Frequently Asked Questions about
Public Records Requests

What is a public records request?
A public records request is a request made under the Idaho Public Records Law by a member of the public, to include other government agencies, in order to examine or copy records maintained by DEQ.

What is a public record?
A public record is any record, regardless of format, created or received by DEQ documenting the administration of DEQ business.

How are public records requests submitted?
Public records requests must be submitted in writing to DEQ via e-mail, fax, mail, or hand-delivery. The simplest method is through the Online Public Records Request Form.

Fax: 208.373.0417

Mail or drop-off: Department of Environmental Quality
Attn: PRR Coordinator
1410 North Hilton
Boise, ID 83706

What information is needed in the description?
Please **be as detailed as possible** in your request. Include, when available: facility name(s) and address(es), prior facility name(s) and owner(s), county, type of records desired, timeframe involved, etc. The more specific you are, the better we are able to respond to your request.

How long does DEQ have to respond to a public records request?
DEQ is required to respond to all public records requests within three working days following the date the request was received. If DEQ fails to respond to a request within ten working days, regardless of the reason, the request is deemed denied.

What if I receive an extension letter?
It is possible DEQ will be unable to fulfill your request in the three business days allotted. An additional seven working days may be taken in which case you will receive an extension letter. Your extension letter will be sent within three working days of receipt of your request and serves as notification that additional time is required.

What if I receive a denial or partial denial letter?
Certain records may be withheld from disclosure due to their confidential nature (Idaho Code §§ 9-340A through 9-350). All partial and full denials have undergone attorney review. The letter you receive notes specific statutory provisions serving as the basis for your denial. You have the right to file an appeal within 180 days of the mailing date of the denial notice.

How do I determine possible fees associated with my request?

Public records request fees are outlined in the Fee Schedule.

What if I am unable to cover the costs for my request?

You may submit a Public Records Fee Waiver Request Form for review. DEQ shall waive any cost or fee for copies or labor when the requester demonstrates that their request contributes significantly to the public's understanding, does not pertain to the requester's interest in litigation, and that the requester has insufficient financial resources to cover any fees.

How am I billed for my request?

If there is a fee associated with the copying, printing, or mailing of your public records request and/or an associated DEQ out-of-pocket cost, you will receive a separate mailing containing an itemized invoice. You have 30 days to remit payment.

Who can I contact if you have a public records request question?

Kari Kostka is DEQ's Public Records Coordinator and can be reached by phone at 208.373.0199 or via email at kari.kostka@deq.idaho.gov.

Where can I find more information about public records requests?

- DEQ's policy for handling public records requests (includes fee schedule)
- Idaho Statutes – Public Writings
- Attorney General's Idaho Public Records Law Manual
- IDAPA 58 Title 01 Chapter 21 – rules governing the protection and disclosure of records in the possession of the Department of Environmental Quality