

Department of Environment and Science

The Department of Environment and Science (the department) recognises that the COVID-19 pandemic is a difficult time for our community, industries and our own workforce. We are committed to the health and safety of our community, industry workers and our workforce, as well as sustaining a strong economy and whilst protecting our environment.

At this time, all companies and individuals must comply with the directives of the Chief Health Officer. The department has activated its relevant Business Continuity Plan and will continue to deliver its core services in compliance with those directions.

We recognise that our community including our regulated industries are facing significant challenges in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. The department reminds our regulated industries that the requirement to be appropriately licenced and comply with obligations regarding general environmental duty under the Environmental Protection Act 1994 continue despite the current challenges. However, operators should be assured that the department will consider these difficult circumstances as part of its existing discretion when making enforcement decisions and that it will continue its risk-based regulatory approach focussing on environmental harm and serious non-compliance.

The department is maintaining our lines of contact in order to support you during the COVID-19 response and will also continue to respond to environmental incidents and service incoming applications:

- Notifications of pollution events and compliance issues can continue to be made to the pollutionhotline@des.qld.gov.au during business hours or to the pollution hotline 1300 130 372 (option 2) for significant pollution after-hours.
- Matters relating to the waste levy can continue to be directed to wastelevy@des.qld.gov.au.
- Enquiries relating to licences for environmentally relevant activities including resource activities, contaminated land and compliance assessment can continue to be made to topalm@des.qld.gov.au.
- Clients are encouraged to engage with the department in pre-lodgement discussions before lodging any applications via telephone, email, or other virtual communication tools.

We are committed to working with you to minimise the likely and actual harm on people and the environment that could result from the COVID-19 pandemic and responses to it. Should you be concerned about potential compliance issues arising for you as a result of the COVID-19 response, please raise your concerns via email to pollutionhotline@des.qld.gov.au, or via phone through the pollution hotline on 1300 130 372 and select option #2, leave a message with the operator stating you are calling to report a possible non-compliance as a result of the COVID-19

event. Your details will be passed on to the appropriate business unit and an officer will call you directly to discuss.

The department looks forward to continuing to work with you to support Queensland industries through this challenging period.

Yours Sincerely,

Environmental Services and Regulation
Department of Environment and Science

