

# Protecting our ENVIRONMENT

## *It's everyone's job*

Protecting the environment is the joint responsibility of the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and all Oklahomans.

The DEQ was created by the Oklahoma Legislature July 1, 1993, after many years of study. It was determined that the best way to protect the environment and public health was to create a stand-alone agency to address air, water and waste issues.

DEQ employees work in the divisions of Air Quality, State Environmental Laboratory Services, Environmental Complaints and Local Services, Land Protection, Water Quality, and Administration. This staff includes environmental specialists, geologists, hydrologists, chemists, engineers, lawyers and support personnel.

The DEQ has local offices across the state with a central office in downtown Oklahoma City.

## Responsibilities

- Enforce state and federal environmental laws, including:
  - Clean Air Act
  - Clean Water Act
  - Oklahoma Solid Waste Management Act
  - Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)
  - Safe Drinking Water Act
  - Superfund Amendments and Title III Reauthorization Act (SARA)
  - Oklahoma Radiation Management Act
- Be responsive to environmental complaints and operate a 24 hour toll-free hotline.
- Write and issue permits for:
  - Air pollution control construction and operation
  - Construction of public drinking water supply systems
  - Hazardous waste facilities
  - Radioactive materials
  - Solid waste landfills
  - Municipal and industrial wastewater treatment plants
  - Stormwater runoff
- Assist municipalities, businesses and citizens with understanding and complying with environmental laws, rules, and best practices.

## Accomplishments

- Established a 24 hour hotline to be responsive to environmental complaints.
- Established a nationally recognized complaints resolution system.
- Developed a program to assist citizens with on-site wastewater and disposal systems (septic systems).
- Developed a program to assist municipalities and industries through the maze of the permit process.
- Developed a tier system to streamline the permitting process to speed up the review time and allow permits to be reviewed according to risk.
- Developed a nationally recognized program to dispose of and reuse old tires.
- Developed a program to clean up historical pollution programs and aggressively working on land restoration.

