Public Access to EPA Regulatory Compliance and Enforcement Data

Enforcement and Compliance History Online

http://echo.epa.gov

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The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency provides public access to its regulatory compliance and enforcement data via the Internet.

The Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO) website at http://echo.epa.gov integrates data from major EPA information systems for public use.
What is ECHO?

ECHO is EPA’s public website that provides compliance information about regulated facilities:

- How they are regulated (CAA, CWA, RCRA, SDWA)
- When they were inspected
- Whether violations of environmental regulations were found
- Whether enforcement actions were taken

The site also provides aggregated activity statistics by state and some batch files.
ECHO was released to the public in 2002

Use has increased steadily over the years, providing answers to two million queries per year

ECHO is used by:

- Members of the general public
- Citizen groups and non-governmental agencies
- Academics and researchers
- Members of the press
- Businesses and companies
- Other government agencies
Compliance history for more than 800,000 EPA-regulated facilities

• Three-year compliance status with five-year inspection and enforcement history

• EPA and state, local, and tribal environmental agency data for:
  • CAA stationary sources
  • CWA permitted direct dischargers
  • RCRA hazardous waste handlers
  • SDWA public water systems

• EPA inspection and enforcement action data for other statutes like EPCRA, FIFRA, TSCA
Compliance History

• Basic facility and permit data
• Inspections/evaluations performed
• Violations with pollutants or brief violation types
• Significant violation status
• Enforcement actions taken
• Penalties assessed
• Additional data for context
  • Demographics of area surrounding facility from U.S. Census
  • Pollutant release data from TRI
Sources of ECHO Content

ECHO extracts data from other EPA data systems weekly

• Air Facility System
• Integrated Compliance Information System
  • Clean Water Act direct dischargers
  • Multi-state EPA enforcement cases
• Resource Conservation and Recovery Act Information System (RCRAInfo)
• Facility Registry System
• *Updated quarterly* – Safe Drinking Water Information System
Sources of ECHO Content (cont’d)

ECHO integrates other data for context

• EPA’s Toxics Release Inventory
• U.S. Census
Capabilities and Reports

Abilities

• Search for facilities/systems based on key attributes
• Review/download summary data
• Review a detailed, integrated facility report (cross-statute)
• Examine severity of violations
• Download annual data files
• Review detailed information about EPA enforcement cases
• Look at overall enforcement and compliance status trends on state comparative maps and dashboards
Waste Water Pollution Data

ECHO includes some pollution data but links to more in-depth tools

Clean Water Act Pollutant Loading Tool (http://cfpub.epa.gov/dmr/)

- Who is discharging, what pollutants they are discharging, and where they are discharging
- Data from Integrated Compliance Information System
- Compare wastewater pollution releases reported through CWA discharge monitoring reports to Toxic Release Inventory for industrial facilities
- Will be integrated with ECHO beginning June 2014
In 2013, 23-year-old mainframe data system replaced with Oracle data mart

Moved from monthly to weekly data refreshes for most data

Information maintained at http://echo.epa.gov/echo_modernization
Modernization – Upcoming Features

Features Coming in 2014

• Drinking water (SDWA) system search
  • Launched in March

• CWA facility search, effluent charts, water quality data, and loading tool integration

• EPA Enforcement Cases search

• Hazardous waste (RCRA) facility search

• CAA facility and pollutant search
  • May be 2015 depending on source system modernization
ECHO reports, including the facility search results tables and maps, Detailed Facility Report, and Enforcement Case Report, are built from public web services

- API for the Detailed Facility Search service is documented and posted on http://echo.epa.gov/web_services
- Documentation for other services will be posted soon

Static content is managed by Drupal, an open-source content management system

Dynamic content is built with a combination of PHP and Javascript
Contact Us link provides access to user support

Site Documentation

• Home page Resources tile
• “Help” buttons on search pages and reports

Training series will be posted – the first will be available in May

ECHO includes an online error correction process with a network of state and EPA data stewards who address data error reports
Questions?