

General Warning

The purpose of this fact sheet is to give general introductory information about the complaints process. It does not contain legal advice.

WARNING: Alternative legal action should be considered before making a complaint. What is included in a complaint may be relevant to any current or future legal proceedings. If you are involved in legal action you should immediately see a lawyer and not proceed with a complaint.

If you (or the complainant, if you are complaining on their behalf) want financial compensation, support or money you should see a lawyer before making a complaint.

General complaint information

Complaints are rarely about just one thing. When you have a problem, it may be that a number of things have gone wrong. Below are some of the common areas where issues may arise that could lead to a complaint.

Discrimination	Disability and NDIS services	Policing, Custody and Detention
Seniors and Aged Care supports and services	Consumer and Business disputes	Phone and Internet services
Banking, Insurance and Superannuation	Energy and Water services	Housing and Real Estate
Health Care services	Employment issues	Education and Training providers
Government Agencies and Departments	Child Safety and Protection	State Fines and Debts
Corruption	Privacy and Access to Information	Media and Publications

There are different complaint bodies to handle different types of complaints. You should consider the different pathways available to decide the most appropriate pathway for your circumstances. One event could lead to multiple complaints. That means you may need to lodge more than one complaint to have all of your concerns addressed.

[The online triage tool on this website can help you to identify the different complaint bodies that may be able to assist you.]

It is usually quickest and easiest to try to resolve a complaint directly with the person or body you are having a problem with. Many complaint handling bodies will not act on a complaint unless you have tried to resolve your complaint directly. If you do not feel it is safe or appropriate to complain directly, you should contact the relevant complaint body to discuss your situation.

Complaints involving discrimination

There are state and federal complaints bodies that handle complaints that about discrimination. If your situation involves discrimination, you should consider making a discrimination complaint in addition to any other complaints. Discrimination may occur when someone is treated less favourably on the basis of: race; sex; gender; disability; age; sexuality;

relationship status; pregnancy; caring responsibilities; or having or being thought to have an infectious disease.

WARNING: The state and federal bodies that handle discrimination complaints have different rules, including time limits. You can make a complaint to both the state and federal complaint bodies, but they may decide not to address your concerns if you have already complained elsewhere. For example, if you have already lodged a discrimination complaint to Equal Opportunity Commission WA, it is likely that Australian Human Rights Commission will decide not to act on your complaint. Please carefully review the discrimination factsheets for information about your options before making a discrimination complaint.

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation

In this fact sheet, we introduce the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation ('DWER'). We outline how reports, complaints and submissions can be made by members of the public and affected people to DWER.

DWER is a Western Australian Government department that manages and regulates the state's environment and water resources.

Legislation and Key Terms

Relevant Legislation:

- [Environmental Protection Act 1986 \(WA\)](#)
- [Environmental Protection Regulations 1987 \(WA\)](#)
- [Contaminated Sites Act 2003 \(WA\)](#)
- [Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914 \(WA\)](#)
- [Litter Act 1979 \(WA\)](#)
- [Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2007 \(WA\)](#)

Key terms:

Algal bloom: A large growth of algae in water. It may look like green scum, discoloured water, foam or floating material. Some algal blooms can affect water quality, animals, people or the environment.

Clearing: Removing, cutting down, killing, damaging or destroying native vegetation. This can include bulldozing, burning, draining, flooding, grazing damage or other activities that remove or damage native plants.

Complaint: An unresolved expression of dissatisfaction raised with DWER by, or on behalf of, a customer. This can relate to its services, staff performance, staff behaviour, staff conduct, or complaint handling process.

Complainant: A person who makes a complaint, report, submission or enquiry to DWER.

Contaminated site: Land, groundwater or surface water that has substances in it at levels that may pose a risk to human health, the environment or environmental values.

Environment WAtch: DWER's service for reporting pollution, illegal dumping and other environmental matters. Reports can be made online or by calling the Environment WAtch hotline on 1300 784 782.

Environmental harm: Harm to the environment. This can include pollution, contamination, damage to land or water, harm to plants or animals, or other impacts on environmental values.

Illegal dumping: Dumping or abandoning waste without authorisation. This may include dumped tyres, building waste, commercial waste, car bodies, chemical drums or large amounts of unwanted household items.

Native vegetation: Plants that are native to Western Australia. This can include trees, shrubs, grasses and other native plants.

Prescribed premises: A type of industrial or commercial premises that is regulated under environmental law because its activities may cause emissions, discharges, pollution or environmental harm.

Public comment: A written submission made to DWER about an application that is open for public comment, such as some works approval, licence or native vegetation clearing permit applications.

Report: Information given to DWER about a possible environmental, water, waste, contamination, smoky vehicle or compliance issue. A report does not guarantee that DWER will investigate or take enforcement action.

Smoky vehicle: A vehicle that releases excessive visible smoke from its exhaust. DWER has a smoky vehicle reporting pathway.

Submission: A written comment or response sent to DWER during a public comment period for a DWER-regulated application.

Watercourse: A river, creek, stream or other natural water channel. Some DWER water compliance pathways involve interference with the bed or banks of a watercourse.

Step 1: What type of Complaints can be made to this body?

DWER handles several different complaint-like pathways. These include:	
Sub-category	Example
Report pollution, emissions, waste discharges, or environmental harm <i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i>	You may report pollution, waste or chemical discharges, hazardous spills, air or water contamination, dust, odour, noise from a DWER-regulated activity, algal blooms, or other activities causing environmental harm through Environment WAtch. DWER's Environment WAtch service operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call 000 if there is a life-threatening emergency. DWER usually regulates large industries licensed or registered under the Environmental Protection Act. Residential and small to medium business nuisance issues, including many noise, dust and odour issues, are usually managed by local government. <i>Examples:</i> • <i>Alex sees liquid industrial waste spilling from a tanker into a roadside drain near a wetland.</i> • <i>Priya's home is repeatedly affected by dust from a licensed mineral processing premises, and she records the dates, times and wind conditions.</i> • <i>Jonah lives near a licensed industrial plant and hears loud mechanical noise from the site most nights.</i> • <i>Mei notices wastewater overflowing from a treatment plant pump station into a creek.</i> • <i>Sarah experiences repeated offensive odour from a licensed landfill and keeps a diary of the dates, times, wind conditions and impacts.</i> • <i>Zara sees a large green scum that looks like an algal bloom spreading across a river and wants to report it.</i> • <i>Nina sees dead fish and discoloured water downstream from an industrial site and reports it as possible water pollution.</i> • <i>A licensed premises occupier tells DWER about an accidental waste discharge that may cause pollution.</i>
Report illegal dumping or substantial waste abandonment <i>Environmental Protection Act 1986 s 49A; Litter Act 1979</i>	You may report illegal dumping or substantial abandoned waste to DWER through Environment WAtch. DWER investigates and prosecutes illegal dumping offences under the Environmental Protection Act. Illegal dumping includes unauthorised discharging or abandonment of waste, such as tyres, car bodies, construction and demolition waste, commercial waste and large quantities of unwanted household items. Ordinary small littering, such as cigarette butts or food wrappers thrown from a vehicle or by a person on foot, is better suited to the Keep Australia Beautiful Council litter reporter pathway. <i>Examples:</i>

	• <i>Sam finds a pile of dumped tyres and building rubble on vacant Crown land.</i> • <i>Leila sees a ute unload large bags of commercial waste beside a reserve and records the number plate.</i> • <i>Marco finds drums of unknown waste abandoned behind an industrial area.</i>
Report unauthorised native vegetation clearing or clearing permit non-compliance <i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i>	You may report suspected unauthorised clearing of native vegetation to DWER. Environment WAtch has a specific report category for native vegetation clearing, and DWER's Environment WAtch material identifies clearing of native vegetation as a reportable environmental incident. <i>Examples:</i> • <i>Tahlia notices remnant bushland on a rural property has been bulldozed and cannot find any clearing permit for the work.</i> • <i>Ben sees a contractor clearing beyond the boundary shown in a granted clearing permit.</i> • <i>Aisha sees roadside native vegetation being removed for works and cannot find any sign that the clearing has approval.</i>
Report unlawful water taking, interference with waterways, or unapproved water works	You may report water resource compliance concerns to DWER. This includes suspected unlawful taking of water, interference with the bed or banks of a watercourse, or the construction of bores or dams without the required approval. This is different from a complaint about a water provider's bill, customer service, supply or sewerage service. <i>Examples:</i> • <i>Noor sees a neighbour pumping large volumes of water from a river during restrictions without an apparent licence.</i> • <i>Helen notices a private dam being built across a watercourse without approval.</i> • <i>Peter reports excavation that appears to have damaged the bed and banks of a creek.</i> • <i>Ravi believes a business is breaching its water licence conditions by taking more groundwater than allowed.</i> • <i>Oscar sees machinery digging into the banks of a creek on private land and is concerned the work is damaging the waterway.</i>
Report a known or suspected contaminated site <i>Contaminated Sites Act 2003 s 11</i>	You may report a known or suspected contaminated site to DWER using Form 1: Report of a known or suspected contaminated site. This pathway is for land, groundwater or surface water that may be contaminated, not just a one-off pollution incident. Known or suspected contaminated sites are reported under section 11 of the Contaminated Sites Act 2003. <i>Examples:</i>

	• <i>Emily buys land and finds old underground fuel tanks with soil that smells strongly of petrol.</i> • <i>Hassan finds test results showing groundwater under a former workshop contains solvents.</i> • <i>Grace discovers buried chemical drums while excavating a former industrial lot.</i> • <i>Dylan's environmental consultant identifies soil contamination that should be reported through the contaminated sites form.</i>
Report a smoky vehicle	You may report a smoky vehicle to DWER through the smoky vehicle reporting pathway. Vehicle emissions can affect human health and the environment, and that the Smoky Vehicle Reporting Program is a joint initiative of DWER and the Department of Transport. <i>Examples:</i> • <i>Liam sees a bus repeatedly releasing thick black smoke while driving through his suburb.</i> • <i>Amina follows a truck that is producing heavy visible smoke for several kilometres and records the registration number.</i> • <i>Grace notices the same delivery van regularly emitting excessive smoke near a school.</i>
Send a public comment or submission on DWER-regulated applications <i>Environmental Protection Act 1986 Part V</i>	You may send DWER a public comment or submission when a relevant DWER application is open for public comment. This can include some works approval, licence and native vegetation clearing permit applications. Submissions must be sent before the listed closing date. This does not cover every DWER-related matter. For clearing permits, referrals of proposed clearing and applications to surrender or transfer an existing clearing permit are not available for public comment. Applications related to mineral and petroleum activities go to DMPE. <i>Examples:</i> • <i>Mila lives near a proposed waste facility and sends comments about odour and groundwater risks during the works approval public comment period.</i> • <i>Daniel's conservation group comments on a proposed clearing permit for native vegetation near a wetland.</i> • <i>Sienna comments on a licence amendment that may increase dust from a prescribed premises.</i> • <i>Omar checks the Clearing Permit System and sends written comments before the listed closing date.</i>
Make a complaint about DWER's own service, staff conduct, or complaint handling	You may make a complaint to DWER if your concern is about DWER's own services, products, staff performance, staff behaviour, staff conduct, or complaint handling. <i>Examples:</i>

	• <i>Ana lodged an Environment WAtch report and says DWER did not acknowledge or follow up on it properly.</i> • <i>Michael says a DWER officer spoke to him disrespectfully during a licensing enquiry.</i> • <i>Farah needed an interpreter to make a complaint and says DWER did not arrange reasonable language assistance.</i> • <i>Tom says DWER mishandled his complaint by failing to record the issues he raised.</i>
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Step 2: What is the Jurisdiction of the complaints body?

Jurisdiction	Description
State	This body has powers to hear complaints under the law of Western Australia.
Geographical Scope	The issue should generally relate to Western Australia. This can include conduct in WA, land or water resources in WA, a contaminated site in WA, a vehicle seen in WA, a WA DWER-regulated premises, or a DWER service provided in WA.
Time Limitations	Environmental incidents should be reported as soon as possible, especially if they are current or ongoing. Public comments on DWER applications must be lodged before the listed closing date. Known contaminated sites must be reported within 21 days after a person becomes aware of the contamination, and suspected contaminated sites should be reported as soon as reasonably practicable.
Exclusions	DWER is usually not the right body for • residential or small-business nuisance noise, dust or odour; • ordinary small littering; • urgent gas leaks or gas-safety emergencies; • aircraft noise; • prescribed burns; • public interest disclosures; • public officer misconduct; • or statutory appeals.
Exercise of discretion	Reporting an issue to DWER does not guarantee an investigation, prosecution, clean-up, licence change, compensation, apology or other individual remedy. Enforcement action depends on the context of the issue and its enforcement principles.
Additional information	If there is a life-threatening emergency, call 000. Environment WAtch is not a substitute for emergency services.

Step 3: Who can you make a complaint against?

Respondent	Description
Regulated industrial premises or operators	A business, facility or operator regulated by DWER under environmental laws. This may include landfills, wastewater facilities, mineral processing sites, factories, or other large industrial premises.
People or organisations causing pollution or environmental harm	A person, business, landholder, occupier, contractor or organisation that may be causing pollution, emissions, waste discharge, dust, odour, noise, contamination or environmental harm.
Illegal dumpers	A person, business or vehicle owner involved in dumping or abandoning waste without authorisation. This may include dumped tyres, construction waste, commercial waste, car bodies or large household waste.
People involved in native vegetation clearing	A landowner, occupier, contractor, developer, permit holder or other person involved in clearing native vegetation.
Water users and people carrying out water works	A person, business, licence holder or landholder taking water, interfering with the bed or banks of a watercourse, or constructing bores or dams. DWER's water-use complaint pathway covers suspected unlawful taking of water, interference with bed or banks, or construction of bores or dams.
Contaminated site owners, occupiers, polluters or auditors	A person or organisation connected with land, groundwater or surface water that is known or suspected to be contaminated. This may include an owner, occupier, person who caused or contributed to contamination, or accredited contaminated sites auditor.
Smoky vehicle owners or operators	The owner or operator of a vehicle producing excessive visible smoke. DWER's smoky vehicle pathway is linked to vehicle emissions and asks people to report smoky vehicles online.
Applicants or approval holders whose DWER application is open for public comment	A person, company or organisation applying for, holding or seeking changes to a DWER-regulated approval, licence, works approval or clearing permit where DWER has opened the application for public comment.
DWER, DWER staff, or DWER complaint handling	DWER itself, a DWER staff member, or DWER's handling of a previous complaint, report, service request or interaction. DWER's own complaint process covers dissatisfaction with its services, products, staff performance, staff behaviour, staff conduct or complaint handling.

Exclusions	DWER is usually not the correct respondent pathway for ordinary neighbours, restaurants, cafés, small businesses, water providers' billing teams, public transport operators, aircraft operators, police, courts, tribunals, or public officers where the issue is corruption, misconduct or a public interest disclosure rather than an environmental or water regulatory issue.
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Step 4: Are you eligible to make a complaint?

Eligibility	Description
Who can make a complaint?	Anyone can report an issue or send information to DWER.
Pre-requisite steps	There is no general requirement to complain to someone else before reporting pollution, illegal dumping, smoky vehicles or environmental harm to DWER. However, if the issue is an emergency, call 000 first. If the issue is mainly residential or small-business nuisance noise, dust or odour, local government may be the correct first pathway.
Can complaints be made on behalf of someone?	For complaints about DWER's own service or conduct, a person who is unable to lodge a complaint may nominate someone to act on their behalf. For environmental reports, another person or organisation may provide information if they have relevant details.
Exclusions	DWER's ordinary feedback and complaints process does not cover statutory appeal mechanisms, approaches to the Minister or Ombudsman, public officer misconduct, or public interest disclosures. Those are separate pathways.
Anonymous or confidential reports	Some reports can be made anonymously. Crime Stoppers can be used to anonymously report pollution, illegal dumping and other environmental matters. Anonymous reporting may limit DWER's ability to contact the reporter for more information. Contaminated site reports generally require reporter details, but DWER guidance treats reporter identity as confidential.
Additional information you need to know	Access may differ by pathway. A public report is usually open to anyone with relevant information. A contaminated site report may involve specific legal duties for owners, occupiers, polluters and auditors. A public comment must be lodged during the listed public comment period. DWER can arrange interpreters, translate documents and provide communication support where needed.

Step 5: What remedies are available at this body?

Power	Description
Education, caution or warning	DWER may respond with education, a caution, or a written warning where that is appropriate. DWER lists non-statutory notices, caution notices, letters of education and written warnings as possible enforcement responses.
Statutory notice or direction	DWER may issue a statutory notice or direction requiring a person to do something, stop doing something, investigate, prevent or control emissions, clean up, rehabilitate damage, comply with licence conditions, or restore affected land or waterways. Statutory notices are not guaranteed and depend on the legal criteria for the particular notice.
Licence, permit or approval action	DWER may amend, suspend, revoke, cancel or refuse to renew some licences, permits or other instruments where the legal requirements are met. This is a regulatory outcome, not a personal remedy for the reporter. DWER lists suspension or revocation of instruments such as licences or permits as a possible enforcement action.
Infringement or modified penalty notice	DWER may issue an infringement notice or modified penalty notice for some alleged offences if there is enough evidence and the matter can be dealt with that way. Paying an infringement is not treated as an admission of guilt and does not record a criminal conviction.
Prosecution	DWER may prosecute in serious or repeated cases. DWER generally escalates from voluntary compliance through education and awareness to directions, infringements and prosecution, and will only commence prosecution where there are reasonable prospects of conviction and prosecution is in the public interest.
Contaminated site classification or notice	For contaminated sites, DWER may classify the site and may require investigation, clean-up or management action where the law allows. This is a regulatory process and does not guarantee a personal remedy to the person who reported the contamination.
Public comment considered in assessment	If a person makes a public submission on a DWER application before the closing date, DWER may consider that submission as part of the application assessment. This does not guarantee that DWER will refuse the application or impose the conditions requested.
Service complaint response	For complaints about DWER's own service or staff conduct, DWER may record the complaint, investigate it, respond, acknowledge and rectify errors where appropriate. DWER aims to respond to general complaints within 10 business days.
Exclusions	DWER does not guarantee compensation, an apology, prosecution, clean-up, cancellation of a licence, or reversal of a decision because a person makes a report or complaint. Enforcement powers are discretionary regulatory tools.

Step 6: Preparing your complaint. What should it include?

Requirement	Description
Format	DWER has the following forms for the following issues: • Environment WAch for pollution, illegal dumping and environmental incidents; • DWER's feedback and complaints pathway or water licensing contact channels for water-use compliance concerns; • DWER's feedback system for complaints about DWER's own service; • Form 1 for contaminated sites; • the smoky vehicle report pathway for smoky vehicles; • and the public comment route for listed applications.
Personal Details	Include your name, phone number, email address and address if you want DWER to contact you. Some reports may be anonymous, but this can limit follow-up.
Respondent's Details	Include any details that identify the person, business, vehicle, site, permit, licence, approval or application involved. This may include a name, address, registration number, permit number, licence number, application number, map, site address or property details.
Relevant Facts	Explain what happened, when it happened, where it happened, who was involved, what you saw, heard, smelled or found, and how the issue affected the environment, health, comfort, property or nearby people. Useful details include the date and time, location, alleged offender details, incident description and effects. Attach photos, videos, maps, test results, diary notes, consultant reports, letters, permit details, licence details, or other documents if they help explain the issue.
For contaminated sites	Include whether the contamination is known or suspected, the type and source of contamination, where the contamination is located, when it was discovered, previous or current land uses, and any investigation or testing information. Form 1 asks for separate information depending on whether the contamination is suspected or known.
For public comments	Identify the application you are commenting on. Explain the environmental, water, vegetation, pollution, odour, dust, noise, contamination or other impact you are concerned about. Lodge the comment before the listed closing date.
For complaints about DWER's own service	A simple statement about the nature of the service or conduct is enough. Include what happened, when it happened, who was involved, and what response you are seeking. DWER will contact you if further information is needed.
What NOT to include	Do not include false or misleading information.

	For contaminated sites, the Form 1 material warns against malicious reports, false or misleading statements, and failing to disclose material information. Do not use DWER's ordinary feedback process for statutory appeals, public interest disclosures or public officer misconduct.
Additional information you need to know	If the issue is urgent, ongoing or time-sensitive, say so clearly. If you need an interpreter, accessible format or communication support, include that in your complaint or contact DWER before lodging.

Step 7: Lodging your complaint and next steps.

Step	Description
Where to lodge your complaint	Environment WAtch - pollution, illegal dumping and environmental incidents: Report: - Online: Environment WAtch - Phone: 1300 784 782. Environment WAtch operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Water-use complaints - suspected unlawful taking of water, interference with the bed or banks of a watercourse, or unapproved bores or dams: Report: - Online: DWER's feedback and complaints management system. - For water licensing enquiries, DWER lists 1800 508 885 and licence.enquiry@dwer.wa.gov.au. Known or suspected contaminated sites: Complete Form 1 and send it via: - Email (preferred): info@dwer.wa.gov.au - Post: Manager, Contaminated Sites Branch Department of Water and Environmental Regulation Locked Bag 10 Joondalup DC WA 6919 The contaminated sites information line is 1300 762 982 Smoky vehicle reports: Smoky vehicles can be reported online. Public comments on works approvals and licences: For listed works approval and licence applications open for public comment (found here), lodge your submission before the listed closing date. You may send this via:

	○ Post: Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, Locked Bag 10, Joondalup DC WA 6919 ○ Email: info@dwer.wa.gov.au ● Public comments on clearing permit applications: For listed clearing permit applications open for public comment (found here), lodge your submission before the closing date. You may send this via: ○ Email (preferred): info@dwer.wa.gov.au ○ Post: Native Vegetation Regulation, Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, Locked Bag 10, Joondalup DC WA 6919 ● Complaints about DWER's own service, staff conduct or complaint handling: ○ Online (preferred): Online feedback form ○ Post: Department of Water and Environmental Regulation Prime House, 8 Davidson Terrace, Joondalup WA 6027 Locked Bag 10, Joondalup WA 6919 ○ Phone: 61 8 6364 7000 Monday to Friday 8:30am-5:00pm. ○ Email: primehouse.reception@dwer.wa.gov.au
After you lodge	DWER may record the report, contact you for more information, investigate, refer the matter to another authority, take regulatory action, or take no further action. For service complaints, DWER aims to respond to general complaints within 10 business days.
Additional information you need to know	Keep a copy of what you submit. If the issue continues, keep recording dates, times, locations, impacts and new evidence. For public comments, missing the closing date may mean your submission is not considered in that public comment process.

Step 8: Post-complaint – what if you are not happy with the outcome of your complaint?

Avenue	Description
DWER service complaint follow-up	If the issue is about DWER's own service or complaint handling and you are not satisfied with the response, you can take the matter up with the department. If you remain dissatisfied after further discussion, you may refer the matter to Ombudsman WA. Ombudsman WA may also be relevant for concerns about DWER's administrative handling. It is not a merits appeal pathway and does not replace statutory appeal rights.
Works approval and licence appeals	Some works approval and licence decisions can be appealed. Appeals for works approvals and licences must be received within 21 days of the applicant or holder being notified of the decision.

Clearing permit appeals	Some clearing permit decisions can be appealed. Most decisions on clearing matters under Part V of the Environmental Protection Act 1986 may be appealed, and appeals must be lodged in writing within 21 calendar days of the applicant or permit holder being notified of the decision.
Water licence or statutory direction review	If DWER proposes to amend, suspend or cancel a water licence, the person may have a right to be heard or make a written submission, and may have a right to apply to the State Administrative Tribunal for review. A person who receives some statutory directions may contact DWER to request review and, for some directions, apply to the State Administrative Tribunal within 28 days.
Infringement notice withdrawal	If DWER issues an infringement notice, there is no legislative review process, but the relevant Acts allow a mechanism for withdrawal within 28 days. You should contact DWER if you believe there are grounds to request withdrawal.
Contaminated sites appeals	Some contaminated site classifications and investigation or clean-up notices can be appealed to the Contaminated Sites Committee. Appeals generally must be lodged within 21 days, or within the later time specified in the relevant DWER notice.
Contaminated sites responsibility decisions	The Contaminated Sites Committee can make responsibility for remediation decisions. Responsibility decisions are not appealable on the merits, but may be appealed to the Supreme Court on a question of law.
Legal advice	Get legal advice quickly if the matter involves an appeal, enforcement notice, infringement, prosecution, contaminated site responsibility, licence or permit decision, compensation, court, tribunal or strict deadline.

Step 9: Other bodies that handle complaints about environment, water and government regulation related complaints

Complaint body	Description
Australian Human Rights Commission	The Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) can handle complaints about discrimination and breaches of human rights. It may be relevant if the environmental, water or government-service issue also involves discrimination, such as being treated unfairly because of race, disability, age, sex or another protected attribute.
Office of the Australian Information Commissioner	The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) can handle complaints about the way personal information has been handled by Australian Government agencies and some private organisations. It can also review freedom of information decisions made by Australian Government agencies and ministers. OAIC is not usually the right body for WA Government agency FOI or privacy issues.

National Anti-Corruption Commission	The National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) handles corruption issues involving the Commonwealth public sector. It may be relevant if the concern is about serious or systemic corruption involving a Commonwealth public official, not a WA Government officer.
Office of the Appeals Convenor	The Office of the Appeals Convenor investigates appeals against environmental decision-making in Western Australia on behalf of the Minister for Environment. It may be more appropriate than DWER if you want to appeal certain environmental decisions, such as some works approval, licence or clearing permit decisions.
Environmental Protection Authority	The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) is separate from DWER. It may be relevant for environmental impact assessment of significant proposals. It should not be confused with Environment Watch or DWER's ordinary pollution-reporting pathway. The EPA's contact guidance directs pollution complaints, illegal dumping, contaminated sites, controlled waste, native vegetation and prescribed-premises industry noise to DWER.
Local governments in Western Australia	Local councils or shires may be the better pathway for local nuisance matters, such as residential or small-business dust, noise, odour, light, asbestos, local refuse and local planning issues. EPA guidance directs these kinds of local matters to local councils or shires.
Energy and Water Ombudsman WA	The Energy and Water Ombudsman WA investigates and resolves complaints about electricity, gas and water providers. It may be more appropriate than DWER for water provider billing, supply, connection, disconnection or customer service complaints. The Ombudsman says customers should contact their provider first before making a complaint.
Ombudsman Western Australia	Ombudsman WA can investigate complaints about WA State Government departments, authorities and local governments. It may be relevant if the concern is about DWER's administrative handling after you have first raised the issue with DWER.
Corruption and Crime Commission WA	The Corruption and Crime Commission WA can receive reports about serious misconduct and corruption involving WA public sector entities and police misconduct. It may be more appropriate than DWER's service complaint process if the concern is corruption, bribery, serious abuse of office or serious misconduct by a WA public officer.
Office of the Information Commissioner WA	The WA Office of the Information Commissioner is responsible for oversight of freedom of information matters in Western Australia. It may be relevant if the issue is about access to WA Government documents or review of a WA freedom of information decision. Privacy or personal-information handling concerns may need to be checked against the specific WA pathway that applies.
Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions	This department may be relevant for some issues involving national parks, conservation estate, wildlife, biodiversity or prescribed burns. Environment Watch guidance identifies some matters that may need to go to other agencies rather than DWER.

Department of Transport WA	The Department of Transport may be relevant for transport-related matters. DWER remains relevant for smoky vehicle reports through the smoky vehicle reporting pathway, which is linked to vehicle emissions.
Contaminated Sites Committee	The Contaminated Sites Committee may be relevant for some contaminated sites appeal or review pathways, including certain classification or notice matters. These are later-step pathways and can involve strict time limits.
State Administrative Tribunal WA	The State Administrative Tribunal may be relevant for some water licence, direction or regulatory review matters. This is not DWER's ordinary complaint process and should usually be treated as a later review pathway where a legal right of review exists.

Need help preparing or pursuing your complaint?

Below are organisations that may be able to help you to make your complaint, provide support or advocacy during the complaint process or give you more information.

Organisation	Contact Details	How they can help
Environmental Defenders Office	Website: edo.org.au	Provides environmental law resources and may provide legal advice for some planning and environmental law matters. The EDO says its lawyers provide up to 15 minutes of free legal advice on certain planning and environmental law matters and that people should get in touch early if time limits apply.
Community Legal WA	Website: communitylegalwa.org.au Telephone referral through Citizen's Advice Bureau WA: (08) 9221 5711 Email referral: queries@cabwa.com.au	Can help people find free or low-cost legal help in WA. Community Legal WA says community legal services provide free or low-cost legal help to people in need, and its contact page directs people seeking legal help to the Citizen's Advice Bureau WA referral line.
Translating and Interpreter Service	Website: www.tisnational.gov.au Telephone: 131 450	Provide support to people if English is not their first language.
National Relay Service	Website: www.accesshub.gov.au	Provides a range of services to support people who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment to communicate.

Self-help tools and additional resources

Resource	How this helps
DWER feedback and complaints page	Explains how to make a complaint about DWER's own services, staff performance, staff behaviour, staff conduct or complaint handling. It also lists DWER's head office contact details.
Call It Out	Online register for racism/discrimination experienced or witnessed towards First Nations Australians. Not an official complaints body.
Ombudsman WA complaint guidance	Explains complaints about WA public authorities, including State Government departments, authorities and local governments. Useful if the person is unhappy with DWER's administrative handling after raising the issue with DWER.