



The External Data Framework

*Facilitating Greater Data Sharing
with a Systematic and Streamlined
Approach to Secondary Data*

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So, why should we care about sharing data?



Barriers to Effective Data Sharing

- **Internal barriers**

- Lack of staff resources for review
- Skepticism about data quality, intentionally biased and/or conflicting data
- Concerns regarding legal defensibility

- **External Barriers**

- How will the agency use our data?
- Is our data “good enough”
- How much extra work is this going to take?



Key Features of the External Data Framework

- **Three tiers, each associated with**
 - Potential uses of the data by the agency
 - Specific information sufficiency and data quality requirements
- **Written guidance and online tools to simplify submittals**
- **Streamlined process for internal review and data management**



“Value-added” Features

- **Data quality benchmarks for other, non-agency uses**
 - Recommended data quality benchmarks that participants and nonparticipants alike can use in developing their monitoring plans and evaluating secondary data for their own needs
- **Technical Assistance**



Breaking Down Internal Barriers

- **Addressed through process design and policy**
 - Review processes streamlined with templates for data submittals
 - Setting a high bar for data quality for decisions with regulatory impact
 - Clearly stated policies regarding the agency's use of the data
 - With “safeguards” in place, skepticism becomes moot



Removing Barriers to Participation

- **External concerns addressed with:**
 - Outreach that promotes participation and emphasizes voluntary nature of the program
 - General and technical guidance
 - A range of options for data submittal
 - External data coordinator and online technical assistance



Data Submittal

- **All secondary data is submitted through one of two online portals**
 - Secondary Data Portal
 - Hoosier Riverwatch Portal
- **Three options for data submittal**
 - Online data entry
 - Customize templates for uploading data
 - Electronic Data Interchange (EDI)



Data Management

- **All data submitted through either portal are stored in the same database**
- **Email notification system built in to help the process run smoothly**
- **New data and/or new organization notifications trigger the data quality review**
- **Tier 2 and Tier 3 data also uploaded into the database that stores agency-collected data**



Lessons Learned

- **Identify the barriers to data sharing that exist within and outside your organization**
- **Look around at other states – good models already exist**
- **Start with what you already have**
- **Be cool with the fact that it may take a long time to pay off**



Questions?

- **External Data Framework**

- idem.IN.gov/cleanwater/2485.htm

- **Hoosier Riverwatch**

- idem.IN.gov/riverwatch/2333.htm

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