

# Making Your Voice Heard

Public participation is essential to developing more effective rules, permits and regulations. The Department of Environmental Quality depends on it. When drafting a rule or permit, DEQ scientists do their best to base it on science and the law. They reach out to experts, but they also still count on the public and others to identify flaws and offer solutions to reach a better outcome:

## KEYS TO AN EFFECTIVE COMMENT



### Point Out Unintended Consequences

Some changes may have unforeseen effects and present new challenges. These effects may only come to light through thoughtful feedback from the public.



### Show Up With Technical Expertise

Industrial commenters may be able to provide specific analytical information that is beyond the DEQ's expertise, thereby helping to refine the rule or permit.



### Point To A Solution, Rather Than Just The Problem

Although helpful to explain why a rule or permit doesn't work, it is more helpful to suggest alternatives and substitute language that would correct a problem.

## READY TO MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD?

The Department of Environmental Quality and its divisions are committed to using the public notice and comment process to provide for the best possible rule or permit. If you have additional questions about public notice or a comment for a specific proposal, please contact the DEQ at (701) 328-5150 or visit our website at [deq.nd.gov](http://deq.nd.gov).

## COMMON COMMENT MISTAKES



### The Comment Process Is Not A Vote

One well-supported comment is often more informative than a hundred emails or form letters raising the same point. The NDDEQ will not respond to each comment individually but will note it received the same comment multiple times.



### Comments NOT Specific To The Proposal

Read and understand the proposed rule or permit you are commenting on. Make sure the comment is relevant to the issue at hand and doesn't address other non-related issues.



### Comments Beyond The Authority Of The Agency

You may have a great suggestion for improving North Dakota's environment, but it may require Legislature or Governor approval. Understanding the regulatory process and authority can help support your claims.



### Questions Are Not Considered Comments

Questions are welcomed. And if you have one, give the contact person a call. The DEQ includes contact information for its rule or permit experts on the public comment page. Often getting better clarification on a question will help someone better formulate a helpful comment.