



COVID-19 Compliance and Enforcement Guidance

A large number of facilities that DEQ regulates in Virginia perform critical environmental and societal functions. These include wastewater treatment plants, power plants, fuel distribution centers and landfills.

DEQ recognizes that the COVID-19 outbreak is affecting the ability of some regulated entities to comply with DEQ requirements, statutes, regulations and permit conditions. Staff shortages, service interruptions and other disruptions are all having major impacts.

DEQ balances its obligation to protect the environment with the dramatic effects we're seeing on public health facilities, the delivery of goods and services, the economy and quality of life for all Virginians.

It's important that regulated entities do all they can to ensure compliance with environmental requirements and DEQ expects a good faith effort to comply.

DEQ will exercise reasonable enforcement discretion within its authority when deciding whether to pursue potential violations caused by pandemic-related disruptions.

Communication and Documentation

DEQ requires that regulated entities communicate early and often regarding compliance issues that arise due to COVID-19 disruptions.

Additionally, DEQ requires that regulated entities document and explain pandemic-related events that affect their operations or ability to comply with requirements.

Priority

DEQ requires that all regulated entities do everything possible **to maintain the safe and environmentally protective operation of their facilities**. Priorities for operation include:

- Fully operate all installed pollution control equipment and treatment measures to reduce pollution
- Assure proper facility operation or delivery of service
- Monitor, test and report to demonstrate compliance with specific limits in your permit including effluent limits, withdrawal volume, emission limits, and disposal volumes
- Monitor, test and report to demonstrate compliance with all other requirements
- Implement best management practices

More information

For more specific information about DEQ's enforcement and compliance activities, contact DEQ's Director of Central Operations **Jeff Steers** at Jeffery.Steers@DEQ.Virginia.gov or (804) 698-4079.

This information does not serve as authorization of any kind to violate any applicable requirement of law, including statute, regulation, permit condition, or other obligation.