



Proposed Amendments to Air Quality Management Fees in Metro Vancouver

Metro Vancouver is seeking feedback on proposed amendments to its air quality management fees regulation bylaw ([Metro Vancouver Regional District \(MVRD\) Air Quality Management Fees Regulation Bylaw No. 1330, 2021 \(Bylaw 1330\)](#)). The bylaw update aims to provide clarity to permittees, balance cost recovery and environmental protection, consider affordability, and align with federal and provincial legislation.

Background

Metro Vancouver charges regulatory fees for authorized air emissions to recover regulatory program costs and encourage emission reductions. Bylaw 1330 establishes these fees to support Metro Vancouver in delivering the service of regional air quality management and regulation.

Under the BC *Environmental Management Act*, Metro Vancouver has delegated authority to manage air quality and control the discharge of air contaminants in the region and can set fees to recover the cost of air quality management services. All businesses that discharge air contaminants in Metro Vancouver are required to comply with a Metro Vancouver permit, regulation, or approval. Metro Vancouver expends substantial resources in developing and promoting compliance with permits and regulations. To date,

Metro Vancouver taxpayers have been funding the difference between the cost of delivering air quality services and fees charged for emissions. The MVRD Board has directed staff to move closer to full cost recovery for Metro Vancouver's air quality regulatory function.

Current Bylaw

Bylaw 1330 sets fees for applications for permits, approvals, and amendments, as well as annual permit, approval, and regulated facility emission fees. Fees include both fixed components and variable components, which are based upon the quantity and type of air contaminant authorized. Air contaminants that are more impactful to human and environmental health are assessed higher fee rates.

Public Opinion Survey

In a public opinion survey commissioned by Metro Vancouver, the majority of respondents stated that businesses that discharge air contaminants should pay all or most of the cost of regulating the discharge of those air contaminants. Residents also supported the concept that fees should be scaled in accordance with the amount and degree of harm of the air contaminants discharged.

2025 Updates Under Consideration

Potential amendments to this bylaw aim to provide clarity to permittees, balance cost recovery and affordability, and align with federal and provincial legislation.

The four main proposed amendments are:

Clarify the calculation of emission fees for multi-category air contaminants

The proposed amendments would clarify that when an air contaminant meets the definition of more than one category, the highest applicable emission fee rate would apply. This approach would support consistency and align fees with the most significant potential impacts of emissions.

Reduce fee rates for odorous air contaminants and clarify how fees are calculated

The proposed amendments would reduce fee rates and clarify that if there is a permit limit for an odorous air contaminant, fees are based on that limit, otherwise they are based on measurements. Extending the use of the 2024 emission fee rate for Total Reduced Sulphur compounds until 2026 is also proposed. A phased increase until 2030 is proposed for all fee rates for odorous air contaminants. These fee rates would continue to encourage emissions reduction. The fee rates were developed with consideration for the emission limits and measurement requirements in current issued permits and approvals. This will maintain fairness and predictability for businesses subject to emission fees.

Reduce maximum fees for applications for authorization, and apply interest on overdue payments

The proposed amendments would introduce a limit of \$450,000 on application fees for businesses applying for authorization to discharge air contaminants. This limit reflects the historical effort to process large, complex facilities' applications for permits or approvals.

The proposed amendments would also introduce a provision to charge interest on overdue payments, consistent with provisions under other Metro Vancouver bylaws.

Update definitions

The proposed amendments would refine definitions for hazardous air pollutants (HAP), volatile organic compounds (VOC), and other air contaminants. The bylaw would also be updated to reflect recent changes to the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999* and the *BC Public Notification Regulation*. The definition of "minor amendment" to permits and approvals will reflect changes to that definition in the revised *BC Public Notification Regulation*.

Taking all bylaw amendments into account, fees calculated for individual permits would continue to promote continuous improvement through overall year-over-year fee increases, and would continue to be scaled in accordance with the amount and degree of potential impact of the air contaminants discharged.

The full discussion paper outlining the proposed amendments in further detail is available at metrovancover.org (search: "air quality fees")

We Value Your Feedback

Metro Vancouver would like your feedback on proposed changes to its air quality permit and regulatory fees. You are invited to provide feedback through engagement opportunities featured on metrovancover.org (search: "air quality fees"), or by email to AQBylaw@metrovancover.org.

Staff will consider feedback and present refined proposed amendments, together with a summary of input and how it was considered, to the MVRD Board in late 2025. If adopted, implementation would proceed in 2026, or sooner if feasible.

Please submit your feedback by August 1, 2025.