Office of Environmental Information

Celebrating Five Years of Success—Accelerating Our Progress in the Future

OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

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ENVIRONMENTAL
INFORMATION

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Letter from EPA's Administrator

"Over the past five years, the Office of Environmental Information (OEI) has positioned the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as a leader among federal agencies in information management by streamlining the ways we collect information electronically; rigorously checking and assuring the quality of our data; expanding public access to our resources and analytical tools; guarding our systems' security and protecting our users' privacy. On the occasion of OEI's fifth anniversary, this report celebrates OEI's accomplishments, evolution and vision for the future."

Michael O. Leavitt
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Letter from EPA's Chief Information Officer

I am pleased to present you this history of the Office of Environmental Information (OEI) and our many accomplishments over the past five years. OEI proactively identifies information technology solutions that strengthen the Agency's core mission of protecting human health and the environment. This new framework and organization for managing environmental information was needed to keep pace with the dramatic changes in technology and to satisfy the public's need for information.

On behalf of OEI's senior leadership, I extend our deepest appreciation to our past and present managers and staff for their dedication and hard work over the last five years, and congratulate everyone for all of our outstanding work and achievements.

Kimberly T. Nelson
Assistant Administrator for Environmental Information
and Chief Information Officer

Key Accomplishments and Events

1997 to 1999

- Reinventing Environmental Information (REI) "Action Plan" fosters data standardization, electronic reporting and Agency-wide Information Technology (IT) decision-making efforts—forming the backbone of OEI's mission
- National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) Report, "Environment.gov: Transforming Environmental Protection for the 21st Century" calls for the creation of an information office at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- EPA's "Comprehensive Information Task Force" Report supports a consolidation of information management functions and presents options for creating a new information office
- REI Information Transition and Organizational Planning (ITOP) staff conduct meetings with stakeholders to determine how a new office would best serve their needs
- **EPA creates the Office of Environmental Information (OEI) as a new Assistant Administrator-level office**
- OEI helps EPA to successfully transition its IT infrastructure and systems for Y2K
- OEI hosts the first forum for EPA and state stakeholders to determine methods for more efficiently and accurately exchanging data
- Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) Persistent Bioaccumulative Toxic (PBT) chemicals rule is finalized, lowering the threshold for certain PBT chemicals and adding other PBT chemicals not previously addressed in TRI reporting requirements
- OEI creates the Quality Information Council (QIC) to provide an Agency-wide governance body for information, quality, and technology activities

2000

- EPA releases TRI Explorer—a Web-based tool that provides fast and easy access to TRI data
- OEI restores EPA's Internet connectivity with strengthened security protocols in response to Government Accountability Office (GAO) concerns
- OEI hosts expanded Agency-wide "Web World" conference to continue the effort to unify and enhance EPA's Web presence
- First QIC meeting is held, establishing a new enterprise approach to developing information management policies and planning investments
- OEI launches TRI Explorer and publicizes annual data through EPA Web site for the first time
- OEI serves on first board of directors for FirstGov, the federal government's public access portal

2001

- OEI issues the Agency Network Security Policy (ANSP), establishing controls and policies to protect EPA's IT infrastructure
- OEI successfully develops and implements the Automated Security Self Evaluation and Remediation Tool (ASSERT) to detect and resolve security weaknesses in EPA's IT infrastructure
- Following the September 11th attacks, OEI develops and launches the World Trade Center (WTC) Monitoring Database to track ambient data in New York City
- OEI begins posting WTC maps and monitoring data results on the EPA Web site to inform the public about the environmental status of the site
- OEI supports anthrax toxins monitoring and reporting in Washington, D.C.
- The Central Data Exchange (CDX) is launched, enabling electronic reporting for environmental programs
- EPA's National Computer Center, North Carolina moves from rented space to the new Research Triangle Park Campus with minimal downtime or disruption to the Agency
- First data standard developed by the Environmental Data Standards Council is approved
- OEI deploys first BlackBerry service for EPA
- OEI rolls out first "Information Products Bulletin," providing stakeholders with early notification of significant information products under development by EPA

2002

- EPA, including OEI, actively participates in the Columbia space shuttle cleanup efforts
- OEI responds to the Administrator's call for an Environmental Indicators Initiative
- EPA's Environmental Information Exchange Network grant program awards the first resources to states to re-engineer their environmental business processes and develop new ways of sharing data
- OEI begins Agency Web site audits to ensure EPA truly is "One Agency, One Voice"
- EPA launches the EDOCKET Web site and opens the EPA Docket Center to the public, providing one location to centrally access rulemaking documents and manage and collect public comments
- OEI holds EPA's first virtual job fair in support of workforce planning
- EPA becomes the federal government's lead for the eRulemaking Initiative
- OEI issues EPA's Information Quality Guidelines (IQG), to ensure delivery of quality information
- EPA appoints its first Chief Architect to oversee the Enterprise Architecture effort
- Partnering with the Office of Administration and Resources Management (OARM), OEI successfully completes the multi-year effort to move approximately 6,000 staff members, telecommunications and computer networks from the Waterside Mall complex to the Federal Triangle complex in Washington, D.C.
- EPA introduces the Toxics Release Inventory—Made Easy (TRI-ME) software, an interactive, user-friendly software tool that guides facilities through the TRI reporting experience and allows facilities to report via the Internet through CDX
- OEI begins publishing EPA's weekly "CIO Update"

2003

- OEI issues first Geospatial Network Blueprint, outlining a geospatial program for the Agency
- OEI publishes the first "Draft Report on the Environment" describing for the American public what we know and don't know about the condition of the environment
- OEI's Program Management Office (PMO) is established to coordinate the development of OEI's portion of the "Environmental and Health Protection Target Architecture"
- OEI launches Web sites delivering environmental information to specific audiences, such as high-school students
- OEI leads "Topics Lite" reorganization of EPA's Web site to streamline content by subject area and eliminate redundancies
- EPA's node on the Environmental Information Exchange Network becomes functional on CDX to enable states and EPA to share data
- EPA, leading a team of five federal agencies, launches Regulations.gov, the first milestone in the eRulemaking Initiative
- Window to My Environment (WME) Web site is rolled out nationwide

2004

- EPA's EDOCKET receives high volume of public comments for its first non-EPA posting (a proposed rule jointly published by the Office of Personnel Management and the Department of Homeland Security), extending this citizen-oriented tool beyond the borders of Agency applications
- "E-Government@EPA Report: Accelerating Our Progress Using New Information Technology" is published
- ASSERT, a tool developed by OEI to detect and resolve security weaknesses, is used by the Social Security Administration
- IT Enterprise Architecture Policy is enacted
- OEI achieves a "green" on the President's Management Agenda (PMA) scorecard for implementation of E-Government Initiatives, signifying that EPA has met all standards for success in this category
- EPA and its state partners announce the successful launch of the Environmental Information Exchange Network
- OEI provides and supports IT infrastructure for the Emergency Operations Center

Introduction

The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Office of Environmental Information (OEI) was established in October 1999, on the eve of the 21st century and at the end of a decade of radical change in information technology (IT) and information management (IM). OEI was designed to be a center of excellence that advocates the use and management of information as a strategic resource to enhance public health and environmental protection. Its mission was to take EPA into the information-driven world of the new millennium.

The 1990s saw great technological change that impacted all organizations. Networked personal computers pushed mainframes aside for almost every IT use. By the end of the decade the Internet was emerging as a revolutionary social force, transforming the way we receive and use information. Yet, positive changes were often offset by hidden costs and unanticipated side effects. The promise of cheap and easy computing was giving way to technological turmoil and management uncertainty. OEI, like its counterparts in industry and across government, brings discipline to a field that still evolves with unprecedented speed.

Information is EPA's most mission-critical asset. OEI provides strategic focus for the care and maintenance of this essential resource—improving data quality and data collection, enhancing public and Agency access to environmental information, and modernizing EPA's underlying technological infrastructure. The result: improved, more defensible decision making and better public understanding of complex environmental problems.

OEI quickly met organizational challenges and emerged as a proactive player, anticipating IT and IM solutions that will more effectively meet the Agency's business needs while balancing the needs of public access against the demands of security and confidentiality. This report examines OEI's transformation over the past five years, spotlights the people who have made it happen, and presents a vision for the future. The pace of IT innovation is still accelerating. OEI's next five years promise to be as challenging and exciting as the first five.

Chapter 1

Getting Started

1997 – 1999

The journey to establish OEI was an evolutionary process. Key events, both within EPA and across the federal government, guided OEI's development and paved the way for the principles upon which OEI was founded. This chapter describes those key events and their contribution to OEI.

Over time, the federal government has looked for ways to improve efficiency and effectiveness of information management. Emphasis placed on the government's ability to measure performance, ensure accountability, integrate data, and respond to information needs necessitated fundamental changes in the way information and data were managed. At the federal level, several requirements—the Clinger-Cohen Act, the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars A-130[1] and A-11[2]—were implemented to ensure that federal agencies have processes and procedures in place to implement IT projects within budget and schedule constraints and align with agency missions and goals. The Clinger-Cohen Act required agencies and departments to establish the role of the Chief Information Officer (CIO) to ensure consistent agency-wide IT decisions that would eliminate "stove-piped" information resources management. In response to this Act, EPA became one of the first federal agencies to identify and appoint a CIO.

EPA also proactively identified opportunities to improve its information management practices. Beginning in 1997, EPA's Reinventing Environmental Information (REI) initiative identified information management practices that would improve the quality and accessibility of environmental data. As a result, EPA began data standardization efforts to establish a common language that would work across environmental information applications. Additionally, REI's electronic reporting capabilities helped improve data quality and reduce the cost and time burden on entities who report information to EPA. REI improved Agency-wide IT decision-making by creating a National Systems Board, a technical advisory group that coordinated systems reengineering efforts across the Agency. As evident by these successes and their lasting impact, REI's legacy is profoundly embodied in the current organization and principles of OEI.

"People sensed that EPA was on the verge of a change, that we needed to get on the wagon or be left behind. However, when considering how to change, there were few good organizational models to look to for guidance. OEI had to blaze its own trail. OEI successfully changed the perception of IT from being a black box to a valuable shared resource. OEI improved the quality and collection of data and demonstrated EPA's ability to integrate data across programs, regions and offices in a way that facilitates the understanding and use of the information." *—Margaret Schneider, Acting Assistant Administrator, OEI, 1999-2000 and 2001; and Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, OEI, 2000-2002*

"The creation of OEI represented a new vision reflecting the importance of integrated information necessary for decision making. It recognized the necessity to share information with all our constituent groups, the public, the regulated community, our state partners and our own environmental professionals." *—Al Pesachowitz, Associate Assistant Administrator, 1999-2000*

"We were caught up in the sense that [creating OEI] was something bigger—there was a real sense of purpose. This organization was so different. It was groundbreaking—and it stood the test of time." *—Kathy Petruccelli, Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator, OEI, 2001 and Director, OPRO, OEI 1999-2002*

"OEI's role in the Agency is unique. It affords those of us who work here the opportunity to interact with individuals involved in all kinds of work, in every part of the Agency, and at all levels of staff and management. The inherent cross fertilization of ideas resulting from the nature of our role in the Agency makes work in OEI particularly enriching." *—Constance Downs, OIC, OEI*

While changes in information management practices brought about by REI and efforts to comply with federal legislation significantly streamlined the IT infrastructure and facilitated decision making, the Agency believed it could achieve even greater efficiencies by establishing a central office with responsibility for information management, policy, and technology. On October 24, 1999, OEI was established to answer this need.

The synergies created by establishing OEI enabled EPA to realize successes that it is achieving in IT and IM today. In the beginning, OEI centralized several key IT functions and programs across the Agency and empowered EPA's CIO to fulfill responsibilities mandated by the Clinger-Cohen Act and other federal legislation. Centralization also allowed OEI to take the lead for improving EPA's data quality and information collection while reducing costs and reporting burdens for partners and stakeholders. OEI's focus on managing the business of IT and IM ensured that the products and services EPA offers represent best practices and are responsive to customer needs. OEI's efforts to manage and deliver IT and IM services have supported EPA significantly in providing the public with reliable environmental information and sharing environmental data in a consistent, efficient manner.

[1] Office of Management and Budget, Circular No. A-130 "Transmittal Memorandum #4, Management of Federal Information Resources," November 28, 2000

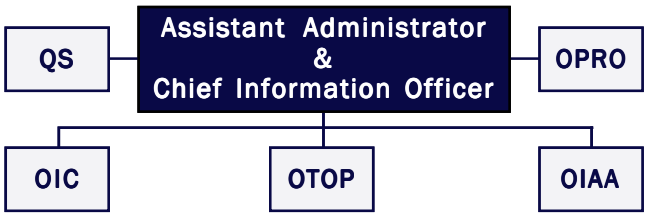
[2] Office of Management and Budget, Circular No. A-11 "Preparation, Submission, and Execution of the Budget," revised July 16, 2004

Chapter 2

Merging Different Cultures into One

1999 – 2000

Setting out to create OEI and to staff a new office with the appropriate people was a unique and challenging experience. EPA senior management knew that in order for OEI to achieve its mission they would need to recruit, select, and place approximately 400 EPA employees from across the Agency. OEI was staffed from elements of the Office of Administration and Resources Management (OARM), the Office of Prevention, Pesticides and Toxic Substances (OPPTS), the Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation (OPPE), the Office of Research and Development (ORD) and the Administrator's Office (AO). Staff from these offices represented very distinct educational and experience backgrounds, skill mixes, and organizational cultures.



From this diverse group of people, four OEI offices and the Quality Staff (QS) were formed to help the newly appointed CIO carry out OEI's responsibilities. The offices included: the Office of Information Analysis and Access (OIAA), the Office of Information Collection (OIC), the Office of Planning Resources and Outreach (OPRO), and the Office of Technology Operations and Planning (OTOP). These offices provide OEI with the expertise to perform information management, quality assurance, data collection, information analysis and dissemination, policy development, and IT infrastructure management functions.

Once an organizational structure was finalized and staff were allocated, OEI quickly focused on the business of merging a number of technology, infrastructure, and program functions across the Agency to improve performance and usability of EPA's IT assets.

"I am amazed at the breadth and scope of OEI. We are a leader in best practices for security, investment management, and managed services for desktop. People across the Agency are now coming to us to provide them with solutions. Even private sector vendors now want our business to showcase their capabilities for IT and information management because of our achievements with data exchange and managed desktops." *—Linda Travers, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, OEI*

"OIAA came out of the overall design concept of OEI—an organization that handles the information flow from collection through analysis. OIAA was the cluster of activities related to analysis and access. Bringing the two closer together was key to OEI's development. The Agency had been making small steps with each function, but bringing the two together would significantly enhance both—bringing better information to the public and EPA more quickly." *—Elaine Stanley, Director, OIAA, OEI, 1999-2004*

"The initial challenge was to help employees transition from the offices and projects they came from into the new OEI environment so that they could have a sense of shared responsibility in the new Office. OEI staff came together from diverse offices across the Agency and were able to join together to get the job done." *—Ed Levine, Assistant Administrator, OEI, 2001*

"Everyone in OEI and EPA can be proud of the National Computer Center. The move to our new state-of-the-art facility was transparent to EPA staff because it occurred when customer usage was low—from midnight on New Years through New Years day. EPA experienced only 18 hours of down time." *—Rick Martin, Deputy Director, OIAA, OEI*

Merging EPA's IT Investment Decision Making Processes

OEI chairs the Quality Information Council (QIC), established in 2000, which provides oversight and recommendations for the Agency's information management, policies and investments. The QIC advises the Assistant Administrator for OEI and CIO on decisions related to the Agency's information policies, program implementation issues, and information investments. The QIC is an efficient forum through which senior Agency officials can raise and debate strategic information issues facing the Agency, and provide opportunities for cross-office exchange and development of ideas on quality and information. As a result, the QIC has stimulated the creation of internal EPA partnerships on information strategies, initiatives, and opportunities for efficiency, and has encouraged forward-looking discussions of current and emerging issues.

Merging EPA's Operations, Facilities and IT Infrastructure

As OEI began daily operations, it became clear that much of the Agency's operations, facilities, and IT infrastructure were inadequate to support staff growth and enterprise IT needs. Streamlined operations, modern facilities, and a more robust IT infrastructure were needed. OEI embraced the challenge and successfully responded to this need by ensuring that EPA staff had the tools they needed to operate more efficiently.

OEI integrated established programs and services upon its creation in 1999. One of the services to undergo integration into OEI was the Working Capital Fund (WCF), which provides funding for centralized administrative IT services to EPA program offices, such as: telecommunications services, network management services, and BlackBerry support. OEI is well positioned to understand IT requirements across the Agency and can ensure that WCF monies are spent efficiently while providing the tools and capacities needed to carry out the Agency's business.

EPA was already engaged in a multi-year effort to move employees to more efficient, cost-effective facilities and supply them with the most appropriate IT tools available. In partnership with OARM, OEI was able to successfully relocate 6,000 personnel from an aging, outdated facility to modern office space at the Federal Triangle complex that supports the Agency's technology needs. In addition to the physical relocation that took place, EPA experienced a cultural shift toward implementing Agency-wide solutions when OEI began the local area network (LAN) consolidation project. Known as Shared Services, this project consolidated and upgraded file servers, computer rooms, LAN closets, and telecommunications equipment. Shared Services eliminated redundant equipment, improved network connectivity, increased productivity, and resulted in more effective management of EPA's IT resources.

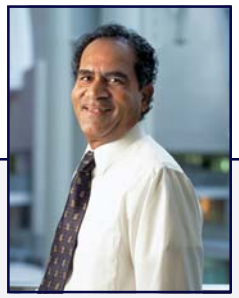
National Computer Center, North Carolina

OEI assumed responsibility for the National Computer Center (NCC) in North Carolina and managed its relocation to EPA's new Research Triangle Park campus. This facility operates the Agency's network servers, mainframes, and supercomputers, as well as develops, deploys, and manages applications and provides telecommunication services for EPA's headquarters, regional offices, and laboratories. Today, NCC manages over 535,000 Web pages, maintaining EPA's strong Internet presence. Providing the public with robust Web access to EPA's data would be impossible without NCC's technology infrastructure support.

Using Technology to Make the Toxics Release Inventory More Citizen Centric

The Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) contains information about releases of certain chemicals and management of wastes at a wide variety of sources, including manufacturing operations, certain service businesses, and federal facilities. Since its inception, the program has grown in several important ways, including expanding the businesses covered and the chemicals on which they report. Over the past few years, EPA has taken several steps to improve the efficiency of collecting and releasing the TRI data, and to increase the accuracy and availability of information. EPA's goal is to process all reporting forms via the Internet. By doing so, we could save taxpayers approximately $1.5 million per year.

- In 2000, EPA launched TRI Explorer —a Web-based tool that provides fast and easy access to TRI data.
- In 2002 (for 2001 reporting year data), EPA saved thousands of dollars in mailing and printing cost by providing facilities with an electronic Facility Data Profile (FDP). The FDP enables facilities to review all of their data submissions to ensure they were captured correctly, and provides an opportunity to review and respond to errors and alerts.
- In 2002 (for 2001 reporting year data), EPA introduced Toxics Release Inventory—Made Easy (TRI-ME) software, an interactive, user-friendly software tool that guides facilities through the TRI reporting experience and enabled facilities to report via the Internet through the Central Data Exchange (CDX) for the first time.
- In 2003 (for 2002 reporting year data), TRI-ME enabled reporters to use an electronic signature to submit a paperless form over the Internet using CDX. It takes EPA approximately 4 minutes to process a submission via CDX versus 35 minutes to process a paper submission. EPA processes approximately 24,000 submissions each year.



"The TRI program has been very aggressive in promoting data quality and implementing electronic reporting. EPA can be very proud of these efforts." —*Velu Senthil, OIAA, OEI*

- By 2004 (for 2003 reporting year data), 93 percent of the TRI reporting community used TRI-ME software, and 34 percent submitted their data using CDX (up from 22 percent in 2003 for 2002 reporting year data, a 50 percent increase).

OEI is continuing to make improvements to the TRI program to increase efficiency. Collaborating with state partners, OEI is developing an Exchange Network *(page 17)* to enable direct exchange of information between EPA and states. The goal of this initiative is to end duplicative reporting for facilities currently required to submit data to the state as well as EPA. OEI plans to migrate the CD-based TRI-ME software to a Web-based application, resulting in an even more user-friendly tool and reducing costs for EPA.

Chapter 3

Rising to Security and Information Management Challenges

2000 - 2001

Since its inception, OEI has demonstrated strong leadership in identifying IT security weaknesses, implementing essential protections, and certifying the security of its IT systems. OEI's leadership in this area began in response to a Government Accountability Office (GAO) audit that identified security breaks in EPA's Internet. OEI took immediate action to strengthen the Agency's infrastructure, suspending all data exchange with the outside world until the security problems were rectified by implementing the Agency's first firewall—thus protecting EPA's data and infrastructure from unauthorized use. In doing this, OEI demonstrated its long-term dedication to not only address EPA's information security weaknesses, but to use its expertise to partner with federal agencies, states, and other stakeholders to protect national security interests and respond to emergency situations.

To address weaknesses identified in the GAO audit, OEI established the Technical Information Security Staff (TISS), an Agency-wide IT security program, which substantially improved EPA's IT security infrastructure. Through this program, OEI implemented firewall and intrusion detection sensors to monitor for evidence of suspicious activities. OEI also issued policy to provide direction on implementing basic controls required to protect EPA's communications network from internal and external threats. Further, OEI documented its risk-based approach to managing IT assets. The ability to address these serious security concerns in a timely fashion demonstrated OEI's critical role in and commitment to protecting the Agency's resources.

Emerging as a Leader in Information Assurance

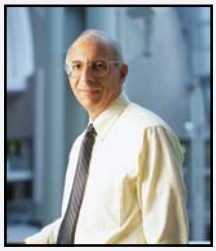
Through OEI's efforts in the security area, EPA emerged as a leader in information assurance and used its innovation and expertise to help other federal agencies address their security weaknesses. OEI made a substantial investment in the Automated Security Self Evaluation and Remediation Tool (ASSERT) to identify and remedy security weaknesses in response to the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) requirements to conduct annual assessments. Since its inception in 2000, ASSERT has helped improve EPA's FISMA standings from a D- to a C+ on the OMB scorecard. As a result, EPA is now 12 to 18 months ahead of the federal government's schedule for implementing an automated FISMA reporting solution. Seeing EPA's rapid success and modeling their leadership, other federal agencies are also leveraging ASSERT to detect and resolve their own IT security weaknesses.

"By focusing on cyber-security, EPA has taken great steps to protect the integrity of the Agency." —*Analytical Perspectives, Budget of the United States, Fiscal Year 2005*

"The Internet security crisis really brought OEI into focus. This event solidified OEI, bringing people of different backgrounds together to solve the problem." —*Mark Badalamente, Associate Director, OPRO, OEI, 1999-2001 and Acting Director, OPRO, OEI, 2001*

"September 11th underscored the importance of OEI's support of communication between first responders, displaced employees, and with the public." *—Robin Gonzalez, Director, National Technology Services Division, OTOP, OEI*

"[EPA] has excelled at protecting their information technology assets. EPA has implemented quantifiable measures of repelled attacks and blocked viruses." *—Analytical Perspectives, Budget of the United States, Fiscal Year 2005*



"A few years ago, EPA was in a security crisis and was publicly criticized for security issues. Today, EPA has turned the crisis around and is cited by OMB and others as a leader for IT security." *—George Bonina, Director, Technical Information Security Staff, OTOP, OEI*

Supporting EPA's Disaster Response

OEI has also used its expertise to assist program offices in coordinating national responses to security threats and emergency situations affecting the nation. In particular, OEI was critical to EPA's response to the September 11th attacks. OEI created a World Trade Center (WTC) Multi-Agency Environmental Monitoring Database to house the results of ambient air monitoring collected in New York City by 13 federal, state, local, and private organizations and worked in collaboration with EPA Region II, the Office of Public Affairs (OPA), Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER), Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards (OAQPS), and many other program staff to provide communications and outreach materials to concerned citizens. OEI's role in the WTC Response marked the first time that EPA's Web site was used as a primary vehicle for communication with the affected public in the aftermath of a national emergency. EPA posted interactive maps showing the location of monitoring sites, data tables with monitoring results for specific constituents, and detailed narrative discussions to assist readers in putting results in context.

In addition to the ambient monitoring conducted in the immediate aftermath of the WTC collapse, OEI staff supported response efforts by developing and deploying the WTC Indoor Air Residential Services Database. The database was designed to track requests from residents in the lower Manhattan area who desired government-sponsored dust testing and cleanup services.

As a result of security threats and disaster response needs, OEI partnered with OSWER to create the state-of-the-art Emergency Operations Center (EOC). OEI provides the IT infrastructure and equipment that enables the EOC to process and manipulate data in a real-time environment. Through the EOC, OSWER is able to organize EPA's response to disasters, hazardous materials spills, and terrorist incidents with other emergency response personnel from EPA and other federal agencies. To assist with this process, OEI developed innovative tools, such as the Emergency Response Analyzer (ERA), which enable response personnel in Headquarters and regional response centers to quickly visualize impacts from environmental emergency situations, such as chemical or oil spills, plant fires, explosions, or other events. The ERA also supports the analysis of the effects of the emergency situation on vulnerable populations or environmental resources.

Chapter 4

Launching OEI's Three Keystone Projects

2002 - 2003

OEI evolved and developed its vision and strategy to support a number of objectives, which include: keeping the public informed and aware, assessing and utilizing relevant technology, integrating and sharing data across organizations, and establishing governance processes for information management.

The Environmental Indicators Initiative, the Environmental Information Exchange Network, and the Enterprise Architecture are three initiatives that have and will continue to play significant roles in supporting the Agency's mission of protecting human health and the environment. These projects are central to OEI and will provide a lasting legacy for the future of environmental information resources.

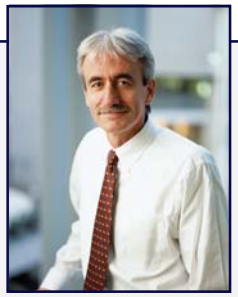
Improving Environmental Quality and Human Health Assessments

The idea of an Environmental Indicators Initiative, first proposed over 14 years ago, has finally been realized through an Agency-wide effort guided by an Executive Steering Committee and led by OEI and the Office of Research and Development (ORD). Environmental indicators of environmental progress provide EPA with the ability to identify the connections among strategic goals, determine how national reporting and indicators can help improve performance, and collaboratively manage for results in the future. Environmental indicators also offer the opportunity to track and anticipate environmental and health issues that could be of future concern.

In 2003, EPA published its first-ever "Draft Report on the Environment" (ROE) which highlighted the progress the United States and territories have made in protecting national air, water, and land resources. The draft ROE also detailed the measures that can be used to describe environmental and human health conditions. As a result of this groundbreaking report, EPA began a critical national dialogue on how to improve its ability to assess the nation's environmental quality and human health and how to use that knowledge to better manage for measurable environmental results in the future. The Environmental Indicators Initiative moves EPA toward a performance-based rather than process-based national environmental management system.

Supporting Environmental Data Exchange

EPA exchanges a wealth of information with a variety of partners, including states, tribes, and businesses. Environmental data are relied upon to make timely, informed decisions regarding human health and the environment. As such, OEI is striving to create an infrastructure that facilitates the exchange of information



"OEI is set up to handle the lifecycle of information—from the collection of data, the management of the data, to data access and analysis. And behind this is the technology that is the backbone that makes it all happen. Having all of the components of information technology and management in one office is a great asset to the Agency, and helps us be as successful as we are."
—Mike Flynn, Director, OIAA, OEI

"The Exchange Network concept helped to re-invigorate EPA's relationships with the states. Information exchanges are no longer just about reporting information to EPA and meeting regulatory requirements. We are exchanging more data than are required to meet regulatory requirements and are collecting better data. The expanded data collection efforts enable EPA and its partners to obtain the right information necessary to protect the environment." *—Andrew Battin, Director, Information Exchange and Services Division, OIC, OEI*

while ensuring the security, quality, and accessibility of that data. The Environmental Information Exchange Network (Exchange Network) was developed in partnership with states to enable participating organizations to share data in a uniform format. As a result, the Exchange Network transmits environmental data between states, tribes, territories, and other partners more easily; reduces the burden on reporting facilities; and safeguards the quality, completeness, and consistency of the data processed.

EPA's Exchange Network Grant Program provides funding to help states improve the infrastructure of their environmental programs and supports innovative data sharing strategies. Through these grants, 15 states now use the Exchange Network to successfully exchange information about facilities, beach quality, water discharges, and air emissions in support of national environmental protection.

The Central Data Exchange (CDX) is EPA's node on the Exchange Network for environmental data exchanges to the Agency. CDX enables streamlined, electronic submission of data via the Internet and is used by reporting facilities from states, tribes, local government, and the private sector. Fourteen data systems, including the Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) data, are now available through CDX. For TRI Reporting Year 2003, there was a 49 percent increase in the number of reports on chemical release and other waste management data submitted to EPA by using CDX, as compared to the previous year when reports were submitted via mail or diskette.

Using Enterprise Architecture to Assess and Manage Agency Resources

As cutting-edge information technology quickly becomes standard at external enterprises, EPA must constantly reassess its own IT requirements to best meet its goals. OEI works diligently to ensure that internal governance processes and policies address the Agency's ever-changing needs, while maintaining the security and quality of EPA's resources. One way OEI accomplished this is through the development and maintenance of an Agency Enterprise Architecture.

Mandated by the Clinger-Cohen Act, an Enterprise Architecture (EA) serves as a tool for senior leadership to visualize how and where to best apply resources—people, technology, and money—to attain the organization's strategic goals. OEI established its EA Team in 2001, appointing a Chief Architect and beginning the process of documenting elements of the EA conceptual framework (i.e., goals, business, data, applications, and technology).

While OEI leads the EA effort, the program is a collaborative effort that includes representatives from across the Agency. EPA's EA has continued to rapidly mature and has received awards and recognition as one of the best in government. OEI published the first baseline architecture and provisional target architecture in 2001 and received among the highest marks of any agency from OMB. Through OEI's strong leadership, EPA has become a forerunner in the architecture arena, and the CIO was appointed to key positions supporting cross-government initiatives and committees.

Chapter 5

Providing the Right Information to the Right People at the Right Time

2003 – 2004

One of OEI's key goals is to enhance EPA's ability to provide its stakeholders and the public with access to environmental data and information. This requires that the necessary content is available to the public and also that the content is presented via user-friendly interfaces. To support this goal, OEI provided strong leadership in working with program offices and other internal and external stakeholders to make critical environmental information easily accessible.

The President's Management Agenda (PMA) requires federal agencies to include E-Government initiatives that integrate agency operations and information technology. As detailed below, EPA has implemented a number of programs in support of the PMA, improving the quality of customer service to citizens, businesses, and other stakeholders through tools that enhance access to information and streamline the Agency's business.

Supporting Citizen Involvement in Federal Government

Citizens, businesses, and the federal government must be able to easily access information about and participate in the federal rulemaking process. Both the EPA Docket Center and the EDOCKET Web site allow the Agency to centrally manage rulemaking documents and make them available for public review and comment. Due to EDOCKET's success, a result of innovation and high utilization, EPA was chosen to lead the federal government-wide eRulemaking Initiative. The eRulemaking Initiative is helping to overcome barriers to public participation in the federal regulatory process by improving the public's ability to find, understand, and comment on regulatory actions. The Web site receives over 300,000 hits per month.

EPA led a team of five federal agencies to develop the Regulations.gov Web site, the first module of the eRulemaking Initiative. A federal regulatory clearinghouse, Regulations.gov was officially launched in January 2003. This site is recognized as an extraordinarily helpful, one-stop tool for citizens to review and comment on all active federal rulemakings. Regulations.gov provides the public with online access to every open rule published by more than 160 different federal agencies.

"EPA has an exceptional team of information technology experts and I'm proud to work with them. It's been very gratifying to see how EPA's E-Government efforts have grown. I'm especially proud of EPA's leadership of the eRulemaking Initiative and the many awards the interagency team has received. They are at the forefront of using information technology to make a real difference in the timeliness, quality, and openness of the federal rulemaking process." *—Rick Otis, Deputy Assistant Administrator, OEI*

"I believe OEI is at a crossroads to lead EPA in fulfilling its role as an information broker. EPA is currently and will continue to provide information to our stakeholders and the public, allowing them to make informed decisions about their health and surrounding environment." *—Mike Cullen, Director, Program Management Office, OEI*

"I use Regulations.gov to help introduce students to the federal rulemaking process…The clean, simple interface allows students to concentrate on the content and how it fits into the rulemaking process." *—Scott Matheson, Reference and Government Documents Librarian, Lillian Goldman Law Library, Yale Law School*

Merging EPA's Web Presence into One Unified Voice

Early in its existence, OEI identified its Web sites as key mechanisms to communicate to EPA's wide audience. Beginning in 1999, OEI initiated several projects to unify and enhance the Agency's Web sites. Three key activities strengthened EPA's ability to provide the public with access to environmental information over the Internet—the development of Web site design and programming standards, testing for customer usability, and development of formal processes to ensure EPA's Web site is accessible to those with special needs.

OEI has been in the forefront of improving the public's access to EPA information and enhancing EPA's ability to utilize the Internet to disseminate materials and communicate its mission and actions. In February 2000, OEI initiated a Web site usability testing program to ensure that EPA Web sites are navigable, designed for the intended audience(s), and easy for the public (or specialized user) to locate and understand. In April 2000, OEI created a browse index of EPA Web sites to improve the navigation of the EPA Web site. In 2002, OEI worked with the Agency to institute standard design and navigation elements for all EPA Internet materials, and it initiated audit procedures to ensure compliance with accessibility, look and feel, and content standards. By implementing a standard look for the EPA Web site, users are able to more easily navigate the site and find the information for which they are looking. In addition, OEI implemented provisions of Section 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act to ensure that EPA's electronic and information technology is accessible by all citizens, including people with disabilities.

In the fall of 2004, OEI will release the Mercury Portal, the first project of its kind and magnitude in use at EPA. The Mercury Portal harmonizes all of EPA's information on mercury so EPA customers can access all the information in one place. The Mercury Portal project is instrumental in helping EPA reach its goal of "One Agency, One Voice."

OEI has worked diligently to enhance the public's access to environmental information through the Internet. The number of available pages on the EPA Web site has increased 50 percent from 360,056 pages in 2000 to 539,780 pages in 2004. The monthly average of page requests in 2004 is approximately 30 million, which is an increase over the approximately 14 million average number of page requests in 2000.

Promoting Effective Use of Geographic Data

OEI provides the analytical tools necessary to support decision making. Specifically, these tools facilitate the exchange of environmental information so that EPA and its stakeholders can respond to environmental problems, set priorities, make sound decisions, manage for results, and measure performance. Several key projects achieved these goals by improving EPA's management of geospatial information and promoting information exchange.

EPA began its Geospatial program in 2001 with the completion of the "Geospatial Activities Baseline Assessment." The baseline documented the extensive use of geospatial data and technologies across EPA, summarizing the issues that hindered Agency staff from using these data and technologies effectively. In June 2003, EPA completed the Geospatial Blueprint, building upon the Baseline Assessment by outlining a Geospatial Program that serves the interest of the Agency and establishes best practices for managing geospatial data and technology. One such technology is the Geospatial Data Index (GDI), a Web site which allows internal users to easily search for, locate, and obtain geospatial data for use in environmental analysis. EPA also supports Geospatial One-Stop, an E-Government initiative that enhances government efficiency and enables government to be more citizen-based and results by providing access to geospatial data from across the federal government in one easy-to-use Web site.

In January 2001, EPA launched its Window to My Environment (WME) Web site. WME combines state-of-the-art interactive geographic maps with links to federal, state, and local environmental data. With over a million users per year, this innovative access tool provides the public with detailed information on environmental issues and conditions affecting communities and other locations. The media, including national publications, have lauded WME as a valuable public resource. Additional proof of success is demonstrated as WME is incorporated into classroom curriculums across the country, providing environmental information to EPA's youngest customers. By 2003, WME's coverage was national. OEI is working to continuously improve WME's capability to provide the public with the most current environmental information in a geographic context.

"This [WME] site is great, and as a tax payer, I support it."
—Private Citizen

"Geospatial technology is allowing us to do unprecedented new things. Over the last decade, geospatial tools have linked with Internet technology to allow us to pull data together from many sources. A "net-centric" approach to geospatial information lets us go directly to the best subject matter sources, pull in the latest data in real time, and visualize it within seconds." *—Brenda Smith, Geospatial Information Officer, OEI*

"…I would just like to thank you for this [Environmental Kids Club] Web site! You have made it so easy to understand and have so many amazing ideas for not only kids, but even students in college like myself…Thank you for caring." *— A Student*

"The goal of this project [Regulations.gov] is nothing short of creating a one-stop portal where the public can look at, download and comment on federal rulemaking. It will revolutionize the way the federal government writes rules and solicits comments from the public." *—Oscar Morales, Director, Collection Strategies Division, OIC, OEI*

OEI's newest GIS tool is Dynamic Choropleth Maps (DC Maps). DC Maps is a technologically advanced mapping tool that EPA offices are using to explore possible relationships among demographic, environmental, and health data. DC Maps can be used to create quick, geographically-based displays or to identify possible associations among indicators for further study.

Establishing Standards to Improve Data Reporting and Access

Data Standards streamline reporting and reduce redundancies, making it possible for disparate systems to send information to and receive information from other systems. OEI's development of a System of Registries (SoR) revolutionized data reporting and access through the use of common data element definitions and formats across EPA and with states, tribes, and other strategic partners. Registries in the SoR, such as the OEI-managed Substance Registry System and the Facility Registry System, support the discovery and use of information managed, and of interest to EPA, its partners, the regulated community, and the public. With the SoR, and through the use of Web services, states and tribes are able to access the Agency's most accurate and complete chemical and facility identification information. This ensures consistency between EPA data and state and tribal data, improving the quality of data as it comes into EPA rather than requiring extensive data corrections after it is received.

SoR use has increased dramatically from 2001 to 2003. Information downloads rose by a significant 60 percent—from 3,600 items downloaded in 2001 to 5,750 in 2003. Customer feedback also increased by 63 percent—in 2003, 278 feedback emails were received compared to 171 in 2001.

Leading Agency Efforts to Improve Information Quality

OEI is the lead office implementing the Agency's Quality System, which ensures that environmental programs and decisions are supported by high-quality data, and that the correct data type is available for its intended use. The Quality System ensures that decisions involving environmental technology are backed by appropriate engineering standards and practices through detailed quality assurance procedures and reviews.

In accordance with guidelines issued by OMB, EPA issued its own Information Quality Guidelines articulating the Agency's goals for improving information quality, creating policies that ensure the delivery of quality information, and developing a transparent approach to corrections. As part of this effort, OEI maintains a public Web page where stakeholders who are interested in data quality have a "one-stop" shop for reviewing Information Quality Guidelines (IQG) requests received by EPA and corresponding Agency responses.

Four years ago, OEI created the Integrated Error Correction Process (IECP), a centralized service which responds to the public's data quality inquiries. The IECP allows the public to immediately notify the Agency of potential data quality problems on any of its Web pages. By way of the IECP, OEI has handled over 16,000 error notifications in order to ensure the quality and accuracy of the data and information used by the public. By centralizing internal Agency processes and making them more prominent, accountable, and easier to use, the IECP has become a valuable customer service tool for the public.

"For the first time in the Agency's history, all organizations that are involved in environmental information and data operations have approved quality management plans…this ensures that decisions can be supported by data of known quality." —*Reggie Cheatham, Director, Quality Staff, OEI*

Supporting the Agency's Workforce

OEI's success hinges on its most valuable resource—its people. OEI has proactively and enthusiastically taken several steps to assess its IT workforce capabilities and put measures in place to grow and develop the skills of its staff so they can deliver the goods and services to customers. OEI issued the EPA Executive and Senior IT Management Assessment to identify and remedy skills gaps; provided training on IT security, project management, and IT skills; and participated in the first ever government-wide IT virtual job fair.

OEI extends value to EPA through continuous innovation, identifying and implementing emerging technologies and strategic solutions that provide immediate benefits to the Agency's business. OEI actively supports EPA's rapid business environment, traveling staff, and flexible workplace policies with revolutionary technologies, such as BlackBerry wireless e-mail services. Two thousand BlackBerry devices are in use by EPA managers and field staff for critical daily and hourly communication. BlackBerry devices enable staff to expand their productive time, respond quickly to critical messages, and reduce cell phone expenditures. EPA's vital and emergency response teams, including the Continuity of Operations (COOP) staff and disaster recovery teams rely heavily on communication via BlackBerry.

"One of OEI's greatest strengths is its commitment to invest in its people. We really care about developing an IT-savvy, service-oriented workforce who like what they do and are considered the "best in the business" by other federal agencies and departments. OEI is full of opportunities for employees who want to learn new things and take on new challenges." *—Maggie Mitchell, Director, OPRO, OEI*

"I have been in OEI since its early conception. Now I'm working on OEI's IT Human Capital plans, programs and training while working on my master's degree. I look forward to continuing my career in OEI!" *—Lisa Treadwell, OTOP, OEI*

Refining the IT Project Review Process

Closely linked to EA, and also mandated by the Clinger-Cohen Act, the Capital Planning and Investment Control (CPIC) process ensures that an agency's IT projects align with its mission and goals. Each year, EPA formally reassesses existing and reviews new investments that generally cost more than $3 million per year. OEI leads the CPIC process by providing guidance, training, review, and outreach to the rest of the Agency for developing business cases and related documentation that detail and justify all aspects of the project—management strategy, alternatives, risks, cost/benefit ratios, and ongoing performance. Smaller projects require less extensive documentation but are still reviewed against the Agency's IT requirements.

With the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, OEI co-chairs the review committee that evaluates and ranks the Agency's overall IT investment portfolio prior to submitting the final portfolio to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) as part of EPA's annual budget submission.

"OEI has enhanced our ability to protect the environment and promote public health by accelerating the cost-effective use of technology to make information more readily available to regulators, the regulated community, and the public; and has done this through extensive collaboration with its partners from throughout EPA, the states, and the private sector." *—E. Ramona Trovato, Deputy Assistant Administrator, OEI, 2002-2003*

"OEI helps the Agency to view IT services as enterprise-wide offerings. Through consolidation and standardization, we enable better efficiency and cost savings and continue to offer customized IT solutions at the same time." *—Myra Galbreath, Acting Deputy Director, OTOP, OEI*

OEI's contribution to the CPIC process—through extensive guidance, training, review, and outreach—is the instrumental force behind the Agency's "green" status award from OMB. Very few federal agencies are members of this exclusive club; EPA's success is a testament to OEI's effort.

Enabling Enterprise-wide Tools and Central Services

The Environmental Information Integration and Portal Development (EIIPD) project coordinates the design and development of OEI's common infrastructure components and provides value-added services to the program offices using these components. The Portal, one component of EIIPD, serves as a single gateway for people to access, exchange, and integrate EPA data sources. The portal will promote a collaborative team environment for peers to exchange ideas and information; allow internal staff and external partner access to Agency business processes, integrated data holdings, and computing resources; reduce IT investment redundancies; increase productivity and cost efficiencies by focusing resources on business goals instead of on IT maintenance; and encourage "self-service" and support federal E-Government initiatives.

During FY04 and FY05, EIIPD is partnering with the Office of Air and Radiation (OAR), to prove the value of these services to the Agency. In support of OAR, EIIPD is demonstrating a notification service, Web services, an air analyst portal, data mart creation, and geospatial tools. After a successful pilot effort, EIIPD will roll these enterprise-wide tools out for Agency use.

Supporting Sound Science

OEI supports sound science by delivering science-based information to decision makers. Quality environmental science requires leading-edge computational tools that enable researchers and policy makers to better understand complex scientific data so important environmental information can be conveyed to others in a meaningful way. OEI maintains facilities in Research Triangle Park, NC where researchers and analysts work with the latest computational systems, software, and networking tools for high performance computing and scientific data visualization. These tools enable EPA to turn a large amount of complex data into images that are more easily understood. For example, data that depict air flow over a city can be visualized and shown as a 2-dimensional moving image. OEI also supports EPA regions, program offices, and laboratories by collaborating with researchers to develop software and visualization tools for activities such as air quality monitoring and forecasting. In addition, OEI helps transfer new technology throughout the Agency and provides expertise and guidance in the application of new computational technologies to support EPA's mission and meet environmental research requirements.

Chapter 7

Accelerating Our Progress in the Future

"Whereof what's past is prologue ..."

—William Shakespeare, The Tempest

Over the past five years, OEI has played a key role supporting the Agency in its ability to protect human health and the environment by improving data quality, improving public access to environmental data, streamlining data collections, securing our IT resources, and strengthening our technology infrastructure. EPA is one of the few agencies to receive the highest rating of "green" on the President's Management Agenda E-Government scorecard—a ranking the Agency intends to keep. The vision for the future of OEI is even more exciting.

OEI will continue to improve the public's and our partners' access to environmental data by evolving the Agency's Web sites and databases to become fully integrated Web service applications that marry environmental data to a geographic context. This will enable the public and our partners to better understand the current state of their environment.

OEI will enable applications to share data across programs and information systems by providing automated access to System of Registries data—increasing data quality in these registries and enabling the Agency to improve data quality with state partners. By implementing a state-of-the-art data integration platform consisting of a central data extract, transform, and load tool coupled to the System of Registries, OEI will remove the information barriers that exist between the program offices. OEI will continue to evolve and expand the Exchange Network to improve and increase environmental data transfers with state partners. OEI will build out the Enterprise Architecture to provide EPA field, analysis, and management staff with full access to EPA data holdings on a real-time basis and will enable more Agency staff to work productively from home or while traveling.

Additionally, OEI will implement technology enabling the Agency to make better, more accurate and defensible decisions to protect human health and the environment. To support this effort, OEI will implement the Agency's Enterprise Architecture, the technology approach which is designed to support environmental decision makers. As a result, OEI will implement a common interface to all of the Agency's data holdings and provide integrated access to EPA and partner data. OEI will also integrate emergency response tools with additional analytic capabilities—enabling the Agency to quickly gauge the environmental and health impact of an emergency event. All of these improvements will strengthen our analytical capabilities and

"In the future we will rely more than ever before on high quality information—collecting it, analyzing it, verifying it, disseminating it, and using it to support public policy decisions in a transparent way. It will be OEI's role to ensure that the Agency and our stakeholders have access to the highest quality information, in the most economical manner, to support public policy and our mission of protecting human health and safeguarding the natural environment."
—Kimberly T. Nelson, Assistant Administrator and CIO, OEI

"In 10 years about half of the HQ staff will work at home or in commute centers most of the time. Technology will enable this. Further development of the Exchange Network and its components will lead to universal connectivity between participants with associated ability to access and use virtually all environmental data the partners have." *—Mark Luttner, Director, OIC, OEI*

"OEI has been one of the most enjoyable organizations that I have ever worked for." *—Brenda Gibson, OIC, OEI*

"EPA will have a solid basis for understanding its impact on the environment through tools such as scientific modeling, enhanced document management and better collaboration tools." *—Mark Day, Director, OTOP, OEI*

provide the Agency and the public with the access to information needed to make informed decisions about human health and environment. Additionally, EPA's Computational Grid will enable Agency researchers to tap unused processing capacity on local and remote clusters at the campus-level or enterprise-level. Ultimately, Agency researchers and trusted partners will be able to access a Partner (or Global) Computational Grid that extends to the computational capacity of organizations outside of EPA. All of these technologies will be developed in a way that allows quick adaptation to new business needs. By enabling data integration and access in a controlled, efficient, repetitive process, the system will provide a virtual workbench for the discovery of knowledge.

Finally, OEI will continue to develop internal partnerships with scientists across the Agency to meet their high performance and scientific computing needs. OEI will expand capabilities for source-to-effect simulations; multi-media modeling; and genomics, proteomics and knowledge management integration with environmental modeling. This will enable EPA scientists to process more environmental data than ever before.

OEI has come a long way from its beginning. Back in the early days, this new organization was busy preparing the Agency for the impact of Y2K and solving the security problems that temporarily forced EPA to shut down its Internet site. Now, it is utilizing technologies and managing information that will enable the Agency to collect, analyze and distribute data in ways it never has before—to protect human health and the environment. As EPA faces the future, it does so knowing that OEI has the talent, the tools, and the commitment necessary to continue making our Agency a leader in the federal government.

Key Awards

1999–2001

- EPA Silver Medal presented to the Office of Information Transition and Organizational Planning (ITOP)
- EPA Gold Medal awarded to the Information Security Crisis Response Team for Exceptional Service

2002

- EPA Honor Award presented to employees who provided outstanding support in the aftermath of the events on September 11, 2001
- Mason Hewitt Award presented to Region II and OEI's WTC Disaster Response activities. This award is presented annually to one project that symbolizes excellence in Geospatial Information Services (GIS)
- Excellence in Government Award for Public Service Applications presented to Window to My Environment (WME)
- EPA Gold Medal presented to WME Development Team
- EPA Gold Medal awarded to the Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) program for the release of TRI-ME software
- TRI-ME software team won E-Gov Government Solutions Center "Pioneer Award"

2003

- SecurE-Biz.net's Leadership in Enterprise Architecture Award presented to EPA
- "Trailblazer Award" for innovative E-Government applications and proven best practices presented to EDOCKET by the E-Gov Government Solutions Center
- The Grace Hopper Government Technology Leadership Award awarded to the eRulemaking program for Regulations.gov, presented by Government Executive Magazine and the Council for Excellence in Government
- SecurE-Biz Leadership Citizen Service Team Award for eRulemaking presented to EPA
- E-Gov Government Solutions Center Pioneer Award for innovative E-Government applications and proven best practices was awarded to Regulations.gov
- Robert J. Colborn, Jr. Innovation Award for Regulations.gov presented by the Administrative Codes and Registers of the National Association of Secretaries of State
- The eRulemaking initiative was recognized at the Federal Executive Leadership Council Showcase of Excellence Awards
- EPA Silver Medal presented to Dave Wolf of OEI for outstanding vision and leadership in the evolution of EPA's Geospatial Information Program

- The U.S. Technical Advisory Group (TAG) on Environmental Management presented Gary L. Johnson, Quality Staff with the Outstanding Achievement in Standards Development award for his leadership in representing the U.S. position in the development of *Guidelines for Quality and/or Environmental Management Systems Auditing*
- EPA won Excellence in Enterprise Architecture award presented by E-Gov, *Federal Computer Week*, and Federal Enterprise Architecture Council

2004

- *Federal Computer Week* recognized Kim Nelson and Oscar Morales for the "2004 Federal 100" list
- EPA Gold Medal was presented to the Central Data Exchange (CDX) team
- EPA Gold Medal was presented to individuals participating in developing EPA's *Report on the Environment* and initiating a national dialogue on effective environmental reporting
- EPA Silver Medal was presented to the BlackBerry team
- EPA Customer Service Award was presented to the OEI Quality staff
- EPA received the Innovator Award from *Application Development Trends* magazine for its Architecture Repository and Tool (ART)
- EPA received a "green" rating on the President's Management Agenda Scorecard for E-Government initiatives
- Kim Nelson was awarded the Leadership Award for Service to Citizens by the Association for Federal Information Resources Management (AFFIRM) for the eRulemaking Program
- The Capital Planning and Investment Control Team, EPA's Chief Architect, John Sullivan, and the eRulemaking team, received a "Congratulations Letter from President George W. Bush" for achieving a green score in IT and E-Government
- *Government Computer News* named the Environmental Information Exchange Network as one of their Top Ten Award winners
- Mark Luttner, Director, the Office of Information Collection, received the first annual CIO Council Award for his leadership with the implementation of the Exchange Network
- Excellence.gov Awards were given to the eRulemaking initiative and the Environmental Information Exchange Network for best practices in E-Government applications
- The Regulations.gov Web site received the American Association of Law Libraries Public Access to Government Information Award
- The Transformation Award was presented to EPA's Enterprise Architecture team at the Excellence in Enterprise Architecture Awards ceremony
- *Government Computer News'* Civilian Executive of the Year awarded to Kim Nelson
- The Mason Hewitt Award was presented to OEI, Office of Federal Facilities, Region II, and the Systems Development Center for Technical Excellence in the Field of Geographic Information Systems for their work on the NEPAssit Environmental Review and Project Planning Tool

OEI: Celebrating Five Years of Success—*Accelerating Our Progress in the Future*

OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

1999–2000

People

First Office Directors Appointed

Elaine Stanley, Director, OIAA

Mark Luttner, Director, OIC

Mark Day, Director, OTOP

Kathy Petruccelli, Director, OPRO

Margaret Schneider, First Acting Assistant Administrator

Al Pesachowitz, First Associate Assistant Administrator

Nancy Wentworth, Director, Quality Staff

Milestones

Office of Environmental Information (OEI) is created

EPA releases TRI Explorer

OEI prepares EPA for Y2K

"OEI staff came together from diverse offices across the Agency and were able to join together to get the job done." —Ed Levine

Quality Information Council (QIC) is formed

EPA Internet connectivity restored with strengthened security protocols

TRI PBT chemicals rule is finalized

Awards

Information Transition and Organizational Planning receives EPA Silver Medal

2001

"We were caught up in the sense that [creating OEI] was something bigger—there was a real sense of purpose. This organization was so different. It was groundbreaking—and it stood the test of time." —Kathy Petruccelli

Ed Levine, First Assistant Administrator

Kimberly T. Nelson confirmed as EPA Chief Information Officer (CIO) and Assistant Administrator for Environmental Information

First data standard developed by the EDSC is approved

National Computer Center moves to a new state-of-the-art facility

First BlackBerry service is deployed

"September 11th underscored the importance of OEI's support of communication between first responders, displaced employees, and with the public." —Robin Gonzalez

Automated Security Self Evaluation and Remediation Tool is launched

World Trade Center (WTC) Monitoring Database is released and data results are released to the public

Central Data Exchange goes live

OEI Information Security Crisis Response Team wins EPA Gold Medal

"I believe OEI is at a crossroads to lead EPA in fulfilling its role as an information broker." —Mike Cullen

2002

Ramona Trovato, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator

OEI appoints first Chief Architect for Enterprise Architecture effort

EDOCKET Web site is launched and EPA Docket Center opens to the public

CIO update is first published

First Virtual Job Fair is held

First grants awarded to states and tribes for Exchange Network participation

"The TRI program has been very aggressive in promoting data quality and implementing electronic reporting. EPA can be very proud of these efforts." —Velu Senthil

TRI-ME software is introduced

"Our expanded data collection efforts enable EPA and its partners to obtain the right information necessary to protect the environment." —Andrew Battin

TRI-ME software team wins E-Gov Government Solutions Center "Pioneer Award"

TRI program wins EPA Gold Medal for the release of TRI-ME software

Rick Otis, Deputy Assistant Administrator

OEI implements Web site audits to ensure "One Agency, One Voice"

Move to Federal Triangle complex is complete

Environmental Indicators Initiative is launched

Information Quality Guidelines are issued

EPA becomes the federal government's lead for the eRulemaking Initiative

EPA Honor Award presented to employees who provided support in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks

Region II and OEI received the Mason Hewitt Award for their WTC Disaster Response activities

WME Development Team awarded EPA Gold Medal

WME receives the Excellence in Government Award for Public Service Applications

2003

Maggie Mitchell, Director, OPRO

"OEI's role in the Agency is unique. It affords us the opportunity to interact with individuals involved in all kinds of work, in every part of the Agency." —Constance Downs

OEI's Program Management Office is formed

Window to My Environment (WME) is launched nationwide

"Topics Lite" project is initiated to streamline content across the EPA Web site

"Draft Report on the Environment" is published

EPA's node on the Environmental Information Exchange Network becomes functional

First Geospatial Network Blueprint is issued

"Regulations.gov will revolutionize the way the federal government writes rules and solicits comments from the public." —Oscar Morales

Regulations.gov is launched

EPA EA Team wins the Excellence in Enterprise Architecture Award

EPA wins SecurE-biz.net's Leadership in Enterprise Architecture Award

Regulations.gov receives the Robert J. Colborn, Jr. Innovation Award

Regulations.gov wins the E-Gov Government Solutions Center Pioneer Award

Gary L. Johnson, Quality Staff, presented with the Outstanding Achievement in Standards Development award

"EPA has an exceptional team of information technology experts and I'm proud to work with them." —Rick Otis

SecurE-Biz Leadership Citizen Service Team Award for eRulemaking presented to EPA

"Trailblazer Award" for innovative E-Government applications and proven best practices presented to EDOCKETS by the E-Gov Government Solutions Center

eRulemaking Initiative wins the Federal Executive Leadership Council Showcase of Excellence Award

Regulation.gov team was awarded the Grace Hopper Government Technology Leadership Award

Dave Wolf is presented with EPA Silver Medal for outstanding vision and leadership in the evolution of EPA's Geospatial Information Program

2004

Mike Flynn, Director, OIAA

EPA selects first Geospatial Information Officer

Reggie Cheatham, Director, Quality Staff

"One of OEI's greatest strengths is its commitment to invest in it's people." —Maggie Mitchell

Linda Travers, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator

The successful launch of the Environmental Information Exchange Network is announced

EPA achieves a "green" on the President's Management Agenda scorecard

IT Enterprise Architecture Policy is enacted

OEI provides and supports IT infrastructure for OSWER's Emergency Operations Center

E-Government@EPA Report is published

CPIC Team Members, EPA's Chief Architect and the eRulemaking Team receives "Congratulations Letters from President George W. Bush"

eRulemaking Initiative and the Environmental Information Exchange Network receive the 2004 Excellence.gov Award

OEI's Quality Staff received the EPA Customer Service Award

Kim Nelson is awarded the Leadership Award for Service to Citizens by the Association for Federal Information Resources Management (AFFIRM) for eRulemaking Initiative

Regulations.gov Web site received the Public Access to Government Information Award by the American Association of Law Libraries

OEI's BlackBerry Team wins the EPA Silver Medal

OEI's EA team received the Innovator Award for its Architecture Repository and Tool (ART) application

OEI's CDX team, the Environmental Indicators Team and the Quality Staff receive EPA Gold Medals

Mark Luttner, the Director of OIC, receives the CIO Council Award for implementation of the Exchange Network

Environmental Information Exchange Network named a Top Ten Award winner by Government Computer News

The Transformation Award presented to OEI's EA team

Government Computer News' Civilian Executive of the Year awarded to Kim Nelson

Kim Nelson and Oscar Morales are recognized for the Federal Computer Week "Federal 100" list

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Office of Environmental Information
Washington, D.C. 20460