

Accessing DEQ Documents Online and through the Freedom of Information Act

Leigh M. Copen

DEQ, Office of Environmental Assistance
517-284-2815 / CopenL1@michigan.gov

Michigan's Freedom of Information Act

1976 PA 442; MCL 15.231 *et seq.*

"It is the public policy of this state that **all persons**, except those persons incarcerated in state or local correctional facilities, **are entitled** to full and complete information regarding the affairs of government and the official acts of those who represent them as public officials . . . The people shall be informed so that they may fully participate in the democratic process."

What is a FOIA Request?

According to the Law:

“a written request that describes a public record sufficiently to enable the public body to find the public record.” MCL 15.233

What is a FOIA Request?

What it means:

If the written request describes the record with enough detail so that a trained employee can locate it with reasonable effort, it is a FOIA request.

Do I Need to Submit a FOIA?

- On our website choose “View Additional DEQ FOIA Info” to answer this question.
- The DEQ keeps many records online in databases that can be accessed by the public.
- The law says that if FOIA coordinators know or have reason to know a record is on the website, they shall notify the requestor and, to the degree practicable, include a specific webpage.

Website

DEQ

Freedom of Information Act Process for Environmental Quality

Michigan's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), MCL 15.231 et seq, provides that certain persons can receive copies or make inspections of most public records of public bodies upon written request. The person must sufficiently describe the records he or she seeks. The public body may charge a fee to cover the cost of complying with a person's FOIA request.

FOIA requests directed to this Department can be sent by email or mail to:

Email: [FOIA Coordinator](#)

FOIA Coordinator
Department of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 30457
Lansing, MI 48909-7957
Phone: 800-662-9278

[FOIA request form](#)

[View the Department's written procedures and guidelines.](#)

[View a written public summary of the Department's procedures and guidelines.](#)

[View additional DEQ FOIA Information.](#)



DEQ Websites / Databases

Do I need to submit a FOIA?

Maybe not. The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) provides online access to several databases that may contain the information you need: [DEQ Site Registry](#) - The DEQ Site Registry is a geographically-based database that presents information about facilities and locations of interest to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) and the environmental community. This site contains general site information on active and closed facilities and the environmental interests at the site. Facilities and compliance data from additional MDEQ databases will be added as resources become available. It can be utilized to determine if more than one division/program has an environmental interest in a particular facility. Links to GIS (Michigan's Center for Geographic Information) allows facilities to be geographically searched and mapped.

The database currently contains site information from Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) - OEA, NMS - Water Resources Division (WRD), Emission Reporting - Air Quality, WDS - Resource Management Division (RMD), Complaints Database - (WRD), and MIR - Office of Oil, Gas and Minerals, and compliance information from RMD, Complaints Database, MIR, and NMS.

[MIWaters](#) is now open to the public. Site Explorer is a tool on the [MIWaters Web](#) site that allows you access to Water Resources Division information like forms and documents. You are not required to sign up for an account to take advantage of this service.

Environmental Permits, Licenses, and Certifications

Air Quality Division	Remediation and Redevelopment Division	Water Resources Division
Air Permits		
MAERS reporting	Michigan Environmental Mapper	MIWaters
Air Quality Source Information	Leaking Underground Storage Tank Sites Inventory of Facilities	CSO and SSO Discharge Information
Office of Waste Management and Radiological Protection	Office of Drinking Water and Municipal Assistance	Office of Oil, Gas, and Minerals
	Wellogic System	
	Wells and pump records 2000 and newer	
Waste Data System	Wells 1999 and Older	GeoWebFace (oil & gas maps and data)
	Septage Haulers Directory	Michigan Online Oil & Gas Information System
	GeoWebFace (water wells under Geology layers tool)	

How do I request records via FOIA?

- Website . . .
- E-mail . . .
- and a Form . . .

... Oh My!!



DEQ

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Form

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
REQUEST FOR DISCLOSURE OF DEQ RECORDS
Under The Freedom Of Information Act

This information is required under 1976 PA 442, as amended, in order to request public records.

ALL INFORMATION MUST BE TYPED OR PRINTED EXCEPT FOR WRITTEN SIGNATURES

Company Name or Organization (if applicable)		Company's Project/Reference Number	
Requester's First Name	Requester's Last Name	Daytime Phone # (include Area Code)	
Address (Street and Number)		Fax # (include Area Code)	
City	State	Zip Code	E-mail

This request is for records from Lansing Central and/or District Office

_____ **SUBMISSION DATE:** _____

- I wish to review the records listed below
- I wish to receive a copy of the records listed below
- I wish to receive an estimate for the cost of fulfilling my request

NOTE: To refine the searching process, you may wish to narrow down your request by calling the Environmental Assistance Center (1-800-662-9278) for assistance, or checking specific boxes related to particular divisions. If you do not see what you are looking for in the list below, please feel free to use the additional comments field. For additional program information, please [click here](#).

Form (continued)

Programs: If you are only requesting the available information from certain programs, then please list the site number (i.e., Site 1, 2, etc. or "ALL") in the appropriate form field(s) provided below. (see division acronyms in site table below).

AQD - Permits		OWMRP (RMG)- Hazardous Waste, ID#:	
RRD - BEA Only		OWMRP (RMG)- Solid Waste/Scrap Tires/Medical Waste	7 / 7
RRD - Environmental Remediation		OOGM - Oil, Gas and Minerals	
RRD - Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (Part 213)		WRD -Groundwater	
RRD -Superfund		WRD - Water Permits	
Storage Tanks (Part 211)- Jim Lucas – Lucasj@michigan.gov	SUBMIT to DLARA	WRD - Stormwater	
ODWMA (RMG)- Public Water Supply		WRD - Wetlands	

Check boxes for each Division you are requesting files from
(You must provide the section, township, range for oil, gas and minerals records)

Description Provide a detailed description of materials being requested. At a minimum, include the Facility Name, Street Address, City and County.		Air Quality (AQD)	Oil, Gas & Minerals (OOGM)	Remediation & Redevelopment (RRD)	Resource Management (RMG)	Water Resources (WRD)
Site 1	COUNTY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Site 2	COUNTY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Site 3	COUNTY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Site 4	COUNTY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Site 5	COUNTY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Additional Comments:

E-mail

Send an e-mail to DEQFOIA@michigan.gov

- With or without the "Request for Disclosure of DEQ Records form"
- Be specific
- Include your contact information

Now What?

Written notices

- Within **5 business days** after receiving the request:
 - (a) Grant the request.
 - (b) Issue a written notice to the requesting person denying the request.
 - (c) Grant the request in part and issuing a written notice to the requesting person denying the request in part.
 - (d) Issue a notice extending for not more than **10 business days** the period during which the public body shall respond to the request. MCL 15.235

Non-paper physical media

- The parties may “stipulate” or agree that records will be provided on non-paper physical media, by e-mail, or other electronic means.
- Actual and most reasonably economical cost of CDs, etc.

Exemptions

MCL 15.243 – Sec. 13. (1) *A public body may exempt from disclosure as a public record under this act any of the following . . .*

- (a) Information of a personal nature if public disclosure of the information would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of an individual's privacy.

Exemptions

MCL 15.243 – Sec. 13. (1)

(d) Records or information specifically described and exempted from disclosure by statute.

Exemptions

MCL 15.243 – Sec. 13. (1)

- (g) Information or records subject to the attorney-client privilege.

Exemptions

MCL 15.243 – Sec. 13. (1)

(m) Communications and notes within a public body or between public bodies of an advisory nature to the extent that they cover other than purely factual materials and are preliminary to a final agency determination of policy or action.

a/k/a The Frank Discussion Exemption

Appeals

- Requestors can appeal:
 - The denial of records;
 - Fees charged for records; and
 - Records that have been exempted

Thank You

Thank you for coming to the
2016 Michigan Environmental Compliance
Conference

Please contact me with any questions:

Leigh M. Copen

517.284.6702 or CopenL1@michigan.gov