



**Keeping the  
Environment Safe**



PROTECTING ★ THE ★ UNPROTECTED



# **Environmental Enforcement**

Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost's  
Environmental Enforcement  
Unit investigates criminal  
environmental activity in Ohio.



**DAVE YOST**

OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL

## **Our work**

The Environmental Enforcement Unit works with local, state and federal agencies to protect Ohioans and their health by investigating crimes that taint our air, water and soil. Made up of specially trained agents from the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation, the EEU works cases involving hazardous, solid and infectious waste as well as other pollution. The unit routinely partners with the Ohio and U.S. Environmental Protection agencies.

## **Agent qualification and training**

All EEU agents receive basic peace officer training and additional instruction in conducting environmental crime investigations. The specialized training includes identification and evaluation of potential environmental crimes, analytical investigative methods and several advanced interviewing courses with an emphasis on environmental crimes. All unit agents are trained in hazardous materials incident-response operations as well as the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's courses required for individuals working in potentially toxic environments.

## **Task force collaboration**

The EEU participates in five environmental crime task forces throughout the state. Primarily directed by one of Ohio's two U.S. Attorney offices (Northern and Southern Districts), the task forces are designed to maximize cooperation across multiple jurisdictions.

The lead investigative agency on a case is typically determined by the task force members, based on the best available resources – whether those be a federal, state or local law enforcement agency's or a prosecutor's.

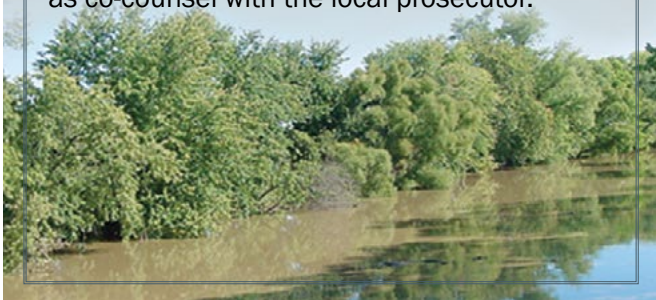
## **Environmental crime investigation**

Because of the highly technical and complex nature of environmental crimes, Ohio has adopted a three-pronged approach to such investigations and prosecutions.

**Most investigations begin when the Ohio EPA's Office of Special Investigations Unit receives a lead or a complaint. After evaluating the information, the Ohio EPA unit contacts the attorney general's Environmental Enforcement Unit, and, if warranted, the two agencies jointly investigate for possible criminal activity.**

The SIU is responsible for collecting environmental samples and the regulatory aspects of an investigation, and EEU agents conduct interviews, crime scene analysis, surveillance, document analysis and law enforcement functions related to the investigation.

Attorneys with the attorney general's Environmental Enforcement Section help develop cases for enforcement action. They assist with search warrants and provide opinions on matters related to search and seizure. Upon request from the appropriate state agency or a local board of health, an Environmental Enforcement Section attorney may prosecute the case. If necessary, a section attorney can be cross-designated as a special assistant prosecutor in the jurisdiction where the case is being prosecuted. That attorney then personally handles the prosecution or works as co-counsel with the local prosecutor.





## The investigations and prosecutions process

- 1** A complaint is registered with Ohio EPA.
- 2** When criminal activity is suspected, the EPA's Special Investigations Unit contacts the Ohio attorney general's Environmental Enforcement Unit.
- 3** The SIU and EEU conduct a joint investigation.
- 4** The EEU performs interviews, crime scene analysis and other law enforcement functions.
- 5** The SIU collects environmental samples and handles regulatory aspects of the investigation.
- 6** Environmental Enforcement attorneys provide legal advice, assist with search warrants and prosecute the case.





## **A success story**

**»» As a result of one joint EEU/EPA investigation in Newark, the operator of an illegal dump site was sentenced to four years in prison, fined \$5,000 and ordered to pay \$71,000 in restitution.**







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## **Environmental Enforcement Unit**

**Ohio Attorney General's  
Environmental Enforcement Unit**

30 E. Broad St., 25th Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215  
800-348-3248

**U.S. EPA  
Criminal Investigation Division  
440-202-4440**

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**For 24-hour emergency response, complaints  
or assistance with illegal activity, call the  
Ohio EPA hotline at 800-282-9378.**  
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Shine a light on  
**DUMPERS**



**For information on our Shine a Light on Dumpers  
initiative, email [StopEnvironmentalCrimes@  
OhioAGO.gov](mailto:StopEnvironmentalCrimes@OhioAGO.gov) or scan the QR code.**

