

ASBESTOS CERTIFICATION PROCESS



LEAN Event Report Out

TN Dept of Environment and Conservation

November 18-20, 2013

Executive Sponsors

- Dr. Shari Meghreblian, TDEC, Deputy Commissioner, Bureau of Environment
- Tom Eck – Assistant Commissioner, TDEC, Administration

Sponsors:

- Pat Flood, Director, Division of Solid Waste Management
- Adrienne White, Manager, Toxic Substances

Team Leader:

- Jackie Manuel (Toxics)

Team Members:

- Irene Tidwell (Toxics)
- Jana Finch (ISD)
- Chandra Hudson (DFS)
- Rebecca Huntemann (Toxics)
- Grace Buchanan (Toxics)
- Pamela Fitzpatrick (DGS)

Facilitators:

- Elaine Boyd, Emily Passino, Lindsay Oliveras



AGENDA

Background: Challenge to LEAN Team

Methodology: How Team Approached Solution

Future: Changes, Benefits, Implementation Plan

Background

- About This Process

- Asbestos certifications are required for people and firms engaged in asbestos activities. Individuals apply for certification through TDEC, their paperwork is reviewed, certification card produced and mailed to them.

- Business Issue to Address

- The primary issue to be addressed is **timeliness**. The regulatory time frame for asbestos certification is 60 days. As of the August 1st legislative permitting report, 24% (218 of 894) asbestos initial individual applications were not acted upon within the regulatory time period.
- More recent data reflects change is already underway in the Division: 100% acted upon within 60 days.

Background (continued)

- Customer
 - Individuals submitting initial application for Asbestos certification.
- Other Key Stakeholders
 - Note: Changes in process may apply to firms/training providers/individual renewal application processes also.

Background (continued)

- Scope
 - First Step: the individual application is received by the Toxic Substances section
 - Last Step: the customer receives the certification card
 - Out of Scope:
 - Fee Section application and check receipt and closing of the books processes
 - Major equipment purchases
 - Changes to rules or statute

Goal for Future State Process

- Team Focus

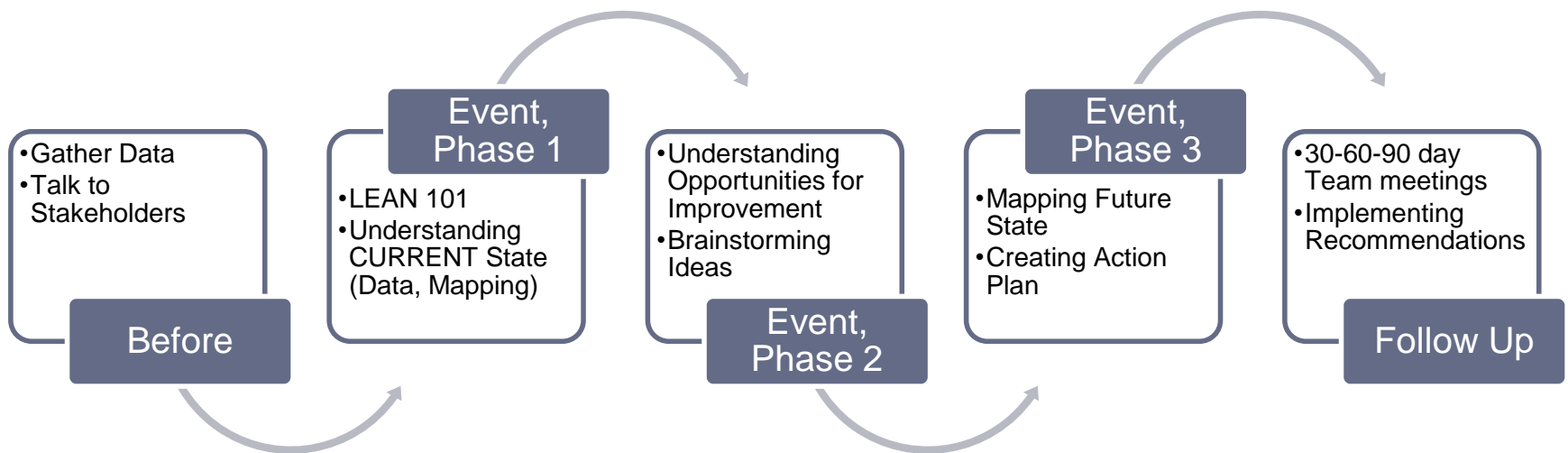
- The purpose of this LEAN Team is to improve timeliness, efficiency, effectiveness and the level of customer service of the Asbestos Certification process for the asbestos certification community so that (1) job opportunities are opened, (2) training is provided, (3) Tennessee is healthier, (4) asbestos is removed in compliance with regulations in a fluid, streamlined process.

- Measurable Goals, Targets:

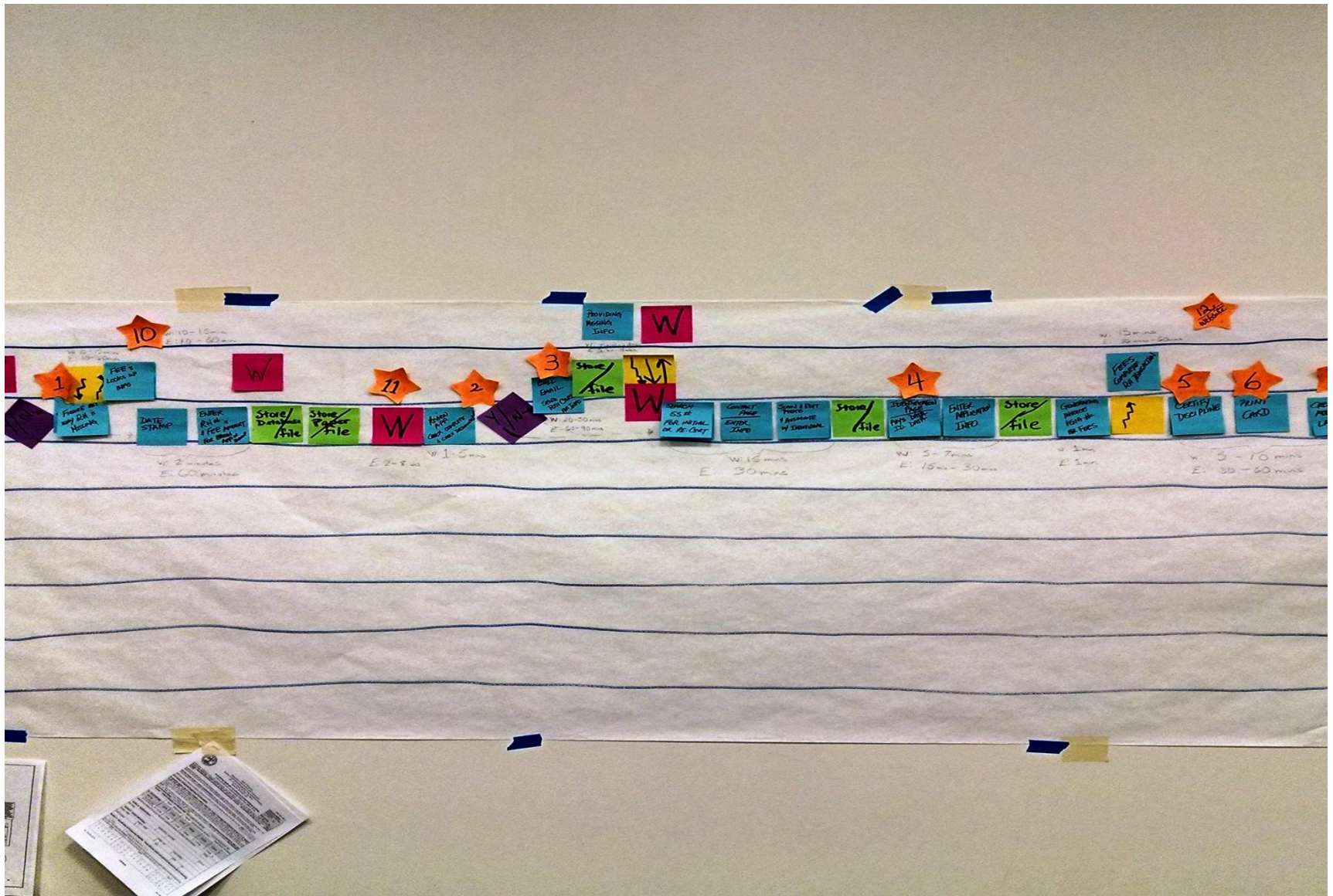
- Improved Customer Service
- 95% of initial individual asbestos certifications will be issued within 60 day time period mandated by regulations.
- Turnaround time for the certification will be improved by 10%.

Methodology

Key Principle: Process, Not People



Current State



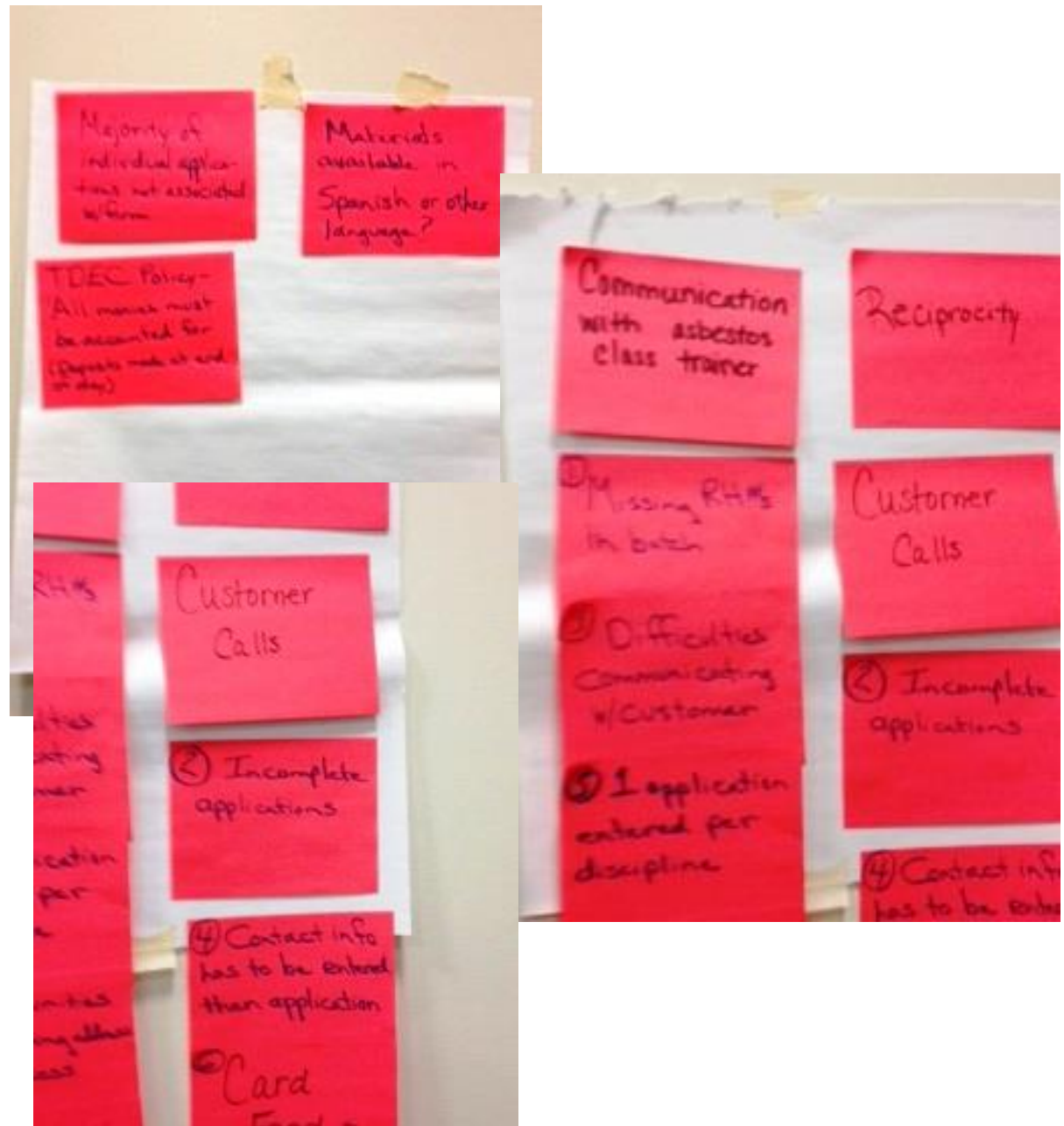
Current State Statistics

Name of Process

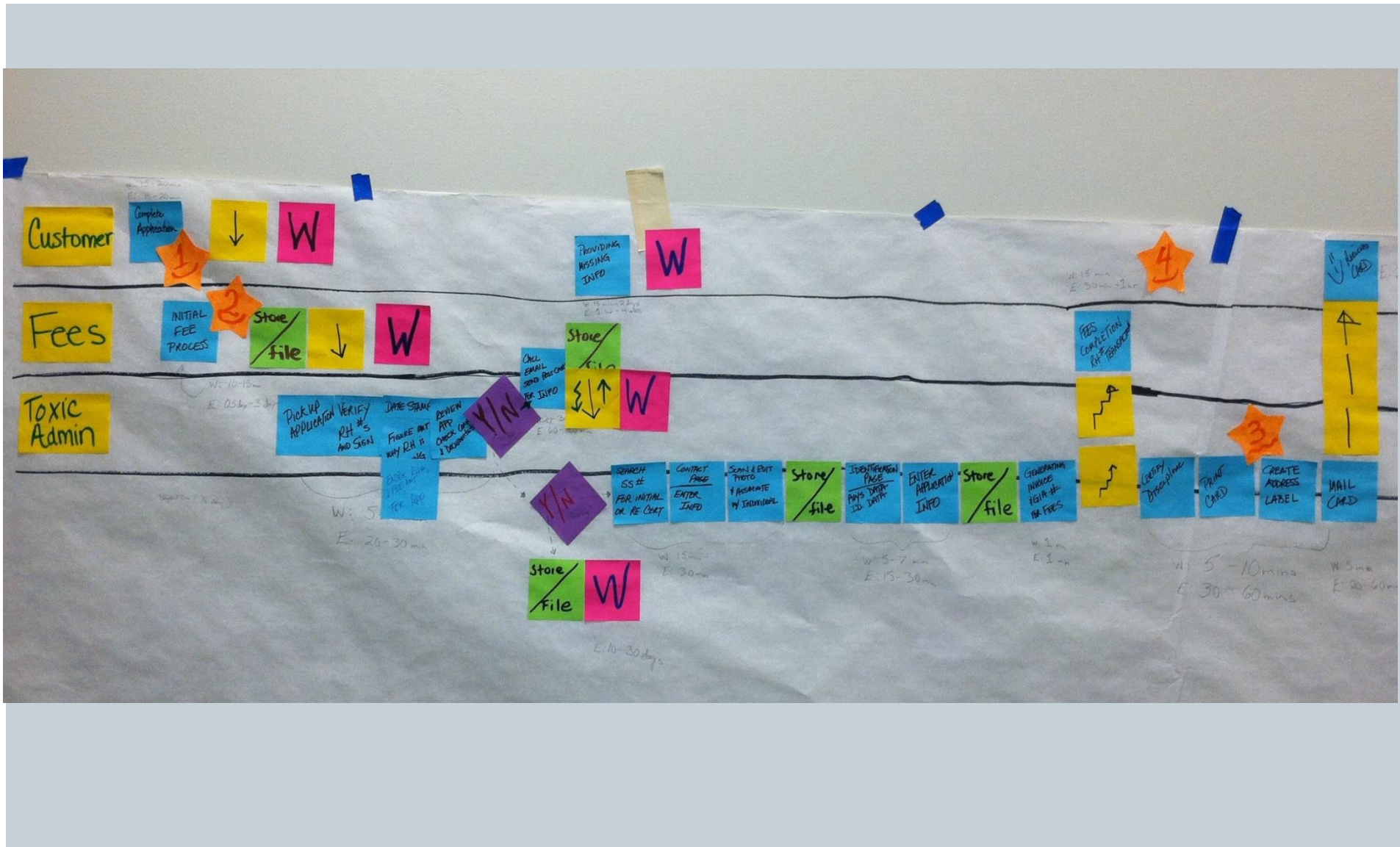
	Current	Future	Difference
Tasks	23		
Waits	6		
Handoffs	6		
Decisions	2		
Work Time	2.75 hrs – 4 hrs		
Elapsed Time	21 days – 106 days		

Observations About Current Process

- Multiple touches of the same batch.
- A number of incomplete applications are received.
- There are difficulties communicating with the customer.
- Opportunities for improvement of internal communications.
- Application and customer checklist could be improved.



Future State



Future State Statistics

Name of Process

	Current	Future	Difference
Tasks	23	23	0
Waits	6	5	1
Handoffs	6	5	1
Decisions	2	2	0
Work Time	2.75 hrs – 4 hrs	1.5 hrs – 2.0 hrs	1.25 hrs – 2 hrs
Elapsed Time	21 days – 106 days	12 days – 73 days	9 days – 33 days

Recommendations

Issue:

Difficult for customers to learn application status, including whether submission was correct in the first place.

Actions:

- Move application completeness review earlier in the preparation steps.**
- Add tab in data viewer to reflect incomplete status.**
- Make customers aware of certification in the data viewer.**

Recommendations

Issue: The current process includes multiple touches of the batch and communication difficulties which contribute to backlogs and bottlenecks.

Action:

- **Pilot morning pick ups from Fiscal to attempt to expedite initial processing and communication to the customer.**
- **Re-education of fees keying staff to copy application, provide RH# and deposit information and pass original application on to Toxics within 3 days.**
- **Additional mailings of cards after last pick up using in-house location.**
- **In the case of missing RH#s, the Toxics staff will be more explicit in communication of questions to Fiscal.**
- **Handle applications by postmark date instead of current first in, first out approach.**

Recommendations

Issue: There are several minor technical fixes which can be implemented to streamline the process.

Action:

- **New card printers are being evaluated that are better designed to handle the volume of cards.**
- **Team will be determining ways to improve the address label process.**
- **Modify public data viewer to be more informative.**

Recommendations

Issue: The division receives a number of incomplete applications which adds time to the process to obtain corrected applications from customers.

Action:

- **Enhance application and checklist to improve clarity.**
- **Investigate translation services to provide information in multiple languages.**

Benefits of Future State

- Building on earlier improvements made by the Division, the additional changes will enable Toxic Substances to issue 95% of the certifications within the 60 day regulatory requirement.
- Average turn-around time for customers will be significantly reduced.
- Earlier notification to customers when application is incomplete.
- The streamlined process will lessen the phone calls and emails which should lower stress levels and improve morale of the staff.

Action Plan

What	When	Who
Revamp application with checklist	4/2/14	Rebecca
Investigate translation services to provide information in multiple languages (Costin Shamble – EJ Coordinator)	4/2/14	Pamela
Transfer future state into flow chart	4/2/14	Elaine
Add tab in data viewer	2/19/14	Jana
Draft revised SOP for new Asbestos Certification process	1/6/14	Irene / Grace
Draft revised SOP for Fees area of responsibility	1/6/14	Chandra
Evaluate new card printers	In process	Jackie
Improve address label process	4/2/14	Jana / Jackie
Communications plan for firms, individuals and trainers by regular letter, website, email blast	4/2/14	Jackie

Measuring Improvements

	Measure 1	Measure 2	Measure 3
Improvement Area	% certifications issued within 60 days	Turnaround time improved by 10%	Initial time within Fees area
Measure	% certifications issued within 60 days	Date received by Toxics to certification date	Day after deposit date to date available for pick up by Toxics
Source	Asbestos database	Asbestos database	Fees sign in log
Frequency	Monthly	Monthly	Weekly
Who	Irene / Grace	Irene / Grace	Chandra

Parking Lot Issues

- Reconsider possibility of implementing reciprocity agreements with other states. In the past year, 936 out of 3500 individual application were out of state.
- Evaluate opportunities to reflect asbestos process improvements in lead-based paint process.
- Revisit aligning certification renewal date with date of training completion. Could be packaged with change from 1 – 3 years in regulation revision.
- Ensure Asbestos process benefits from outcome of ISD project to address customer contact information issues.

Lessons Learned

- LEAN is a critical tool in reducing variability.
- The LEAN process helps participants gain a better understanding of one another's roles.
- Keep an open mind to other people's suggestions even if its been tried before without success. It could work with new team members.
- In the initial fee processing reduce the number of times Fees touches application prior to division's receipt of the application.
- LEAN will address technical and physical holes in the process. It allows for flow improvement.
- We can work as a team **if** we want to.
- The customer is important. Team work is important. Waste makes the customer and team unhappy.

Bottom Line!

- We are.....
 - Improving communications with our customers (e.g. better application, quicker and more pertinent feedback, etc.)
 - Expediting handoff from Fiscal
 - Creating explicit triage by dates received by TDEC and whether application is complete
- Result?
 - Asbestos group will consistently exceed the 60 day regulatory requirement.
 - Job opportunities will be improved for the asbestos industry and customers.
 - TDEC's efficiency and effectiveness will be improved.

Questions/ Comments

