**

**TO KEEP UP WITH  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
ENFORCEMENT  
PUBLIC COMMENTS**

<https://anrweb.vermont.gov/DEC/DEC/enf.aspx>



# ENVIRONMENTAL VIOLATIONS



## Environmental Enforcement Officer Districts

**Chief EEO Sean McVeigh**  
802-828-1254

## Environmental rights under the Civil Rights Act

Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

## How do you know your rights have been violated?

In the environmental context, a state like VT that receives federal funding cannot implement or enforce permits or distribute resources in a discriminatory matter.

**FOR EXAMPLE** placing factories, highways, or landfills in marginalized communities that already bear an undue burden, or not receiving notification of critical environmental health information in your language.

If you want to learn more about your rights under Title VI, contact one of the following:

VT Legal Aid  
1-800-889-2047

Environmental  
Justice Clinic  
802-831-1364

EPA Hotline  
800-962-6215

Vermont DEC  
802-828-1556



Civil Rights are for every person in the U.S.A., regardless of citizenship.

## Where do you file a Title VI complaint?

Against recipients of US EPA funds:



<https://www.epa.gov/ogc/external-civil-rights-compliance-office-title-vi>

- If you're not sure what agency is the source of federal funding, or you do not know where to send the complaint, send it directly to the Department of Justice:
  - by mail (form and address found here:  
<https://www.justice.gov/crt/about/cor/complaint.php>)
  - or call 1-888-848-5306



## What happens next?

- The agency providing federal funds will investigate
- If recipient found non-compliant, the agency may discontinue federal funding



# RULEMAKING PROCESS

## What is a Rule?

Rules govern Agency actions & programs that impact our everyday lives.

- A Rule is also known as a Regulation
- **For Example**, states like Vermont create rules to address environmental problems or accomplish specific goals such as water and air pollution reduction

## What is Rulemaking?

It is the process of creating and implementing a new rule. An Agency drafts a rule and invites the public to give input on the proposed rule.

## How to get involved?

### **PARTICIPATE IN PUBLIC COMMENT PERIODS!**

After a new rule is proposed, there is a period of time where anyone can voice their opinions and concerns about a rule before it is adopted.

- Generally done in writing, by sending a letter or email to the agency.
- The agency may hold a public hearing, or you can request a hearing to be held in your community.

**Individuals and Communities have a  
RIGHT  
to Participate in the Rule Making  
Process!**

## Why should you participate in the rulemaking process?

Your opinions and concerns matter, and your input can really make a difference for your community

### **IMPORTANT**

If you don't participate in a public comment period, you may not have the right to challenge the agency's rule later

## Where do you find rules open for public comment?

Listed on the Secretary of State's Rules Portal:  
<https://secure.vermont.gov/SOS/rules/index.php>

**SCAN  
THIS**  
TO KEEP UP WITH  
PROPOSED RULES  
IN VERMONT



# COMMENT TEMPLATE

To: Name of the contact for the Agency

From: Your name and email or phone number

Subject: Comment on Rule enter rule ID #

Message:

It is important to personalize your comment so that it is considered separate and distinct from other comments!

## **Intro, Why, More Detail, & Closing**

- **State what you support and disagree with**
- **Suggest specific language when possible**
- **Use specific examples to illustrate concerns**
- **Offer helpful solutions to address a concern**

# LOCAL DRINKING WATER DATA RESOURCES

## Drinking Water System Data

Vermont DEC Drinking  
Water Watch



[https://anrnode.anr.state.vt.us/DWW/Maps/Map\\_Template.jsp](https://anrnode.anr.state.vt.us/DWW/Maps/Map_Template.jsp)

## Town Level Data

Private Drinking Water Data



<https://www.healthvermont.gov/tracking/drinking-water>

## School and Childcare Level Data

Lead in School and Childcare  
Drinking Water Data



<https://leadresults.vermont.gov/>



## **70% of Vermonters ARE ON PUBLIC WATER:**

- Your water is tested regularly by your public community water system
- Your water source is protected by a Source Protection Plan
- Your water provider produces an annual water quality report for all customers
- They will notify you in writing if your water is contaminated above certain levels of:  
**Chlorine, Barium, Fluoride, Iron, Nitrates, Radium, Copper, Lead, PFAS**
- If you are worried about the quality of the pipes in your home, you should test your own water

Questions? Contact

Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division  
Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation

802-828-1535

[www.dec.vermont.gov/water](http://www.dec.vermont.gov/water)

## **30% of Vermonters ARE ON A PRIVATE WELL:**

- You are responsible for testing your drinking water and maintaining your well or spring
- You should test your well or spring for bacteria, inorganic chemicals and gross alpha radiation

Questions? Contact

Private Drinking Water Program

Vermont Department of Health

802-863-7220 or 800-439-8550

[AHS.VDHEnvHealth@vermont.gov](mailto:AHS.VDHEnvHealth@vermont.gov)

**WHAT SHOULD YOU TEST FOR?**



[https://www.healthvermont.gov/public-health-laboratory/  
/drinking-water-testing/what-should-you-test](https://www.healthvermont.gov/public-health-laboratory/drinking-water-testing/what-should-you-test)



# Acknowledgements:

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"The DEC recognizes that we need to improve how we communicate with communities that are often not reached through the ways we usually reach out. For several years, DEC has been working to incorporate environmental justice principles into all our regulatory, funding and outreach programs. To better understand the concerns in communities who may face environmental injustices, DEC contracted with the Center for Whole Communities (CWC), and their partners at Rights and Democracy Institute and the Vermont Law School to create plans to engage with three key communities and complete initial outreach in 2022. DEC's goal is to take strategies and techniques learned through this pilot outreach and use them to transform how we engage, to increase direct dialogue with communities before decisions are made that could impact them, especially communities that are historically underserved and underrepresented. The DEC also wants to engage and support a more diverse workforce, and is working to increase language access."

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For questions, edits, or to request printed copies contact:  
[whiterivernrcd@gmail.com](mailto:whiterivernrcd@gmail.com)