

WAYNE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT
WATERSHED MANAGEMENT DIVISION

COMPLAINT INVESTIGATIONS SUMMARY

Complaint Investigations/24-Hour HotLine: The WMD and the Compliance and Public Affairs (CPA) Division of the Wayne County Department of Environment (WCDOE) maintain a telephone “hotline” (888-223-2363) to log and coordinate response to environmental concerns and information requests of all types. Complaints and information requests are also received directly by all DOE divisions. During the reporting period (January 1999 – April 30, 2000), over eight hundred fifty (850) calls were handled through the hotline. In total, WCDOE received and responded to over *two thousand six-hundred (2,600)* complaints or inquiries involving air, land or water pollution concerns. Of this total, at least ninety (90) involved surface water quality and/or soil erosion complaints. The WMD receive and responded to thirty-nine (39) complaints. Investigation of *three (3)* of these complaints resulted in the elimination of significant sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) in the Rouge River watershed. A summary table of calls received by WCDOE is provided below.

Response to Emergency Spills, Etc.: WMD assists with investigations of major spills, fish kills, and other “emergency” water quality issues in both County Drains and waters of the State. During the reporting period, Watershed Management Division (WMD) staff were involved in two (2) diesel fuel spills. The first involved a two thousand two-hundred (2,200) gallon spill into the Lower Rouge River. The second involved a spill into the Middle Rouge River. On four occasions WMD staff verified color changes (twice blue, twice red) to the Lower Rouge River as being caused by non-toxic dye releases from a paper manufacturing plant discharging to the Ypsilanti Communities Utility Authority (YCUA) wastewater treatment plant.

Coordinate Complaint Response: WCDOE continually strives to improve complaint reporting, response and tracking by County departments and between the County and local communities. A variety of products were produced to promote and advertise the 24-Hour Environmental Hotline number including magnets; brochures in English, Arabic and Spanish; and public service announcements (PSAs) via cable TV public access channels.

In 1999, at the direction of WMD, the Rouge Program Office demonstrated and offered three (3) technical training sessions on the use of the two computer tools developed to assist with complaint response coordination, “IDEP Tracking Application” and the “Rouge Dataview CD”. Over fifty (50) staff from the Rouge watershed communities and agencies attended the free training sessions (cross-reference PEP Activity #3). The intent of the “IDEP Application” is to facilitate the efforts of communities and agencies in tracking and reporting illicit discharge complaints and investigations. By offering and encouraging the use of a consistent tracking database system, it is anticipated that coordination of the referral, follow-up and eventual elimination of illicit discharges will be more efficient and effective.

Internally, WMD is spearheading efforts within WCDOE to integrate the IDEP Tracking application into the operations of all its divisions and establishing the network of staff to more efficiently refer complaint investigations between divisions and more effectively track and resolve all complaints and reported illicit discharges.

Wayne County Department of Environment Pollution Complaint Reporting System

January 1999 – April 30, 2000

WCDOE Divisions	1999 Complaints	2000 Complaints (Jan. – April)	Total
Watershed Management Division (WMD)	24	15	39
Compliance & Public Affairs (CPA)	590	262	852
Division of Public Works (DPW)	326	133	459
Air Quality Division (AQD)	814	361	1175
LRM/Solid Waste (LRM-L)	92	29	112
LRM/Soil Erosion (LRM-SESC)	35	13	48
		Grand Total	2,695

LRM – Land Resource Management Division