

# Public Safety and Energy Activities



## Who is Responsible for Public Safety?

Industry is responsible for the safety of their operations. The BC Energy Regulator (BCER) ensures all permit holders meet these obligations through field inspections, engineering assessments, and the planning, training and exercising of emergency response by both companies and BCER staff. The BCER's dedicated compliance and enforcement, emergency response and community relations teams work with the public, industry and other public safety agencies in order to mitigate risks, prevent incidents, and respond quickly and effectively if something should occur.

## Importance of Incidents and Complaints

Incidents and complaints related to energy resource activities are recorded and tracked through the BCER's database. Incidents are reported by industry to the BCER through Emergency Management BC. Incidents are classified into four categories reflecting level of risk and are remediated as quickly as practicable to prevent unnecessary escalation.

Complaints are reported by the public and stakeholders (and may also be reported by industry) and received through the BCER's 24-hour public telephone number at 1-250-794-5200. Each complaint is addressed individually and in most cases, inspectors are dispatched to the location to determine the cause of the complaint and assist to resolve the situation.

Complaints are important in helping reduce the risk of potential incidents, and the BCER commits to responding to all safety related complaints within one hour.



## Communication Toolbox

As detailed in the BCER's mandate and expressed in the mission statement, active engagement of our stakeholders and partners is a priority.

**Community and land owner support** through education, public engagement, mediation and dispute resolution prior to and during application submission and throughout operations.

**Reports and publications** posted online inform, educate and encourage accessibility and flow of information.

**The Dawson Creek Resource Centre** is an interactive display showcasing the history of energy resource activities in B.C. By appointment, the public can come see local artifacts, land owner resources and learn how the energy resource industry operates.

**Complaints** are received, tracked, and inspectors may be dispatched to the location to assist in resolving the situation.

**Inspections** are conducted to ensure safe operations including: geophysical operations, construction, drilling, operating wells, pipelines, facilities and gas plants, restoration sites and incidents.

### Public Concerns and Complaints

Report concerns such as odours, spills or noise.

1-250-794-5200 (24-hour public number) or 1-877-500-BCER (2237) (24-hour toll free).

### Incident Reporting for Industry

1-800-663-3456 (24-hour emergency number). Report oil and gas related incidents.

## How Do We Proactively Regulate?

The BCER has the legislative authority to make decisions on proposed energy resource activities. While we don't set policy, the diverse expertise and experience of our staff provides critical insight at every level of energy resource development. This knowledge base provides perspective through scientific evidence, guidance, best practices, reports, tools and analysis.

Companies looking to explore, develop, produce, and market energy resources in B.C. must apply to the BCER. We review, assess and make decisions on these applications. This consolidated single-window authority provides not only a one-stop place for energy activity requirements, but a consistent application, decision, regulatory and compliance authority. Stakeholders work with one agency; therefore, we serve the public interest by having an all-encompassing review process for energy resource activities.

## How Do I Stay Informed?

- The BCER hosts open house sessions and online webinars to provide an opportunity for the public to dialogue with BCER staff regarding our role as a regulator and the future of energy resource development.
- The [Land Owner's Information Guide](#) is posted online at [bc-er.ca](http://bc-er.ca) and describes exploration, development, and production with respect to rights and interests surrounding proposed and permitted activities.
- The Community Relations team provides information and consultation with a goal of fostering respectful and long-term working relationships between land owners, community and industry participants.
- The BCER continues to work with First Nations and government agencies to address land and resource management issues.
- The documentation section online includes manuals, guidelines, forms and additional information to support industry in applying for and operating in the field of energy resource activities in B.C.
- The BCER's online [reports](#) and [fact sheets](#) provide information and statistics on pipelines, water, public safety, compliance and enforcement, site restoration and flaring, venting and incinerating.

Energy Activity Operations Officers at the BCER are designated as Special Conservation Officers under the Environmental Management Act. This designation provides the authority to enforce both the Environmental Management Act and the Water Sustainability Act, and also provides Peace Officer status to the designated officer.

### Field Inspectors

Compliance and enforcement inspectors conduct site inspections, respond to incidents, and address complaints from land owners, First Nations, public and other interested parties.

The BCER inspects on-the-ground activities including but not limited to geophysical operations, construction, drilling, wells, pipelines, facilities and gas plants, restoration and incidents.

Inspection results are tracked and brought to the attention of the company for action. Inspectors have authority to order corrective work or to shutdown operations not complying with the law.

### Non-compliance

If a company is found to have a:  
(1) high non-compliance issue, it must respond with immediate action;  
(2) low non-compliance issue, it has 14-30 days, depending on the issue and associated risk, to deal with the situation to the satisfaction of the BCER.

If a non-compliance issue is not addressed, the company may be subject to further action, including a complete shutdown of its operation. To increase transparency, the BCER publishes its Enforcement Actions [online](#).