



Hazardous Waste Remediation Bureau

Groundwater Permit Process Review



Summary

Current groundwater management permit reporting requirements are causing an excess amount of reports to be submitted for review, which, in turn, contributes greatly to the overall backlog of technical reports. The current backlog is about 9 months. The goal is to achieve a backlog of no more than 90 days for all technical and permit related submittals. Using Lean principles, the permit reporting requirements were streamlined and documented in written guidance documents for project managers to use in decision making.

Accomplishments

- Standardized permit review approach
- Fewer permit required submittals
- Quicker review/response times for reports in backlog

Team

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The Service

Groundwater Management Permit Process Review

The Problem

Following a groundwater contamination event, a groundwater management permit is necessary to prescribe clean-up procedures and reporting requirements and frequency. Current reporting requirements are causing an excess amount of reports to be submitted for review, which, in turn, adds to the overall response time for all technical reports in the backlog. The current response time for some document reviews is 9 months.

The Goal

Review all technical report submittals in 90 days or less.

The Lean Process

The Team took a “Kaizen” approach where members of the team intensely focused on solving the problem using brainstorming and other techniques.

The Results

Three hazardous waste site risk categories were identified: High, medium and low. Within each category, probable scenarios were outlined and reporting requirements were standardized based on the following factors:

- Source status
- Indoor air issues
- Groundwater quality and trends
- Surface water impacts
- Water supply well impacts or potential impacts

Two written guidance documents were developed, “*Guide for Selection of Permit Sampling and Reporting Frequencies*” and “*Draft Guidance for Remedial Systems*.” These guidance documents assist project managers in making consistent decisions on a site’s current risk status and selecting the appropriate Groundwater Management Permit sampling and reporting requirements. This standardized permit review approach should result in fewer permit required submittals and quicker review/response times.

The five year cycle for permit renewals means that significant improvement will be delayed as permittees come up for renewal, but improvements have been made in the overall permit review process. The team continues to collect the following metrics:

- Total sites in backlog per month
- Total actions per month
- Total incoming reports per month (permit versus non-permit related)

This project will be reviewed after the bureau completes it’s restructuring and the workforce is stabilized.