EPA Open Government Progress Report: FY2012 – 3rd Quarter

Contents and Highlights

Addressed in this document:

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Challenge Activity

- EPA and partners announced the "My Air, My Health Challenge" to Develop Personal Air Pollution and Health Sensors.
- Visit http://challenge.gov/epa#&panel1-3 to see a current status of all EPA challenges.

Transparency, Participation and Collaboration Actions/Opportunities:

- Over the past quarter EPA offered many ways for the public to get informed and involved including:
  - Published 10 speeches from Administrator Lisa Jackson.
  - Posted 6 EPA Congressional hearing testimonies.

Greater Transparency

- The Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics (OPPT) posted 2,545 non-Confidential Business Information (CBI) Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) Section 8(e) documents in the Chemical Data Access Tool (CDAT).
  - These documents are being made available by EPA to specifically assist chemical companies who are participating in the Agency's voluntary declassifying efforts.
  - The goal is to provide companies with a centralized location to find and review their legacy document submissions, and ultimately make final decisions on whether to declassify them.
  - Participating companies are able to find their specific submissions among the 2,545 documents in CDAT by searching Document Control Numbers (DCN) assigned by EPA.
- eRulemaking – Redesigned the Federal Document Management System (FDMS).
  - Beta version deployed June 2, 2012 with streamlined processes, intuitive look/feel, and comment review and management features.
  - Regulations.gov public access improvements incorporated.
- The Federal Communications Commission has listed 25 developer resources hubs from across the federal government, including those from EPA.

Making Data More Accessible: RESTful data service API added to Envirofacts

- Envirofacts is a centralized data warehouse that provides access to EPA's major databases.
- EPA has developed a RESTful data service API to the data holdings in the Envirofacts database.
- The new data service API provides users with the ability to query any table in Envirofacts through the use of a URL. The default output is in XML, which can be utilized in other applications and in tools such as Microsoft Excel or Access.
- Data can also be output in CSV and Excel formats by adjusting the URL. The entire Envirofacts database metadata is available online, so all tables and columns within Envirofacts are documented.
- The Data Service is a simple to use, well-documented way to access multiple data sources without the need of user database connections.

Providing More Chemical Information to the Public

EPA releases the final health assessment for Tetrachloroethylene (Perc)
- The final health assessment characterized perc as a "likely human carcinogen."
- Perc is a chemical solvent widely used in the dry cleaning industry, in the cleaning of metal machinery and to manufacture some consumer products and other chemicals.
- Provides estimates for cancer and non-cancer effects associated with exposure to perc over a lifetime.

EPA releases FY2010 Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) National Analysis
- The TRI National Analysis is an annual report of EPA's analysis and interpretation of recent TRI data
- Provides national and local trends in toxic chemical disposal or other releases to the environment.

Leveraging Partnerships and Technology

- Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Module Update
    - The FOIA Module is being built to serve as a multi-agency solution for receiving and processing FOIA request and providing the public the ability to search previously released requests and responsive documents.
    - The FOIA Module is being built as a shared service on an existing federal-wide infrastructure offering agencies a cost effective means to meet their responsibilities under the Act.
    - A guided demo of an initial build was provided to interested Agencies, NGOs, and Congressional and Senate staff during this past quarter.
    - The system is scheduled for deployment for public use by October 1, 2012.
- EPA partnered with other agencies in the National Ocean Council (NOC) to launch Ocean.data.gov, a portal for data, information and tools to support the future of the ocean, coasts and Great Lakes.
    - EPA participated in an interagency, industry and NGO collaboration to identify improvements for the tool used to track, predict, manage, and adapt to changes in these bodies of water.
    - Information from the collaboration session is being incorporated into a modernization effort for the Integrated Ocean Observation System (IOOS).

Reaching Out: Community Engagement Flagship Initiative

Approach
- Highlights of our Flagship efforts, in varying stages of progress, are provided via links below.
- To support sharing experiences internally and externally, we captured benefits, lessons learned and other qualitative information for many of the Flagship efforts (updated as flagships conclude).

Flagship Theme: Expanding the Environmental Conversation with Communities:
- Urban Waters (Completed)
- Improve Communication of Sampling and Testing Results (Ongoing)
- Improve Delivery of Information to Communities (Ongoing)
- Faces of the Grassroots (Completed)

Flagship Theme: Expanding Public Awareness & Involvement in Developing Rules and Regulations:
- Healthy Waters (Ongoing)
- Chesapeake Bay TMDL Webinar Series (Completed)
- NPDES Pre-proposal Involvement (Completed)
- Rulemaking Gateway (Completed)

Flagship Theme: EPA Mobile Apps to Empower Citizen's Environmental Decisions:
- See Apps for the Environment Challenge and EPA's Mobile web site for additional information.

Fostering Energy and Cost Savings: eGRID & PowerProfiler

- Updated Emissions and Generation Integrated Resource Database (eGRID), the EPA database that helps Americans understand the health and environmental impacts of electricity generation.
- Also updated Power Profiler, a web tool to help consumers understand how clean their power is and how it compares with the National average.

Protecting the Public: Safe Drinking Water Part of ECHO

- EPA released an improved version of the Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO) web tool to allow the public to search to see whether drinking water in their community met the standards in the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA).
- The new tool provides:
  - Information about whether drinking water has exceeded drinking water standards.
  - Violators reports listing water suppliers who are non-compliant.
  - EPA's 2009 National Public Water Systems Compliance Report: a national summary of compliance and enforcement at public drinking water systems.

Collaboration and Participation: Examples of Opportunities

- EPA co-sponsored the 8th Annual National Sustainable Design Expo on the National Mall, Washington, D.C., bringing together more than 30 exhibitors from nonprofits and government agencies showcasing innovative environmental solutions. 45 university and college teams from across the country competed in Phase II of EPA's People, Prosperity and the Planet (P3) student-design competition.
- EPA and American University jointly sponsored a technology market summit that brought together government, industry, academia, and investment decision makers to accelerate the development and adoption of American-made technologies to achieve economic growth through environmental protection.
- At the American Institute of Architects (AIA) National Convention in Washington, DC, EPA recognized nearly 100 commercial building design projects submitted by 43 architecture firms that achieved Designed to Earn the Energy Star certification in the past year.

Partnering Across Government and with Industry: Examples of Opportunities

- EPA and the National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR) signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to raise awareness of environmentally friendly products and solutions to address America's environmental challenges.
- Southeast Diesel Collaborative Sixth Annual Partners Meeting in Atlanta on June 13-15, 2011.
- EPA, the Department of Energy (DOE), and the Department of Interior (DOI) announced a formal partnership to coordinate and align all research associated with development of our nation's abundant unconventional natural gas and oil resources.