

Detailed Lean Improvement Project Report

For the June 1, 2014, through December 31, 2014, reporting period

Agency name:

Department of Ecology

Improvement project title:

Well Report Gateway – electronically submitted well reports

Date improvement project initiated:

09/01/11

Summary:

The Department of Ecology launched a web application that automates the well reporting process for two types of resource protection well reports. The new Well Report Gateway has resulted in:

- A new SmartForm format for well reports providing electronic completion, dynamic sections, database calls and electronic submission.
- Reducing the amount of staff time needed to process a well report from around 100 seconds each to complete automation - redirecting approximately 45 hours of staff time per month toward helping reduce the backlog of well reports.
- A reduction of paper, archiving and handling costs.

Details:

Description of the problem: Ecology processes more than 30,000 well drilling reports each year. To submit a report, a well drilling business is required to prepare a detailed paper form, sign the form, and mail the form to Ecology for each well drilled. After Ecology receives the form, staff upload the report into the State wells database system. This requires staff to enter twelve data fields and scan each paper report. Incomplete forms and undecipherable handwriting can be an issue.

Description of the improvement: Ecology launched the Well Report Gateway on October 20, 2014. Now a well drilling business can submit and file their well reports on a web application. Two types of resource protection wells can be uploaded currently, geotechnical soil borings and environmental investigation wells. These well types were chosen because they represent 60 percent of the well reports Ecology receives per year. This project was completed as the first phase of a larger plan to automate all well reporting in Washington.

Specific results achieved: Since October 20th, when the Well Report Gateway was launched, Ecology has seen a dramatic adoption of web-based well reporting.

- Ecology has received an average of 1,632 well reports each month. As a result of these improvements, the agency is saving an average of 45 staff hours per month. Those staff hours are redirected toward scanning paper well reports and other work that helps reduce the agency's backlog of well reports.



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- Five of the six major drilling companies who, together, file 93 percent of these well reports in the State have adopted the Well Report Gateway.
- In the Southwest Region, 64 percent of these well reports were submitted electronically in December.

The drilling community also benefit by simplifying their own well reporting process. For example:

- Using the SmartForm format, well construction and decommissioning reports are generated simultaneously using information already provided on the electronic Notice of Intent form, available since 2008, simplifying data entry and improving data quality.
- Drillers can now group well reports so that commonly constructed wells can be submitted concurrently.
- Electronic well report files are available immediately to drilling companies and their clients and within 24 hours for all other database users.

How we involved customers or stakeholders in this effort:

The drilling community has been requesting online well reporting forms for years. Ecology teamed up with three major resource protection well drilling companies during the development and testing phase of this project. Our staff also travelled to the offices of two nearby companies to educate, observe and take notes on the user's concerns and issues while using the new application. These concerns led us to modify the service to allow trainees to submit well reports as well as fully licensed drillers. We have received strong positive feedback from well drilling businesses on the ease of use, performance, and value of the application for their business and customers.

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