

# Strategic Lean Project Report



**For Reporting Period:** January 1, 2015, through June 30, 2015

## I. General Information:

Lead agency name: Department of Ecology

Partner agencies: None

**Improvement project title:** Electronic Return Receipt for Certified Mail

**Date improvement project was initiated:** 1/1/2015

**Project type:** New Project

**Project is directly connected to:**

Results Washington performance measure

Agency Strategic Plan

Other

**If applicable, specify the alignment:**

N/A

N/A

Goal 5: Efficient, effective & accountable government, Goal Topic: Resource Stewardship (My money is used responsibly.)

**Report reviewed and approved by:** Polly Zehm

## II. Project Summary:

The Department of Ecology's Water Resources Program's Northwest Regional Office improved the process they use to send certified letters to their water right permit customers. They are using Electronic Return Receipt for Certified Mail, resulting in a total cost savings of \$369.61 and a time savings of 5 minutes per letter from January to June 2015.

## III. Project Details:

**Identify the problem:** The process for sending letters to water right customers using certified mail is cumbersome and expensive.

**Problem statement:** Currently, we are spending \$6.68, including mailing labels, and 6.5 minutes per letter to send mail certified with a return green card paper receipt. Our target is \$5.40 and 1.5 minutes per letter by 1/1/2016 for the entire program.

**Improvement description:** In 2014, Ecology's Northwest Regional Office got a new mail machine that came with the option to use Electronic Certified Mail. After some research, we learned the new option would save \$1.28, per certified letter and also save time. After a discussion with the Program Leadership Team and the Attorney General's Office, the Water Resources program was on board with switching to the new Electronic Certified Mail.

The program developed a new process that includes a guidance document for staff with step-by-step instructions and a comparison of how it is different from the old

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process. The Water Resource program is encouraging other programs at the Northwest Regional Office to adopt this new process. So far, three more programs in the region are in the process of switching to Electronic Certified Mail.

We will continue to collect data on this improvement and provide an update for a future report.

**Customer involvement:** We did not include any of our customers in the process improvement, but the customers we have talked to really like the new process because they don't have to write in a date anymore. They only have to print their name and sign.

## IV. Project Details:

Improved process as measured by: <i>(Click those that apply)</i>	Specific results achieved: <i>(Complete the narrative boxes below)</i>	Total Impact: <i>(Actuals; Current Reporting Period)</i>	Results status:
<input type="checkbox"/> Safety	N/A	N/A	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cost	Decreased cost of Certified Mail <b>from</b> \$6.65 per letter <b>to</b> \$5.40 per letter	1/1/15 to 6/25/15	Preliminary
<input type="checkbox"/> Quality	N/A	N/A	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Time	Decreased time to process Certified Mail <b>from</b> 6:30 minutes per letter <b>to</b> 1:30 minutes.	1/1/15 to 6/25/15	Preliminary
<input type="checkbox"/> Customer Satisfaction	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A (or)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Employee Engagement	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A (or)	

## V. Contact information:

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