

CaseStudy

Trouble with EPA Floppy Disk Program

The State of Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) was receiving SARA Title III, Tier 2 reports by hardcopy and by diskette with the EPA Tier 2 Submit software. DNREC Administrators had to repeatedly import and export Tier II report data from previous years to update the software. This was not only a time-consuming task but also risky. There were several instances when submitted data was temporarily lost. The Tier 2 Submit program also made it a challenge to maintain Delaware-specific data within CAMEO. Data collected via Tier 2 Submit was loaded into the EPA CAMEO system, where additional data was added for each site, for planning and response needs. When subsequent year reports from Tier 2 Submit were loaded into CAMEO, the additional Delaware data was overwritten and had to be re-loaded each year.

Once all of the facilities' chemical reports were collected via the Tier 2 Submit program and loaded into CAMEO, administrators had the responsibility of visiting each of their Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs), 911 centers, and other entities to manually load the updated data onto each desktop. While using the Tier 2 Submit software and CAMEO, this was an annual procedure that took a lot of time and resources.

In 2004, it was almost 9 months after the March 1 Tier II reporting deadline before the entire Tier II report review, compliance checking, and data sharing process was complete, and the updated data was available to all emergency planners and responders.

DNREC Transitions to Online Hazmat Reporting System

On January 1, 2005, Delaware adopted the TIER II MANAGER™, an online hazmat reporting system for more efficient Emergency Planning & Community Right-To-Know Act (EPCRA) program management.

Tier II facility reports were pre-loaded into the system enabling reporting facilities or DNREC administrators to simply edit changed inventory or facility contact information. This feature eliminates the need to repeatedly enter submissions each year. The system also has an online invoicing and payment system.

Businesses quick to sign on to Online Program

In just the second year of the DNREC online TIER II MANAGER™ going live, approximately 85% of facilities opted to use the online reporting program; up from 67% participation for the inaugural year.

Today, once information is submitted online by facilities, the data is reviewed and approved with ease using various administrative features in the system. The limited number of hardcopy reports are entered into the system quickly using administrative access.

9 Month Delay Vanished!

In 2007, the entire set of annual Tier II reports from Delaware facilities was available on-line for use by planners and responders within several days of the March 1 deadline. The built-in edit checks and administrative approval process simplifies review of the on-line electronic submissions. The ever decreasing small number of hardcopy submittals made it possible to enter them as received, without developing a backlog. This greatly streamlined EPCRA process is a far cry from the 9 months it previously took the staff to complete operations using the Tier 2 Submit program.

With many months saved in completing the EPCRA process, DNREC has more time to dedicate to improving other areas of the EPCRA program. For example, DNREC will be concentrating their time on revising their state's EPCRA regulations and conducting compliance audits.

"Data from these facilities was available almost immediately for use by emergency planners and responders, without the delays for processing and distribution."

- Robert Pritchett,
Program Manager for the DNREC
EPCRA Reporting Program

Planners and Responder Get Instant Access

All approved facility reports are made available to all Delaware LEPCs and local fire departments by easily accessing the information through a free browser, without the need to wait to have the information uploaded onto each user's desktop manually. The online program enables the local First Responders to navigate to various reports about facilities Emergency Contact, Extremely Hazardous Substances (EHS), Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS), Emergency Response Plans, and online mapping of hazardous material sites and vulnerable population information.