

## ***Part I – Agency Profile***

### **Agency Overview**

The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) was established by the Environmental Protection and Health Act, Chapter 1, Title 39, Idaho Code, to protect human health and the environment. As the state's environmental regulatory agency, DEQ is responsible for implementing and enforcing delegated federal programs under the Clean Air, Clean Water, Safe Drinking Water, and Resource Conservation and Recovery Acts, as well as many state environmental laws and rules. This regulatory responsibility covers a broad range of activities to ensure Idaho's air, water, land, and Idaho citizens are protected from the adverse impacts of pollution.

The Environmental Protection and Health Act also established the Board of Environmental Quality. The board is the administrative body charged with making decisions on rules proposed by the department to carry out provisions of the act and to enforce state environmental laws. DEQ drafts rules with assistance from the Office of the Attorney General following a negotiated rulemaking process involving interested stakeholders. Rules may be adopted, amended, or repealed by the board. All administrative rules adopted by the board are subject to legislative review. The board also functions as the agency's administrative appeals board. Decisions of the agency can be appealed to the board, which may choose to hear the case or designate a hearing officer. Final determinations of the board are subject to judicial review.

To protect human health and the environment, DEQ's primary activities include monitoring, permitting, conducting inspections, performing remediation, and providing a wide range of oversight, technical assistance, and outreach.

- Environmental monitoring is performed to assess conditions and ensure health-based standards are met.
- Permits are issued to facilities that manage wastes or release pollutants to limit discharges to safe levels.
- Inspections of pollution sources are conducted and complaints are investigated to ensure compliance with environmental regulations and standards. When necessary, enforcement action is taken.
- Remediation is conducted to remove or neutralize contaminants in soil, ground water, and surface waters. Compliance with remedial activities is typically voluntary, but when necessary, enforcement action is taken.
- Oversight is maintained for a variety of projects including environmental cleanups, pollution reduction efforts, and drinking water and wastewater infrastructure improvements.
- Technical support, outreach, and education are offered to facilitate compliance with environmental requirements for air quality, water quality, and waste management and remediation.

DEQ works closely and collaboratively with a wide range of public and private partners including the legislature; the Board of Environmental Quality; federal and state agencies; city, county, and tribal governments; businesses; community organizations; and citizens. These partnerships are critical to accomplishing the agency's mission.

DEQ's headquarters in Boise is organized into five divisions focused on developing and administering programs and policies, providing technical support to the divisions and regions, and providing agency-wide administrative support. The divisions include Air Quality, Surface Water and Wastewater, Drinking Water and Finance, Waste Management and Remediation, and Technical Services.

Day-to-day, on-the-ground agency services are provided by six regional offices located in Boise, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho Falls, Lewiston, Pocatello, and Twin Falls. DEQ also maintains a smaller satellite office in Kellogg. Regional and satellite offices are charged with implementing agency programs and policies and providing direct services to citizens, communities, businesses, and industries.

### **Core Functions/Idaho Code**

DEQ's core functions and regulatory authorities are summarized below, followed by a table detailing the department's revenues and expenditures for the past four fiscal years.

- **Air Quality:** DEQ ensures compliance with federal and state health-based air quality standards by collecting air quality information, monitoring, developing and issuing permits, conducting inspections at facilities, responding to complaints, and coordinating air quality improvement efforts among communities, citizen groups, businesses, industries, other state agencies, tribes, and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (Title 39, Chapter 1, Idaho Code; Clean Air Act).
- **Water Quality:** DEQ protects the surface and ground waters of the state to support beneficial uses and provide safe drinking water supplies by setting water quality standards, certifying project compliance with standards, monitoring, reporting on water quality, developing and implementing improvement plans, issuing wastewater reuse and direct discharge permits, and providing grants and loans for constructing drinking water and wastewater treatment facilities (Title 39, Chapters 1, 36, 66, 76, 79, 85, Idaho Code; Title 37, Chapter 21, Idaho Code; Title 50 Chapter 13 Idaho Code; Clean Water Act).
- **Waste Management and Remediation:** DEQ ensures management and disposal of waste generated in or entering Idaho is conducted in a manner protective of human health and the environment. DEQ responds to releases of hazardous substances to surface waters, ground waters, or soils and conducts, oversees, and negotiates cleanups of contaminated sites. DEQ works with communities to rehabilitate contaminated sites to return them to a safe and developable condition (Title 39, Chapters 1, 30, 44, 58, 65, 71, 72, 74, 81, 88, Idaho Code; Resource Conservation and Recovery Act; Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act).
- **INL Oversight:** DEQ oversees activities at the Idaho National Laboratory (INL) to ensure compliance with legal agreements and environmental regulations for waste treatment, remediation, and removal. DEQ maintains an independent environmental monitoring program designed to verify and supplement monitoring programs carried out by the INL. Working with other state agencies, DEQ assists local governments statewide in planning and responding to emergencies involving radiological materials. DEQ also routinely informs the public about INL activities impacting Idaho's environment (Title 39, Chapter 1, Idaho Code).

**Revenues and Expenditures**

| Revenue                                      | FY 2017             | FY 2018             | FY 2019             | FY 2020             |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Air Quality Permitting                       | \$1,110,118         | \$931,006           | \$1,126,068         | \$793,865           |
| Public Water System Oversight                | \$1,627,025         | \$1,651,657         | \$1,620,766         | \$1,747,254         |
| Water Pollution Control                      | \$4,810,218         | \$4,829,865         | \$4,823,587         | \$4,823,194         |
| Environmental Remediation                    | \$1,869,668         | \$1,970,968         | \$2,110,912         | \$2,081,704         |
| Cooperative DEQ-Federal                      | \$24,536,640        | \$20,838,643        | \$23,280,316        | \$21,414,464        |
| Cooperative DEQ-General                      | \$17,908,000        | \$19,621,100        | \$20,751,696        | \$22,013,564        |
| Cooperative DEQ-Other                        | \$2,342,849         | \$1,921,310         | \$2,115,232         | \$4,268,183         |
| Bunker Hill Consent Decree                   | \$480,546           | \$568,222           | \$179,326           | \$287,571           |
| Underground Storage Tank Fees                | ---- <sup>a</sup>   | ---- <sup>a</sup>   | \$196,085           | \$198,558           |
| Idaho Pollutant Discharge Elimination System | ---- <sup>b</sup>   | ---- <sup>b</sup>   | ---- <sup>b</sup>   | \$764,771           |
| <b>Total</b>                                 | <b>\$54,685,064</b> | <b>\$52,332,771</b> | <b>\$56,203,988</b> | <b>\$58,393,128</b> |
| Expenditures                                 | FY 2017             | FY 2018             | FY 2019             | FY 2020             |
| Personnel Costs                              | 29,859,100          | \$30,425,221        | \$30,856,108        | \$31,381,508        |
| Operating Expenditures                       | 13,209,200          | \$12,234,514        | \$13,397,042        | \$12,333,133        |
| Capital Outlay                               | 640,700             | \$475,410           | \$542,398           | \$414,156           |
| Trustee/Benefit Payments                     | 7,558,500           | \$5,880,173         | \$6,368,776         | \$7,202,156         |
| <b>Total</b>                                 | <b>51,267,500</b>   | <b>\$49,015,318</b> | <b>\$51,164,325</b> | <b>\$51,330,953</b> |

a. FY 2019 is the first year DEQ has received this revenue source.

b. FY 2020 is the first year DEQ has received this revenue source.

### Profile of Cases Managed and/or Key Services Provided

The following table summarizes some of the key services DEQ provides to communities, businesses, industries, and the citizens of Idaho.

| Cases Managed and/or Key Services Provided   | FY 2017           | FY 2018           | FY 2019         | FY 2020          |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| <b>Air Quality Division</b>  |                   |                   |                 |                  |
| Air Quality Permits to Construct Issued  | 89                | 90                | 72              | 70               |
| Air Quality Tier I (Title V) Permits Issued  | 15                | 15                | 18              | 13               |
| Air Quality Tier II Permits Issued   | 1                 | 1                 | 1               | 1                |
| Air Quality Permits by Rule Issued   | ---- <sup>a</sup> | ---- <sup>a</sup> | 26              | 40               |
| Inspections of Stationary and Portable Air Pollution Sources                                     | 193               | 125               | 197             | 212              |
| Number of Crop Residue Acres Approved and Burned   | 41,411            | 34,247            | 40,104          | 34,312           |
| <b>Water Quality Divisions</b>   |                   |                   |                 |                  |
| Wastewater Grants Awarded  | \$325,000         | \$347,500         | \$343,500       | \$326,625        |
| Wastewater Loans Awarded   | \$18,305,461      | \$66,972,863      | \$53,423,000    | \$65,765,815     |
| Drinking Water Grants Awarded  | \$331,172         | \$398,958         | \$248,935       | \$339,250        |
| Drinking Water Loans Awarded   | \$6,165,007       | \$21,015,156      | \$6,058,650     | \$62,679,141     |
| 401/404 Water Quality Certifications Issued  | 40                | 87                | 48              | 57               |
| Wastewater Reuse Permits Issued  | 12                | 19                | 23 <sup>b</sup> | 12 <sup>b</sup>  |
| IPDES Direct Discharge Permits Issued  | ---- <sup>a</sup> | ---- <sup>a</sup> | 1               | 9                |
| Total Wastewater Engineering Plan and Specification Reviews Completed                            | 238               | 302               | 256             | 400              |
| Total Drinking Water Engineering Plan and Specification Reviews Completed                        | 279               | 296               | 409             | 470              |
| Drinking Water Sanitary Surveys Completed  | 417               | 394               | 441             | 342 <sup>c</sup> |
| Source Water Assessments Completed   | 94                | 110               | 102             | 110              |
| Active Nonpoint Source Projects Administered (Previous Calendar Year)                            | 49                | 32                | 45              | 42               |
| Nonpoint Source Projects Completed (Previous Calendar Year)                                      | 20                | 8                 | 9               | 3                |
| Beneficial Use Reconnaissance Program (BURP) Sites Surveyed                                      | 240               | 280               | 242             | 235              |
| <b>Waste Management and Remediation Division</b>   |                   |                   |                 |                  |
| Leaking Underground Storage Tank Cleanups Completed  | 31                | 16                | 16              | 21               |
| Underground Storage Tank Training and Inspections Completed                                      | 399               | 407               | 338             | 285              |
| Hazardous Waste Inspections Conducted  | 95                | 102               | 111             | 85               |
| Three-to-five-year inspections of municipal solid waste landfills completed (three are required) | ---- <sup>a</sup> | ---- <sup>a</sup> | 6               | 2                |
| Snake River Plain Environmental Samples Analyzed (for INL)                                       | 7,100             | 5,780             | 6,027           | 5,809            |
| Pollution Prevention Technical Assistance Efforts  | 104               | 98                | 110             | 78               |

a. New key service—data are not available for FY 2016–FY 2018.

b. Loss of key staff statewide has affected these numbers. Seven major permit modifications have also been issued (EPA Performance Partnership Agreement)

c. The drop in surveys is due to COVID 19. From the end of quarter 3 through quarter 4, sanitary surveys were suspended by DEQ and the health districts.

## Red Tape Reduction Act

The 2019 Red Tape Reduction Act (Executive Order 2019-02) required state agencies to review their administrative rules to identify costly, ineffective, duplicative, or outdated regulations. In January 2020, Governor Little repealed Executive Order 2019-02 and issued Executive Order No. 2020-1, Zero-Based Regulation, requiring agencies to justify every regulation they want to keep. Moving forward, every rule chapter in effect will be reviewed by DEQ, according to a staggered, 5-year schedule. About 20% of rule chapters will be reviewed annually. To reduce the number of chapters, words, and restrictive terms from our administrative rules in accordance with these executive orders, DEQ accomplished the following:

|                        | As of July 1, 2019 <sup>a</sup> | As of July 1, 2020 |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| Number of Chapters     | 24                              | 23                 |
| Number of Words        | 444,623                         | 438,465            |
| Number of Restrictions | 6,888                           | 6,739              |

a. DEQ identified an error in the counting methodology used for the 2019 report. The updated 2019 numbers are listed above.

**Air Quality**—The Air Quality Division removed some permitting sections already incorporated by reference of IDAPA 58.01.01 and is determining the best process to review all air quality rules under the new Executive Order 2020-1 Zero-Based Regulation.

**Water Quality**—In FY 2020, the Water Quality Divisions combined a rule chapter on cleaning septic tanks with rules on installing and permitting septic tanks, which reduced one chapter of rules and approximately three pages. The proposed combined chapter was approved by the DEQ Board in November 2019 and presented to the 2020 legislature becoming effective sine die 2020. The divisions are consolidating facility planning grant and revolving loan rule chapters. In May 2020, the Idaho Board of Environmental Quality considered deleting the “Rules for Administration of Wastewater Treatment Facility Grants” (IDAPA 58.01.04) and “Rules for Administration of Drinking Water Loan Program” (IDAPA 58.01.20) and merging relevant sections. The division initiated negotiated rulemaking to combine the four rule chapters for wastewater and drinking water facility grants and loans into two chapters (Dockets 58-0104-1901, 58-0112-1901, 58-0120-1901, and 58-0122-1901). Through simplification and consolidation, the two facility planning grant rule chapters will become a single chapter, and the two revolving loan rule chapters will become a single chapter. A negotiated rulemaking meeting is scheduled for August 27. The dockets will be introduced in the 2021 legislative session.

**Waste Management and Remediation**—The Waste Management Division evaluated the “Solid Waste Management Rules” (IDAPA 58.01.06) (Docket 58-0106-1901) for outdated, duplicative, and unnecessary language and held a negotiated rulemaking meeting on August 29, 2019. In May 2020, the revised rule was presented to and adopted by the Board of Environmental Quality. Revisions to the rule resulted in removal of 1,547 words, including 44 restrictive words, and decreased the rule length by 4 pages. The division is also working on the “Rules for Ore Processing by Cyanidation” (Docket 58-0113-1901) in response to a request by the Idaho Mining Association to improve these rules, holding negotiated rulemaking meetings in 2019 and 2020. Both dockets will be introduced in the 2021 legislative session. Negotiated rulemaking for the “Rules for the Design and Construction of Phosphogypsum Stacks” (Docket 58-0119-2001) was initiated during FY 2020 in response to House Bill 367, which was signed by the governor on March 9, 2020. This docket may be introduced in the 2022 legislative session.

## FY 2020 Performance Highlights

**Air Quality**—In 2016, Volkswagen agreed to settle a lawsuit alleging it manufactured diesel cars sold and operated with systems intended to defeat emission tests. As a Volkswagen Settlement Beneficiary, the State of Idaho is eligible to request \$17.3 million dollars from the Volkswagen Settlement Fund for projects under Eligible Mitigation Actions, which include a vehicle replacement program (VRP) and an electric vehicle supply equipment program (EVSE). Through the VW Trust, DEQ has completed two VRP application periods, the 2019 and 2020 VRPs. DEQ received \$8 million dollars in settlement funding requests in the 2019 VRP to replace 132 diesel vehicles, of which \$1.4 million in rebates have been paid in FY 2020 toward 35 heavy duty diesel vehicle

replacements. The 2020 VRP application period closed on June 1, 2020; DEQ received 29 applications requesting \$8.3 million in rebate requests to replace 95 diesel vehicles. DEQ has also approved three applications for funding toward four electric vehicle-charging stations and currently has another four applications under review. DEQ works closely with the Office of Energy and Mineral Resources on the electric vehicle supply equipment portion of the settlement.

**Water Quality**—DEQ issued its largest Drinking Water State Revolving Fund loan in the program's history to the City of Lewiston for \$43,000,000. DEQ also issued emergency funds to two small communities to make repairs to their system to remove unforeseen risks to public health. In addition, EPA issued two awards to DEQ for our innovative funding and focus on sustainability and public health protection. The first award was the use of the Clean Water State Revolving Fund to assist the Boise School District with a forgivable loan to replace 1,597 old lead faucets in 20 schools with lead-free water-efficient fixtures. This project helped reduce lead exposure in drinking water for students and saved an estimated 1.7 million gallons of water per year. The second award was for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Lead Abatement Program, which has funded nearly \$1.5 million since 2017 to replace piping and fixtures for several communities throughout Idaho.

**Waste Management and Remediation**—In 2021, DEQ will assume responsibility for operating the newly upgraded Central Treatment Plant at the Bunker Hill Superfund Site in Kellogg, Idaho. The plant will remove metals in mine water discharge from the Bunker Hill Mine and contaminated ground water from beneath the historic Bunker Hill central tailings impoundment. The new system will treat up to 5,000 gallons per minute of contaminated water. The completed treatment plant and ground water collection system is expected to capture nearly 30% of the total dissolved zinc load in the Upper Basin and to provide significant water quality improvement in the South Fork Coeur d'Alene River.

## Part II – Performance Measures

DEQ's target performance measures are used to track and report progress in meeting the overall agency goal of protecting public health and the environment. These targets were chosen because each tracks measurable agency actions and reflects an actual environmental or public health outcome or result. Each performance measure is revisited annually through the strategic planning process to ensure its continued relevance.

### Goals and Performance Measures

We successfully completed several objectives that improved air quality, prioritized impaired waters, and identified new, existing contaminated sites. As a result, the Air Quality, Water Quality, and Waste Management and Remediation Divisions developed new objectives for the next fiscal year. FY 2021 targets are provided in the Goals and Performance Measures table.

**Performance Measure 1**—The target of zero days is based on 11 days in unhealthy range in FY 2019. This performance measure is determined by any single air monitor reaching unhealthy, which is identified as *red* on the Air Quality Index (AQI) scale. If multiple air monitors reach unhealthy air quality levels on the same day, it still counts as 1 day. A vast majority of measured unhealthy days can result from exceptional events such as wildfire and dust.

**Performance Measure 2**—Derived from DEQ's 2016 Integrated Report, this performance measure compares the number of river and stream miles that support beneficial uses to the number of assessed river and stream miles.

**Performance Measure 3**—The target of 211 sites is a 10% reduction in the current 234 open contaminated sites (2,893 total known contaminated sites). This performance measure includes leaking underground storage tanks and general remediation sites. Contaminated site closure is complete when contaminant concentrations meet acceptable risk-based or other approved criteria through assessment or remediation activities. This performance measure excludes sites under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (Superfund), including mega sites, such as the Idaho National Laboratory and Bunker Hill, Department of Defense cleanup sites, hazardous waste sites, and solid waste facilities.



**Performance Measure 4**—This performance measure is based on wastewater reuse applications, IPDES applications, drinking water and wastewater plan and specification submittals, air quality permit applications, and hazardous waste permit applications.

**Performance Measure 5**—This performance measure is based on 5-year averages across programs. Each program measures compliance differently. IPDES is excluded this year because the program does not have a full year of data to report. Annual updates will be made to the benchmark.

**Performance Measure 6**—This performance measure includes air quality permits to construct, wastewater reuse and IPDES permits, and hazardous waste permits. With startup of the IPDES Program, DEQ will inherit a permit backlog that will require 1-to-2 permit cycles (5–10 years) to meet the national goal of 90% current permits.

**Performance Measure 7**—Continuous improvement is a long-term approach to systematically target and incrementally change processes to improve efficiency and quality within the agency. Using the kaizen philosophy and a lean process focus, DEQ will examine our processes in detail and determine output improvements. All staff are encouraged to suggest and implement changes that create continuous improvement within the regions and across the agency.

| Goals and Performance Measures   |        |                  |                  |                  |           |           |
|--|--------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Performance Measure  |        | FY 2017          | FY 2018          | FY 2019          | FY 2020   | FY 2021   |
| <b>Goal 1</b>  |        |                  |                  |                  |           |           |
| <i>Make recognizable and measurable environmental improvements</i>   |        |                  |                  |                  |           |           |
| 1. Reduce number of unhealthy days based on the Air Quality Index (AQI) throughout the state   | actual | -----            | 25 days          | 11 days          | 2 days    | -----     |
|  | target | n/a <sup>a</sup> | n/a <sup>a</sup> | 0 days           | 0 days    | 0 days    |
| 2. Increase the percentage of assessed rivers and streams supporting beneficial uses   | actual | -----            | 33%              | 33%              | 33%       | -----     |
|  | target | n/a <sup>a</sup> | n/a <sup>a</sup> | 35%              | 35%       | 35%       |
| 3. Reduce the number of known contaminated sites   | actual | -----            | 275 sites        | 237 sites        | 234 sites | -----     |
|  | target | n/a <sup>a</sup> | n/a <sup>a</sup> | 247 sites        | 213 sites | 211 sites |
| <b>Goal 2</b>  |        |                  |                  |                  |           |           |
| <i>Provide first-class customer service as a trusted source for environmental leadership</i>   |        |                  |                  |                  |           |           |
| 4. Increase the percentage of complete permit applications and facility plan and specification submittal packages on initial submittal | actual | -----            | 46%              | 71%              | 45%       | -----     |
|  | target | n/a <sup>a</sup> | n/a <sup>a</sup> | 82%              | 82%       | 82%       |
| 5. Increase the compliance rate of inspected facilities  | actual | -----            | 73%              | 82% <sup>b</sup> | 80%       | -----     |
|  | target | n/a <sup>a</sup> | n/a <sup>a</sup> | 82%              | 82%       | 82%       |
| <b>Goal 3</b>  |        |                  |                  |                  |           |           |
| <i>Foster a culture of continuous improvement</i>  |        |                  |                  |                  |           |           |
| 6. Increase the percentage of permits issued before deadline   | actual | -----            | 67%              | 88%              | 80%       | -----     |
|  | target | n/a <sup>a</sup> | n/a <sup>a</sup> | 81%              | 81%       | 81%       |
| 7. Conduct 50 lean improvement projects per year   | actual | -----            | -----            | -----            | 12%       | -----     |
|  | target | n/a <sup>a</sup> | n/a <sup>a</sup> | n/a              | 100%      | 100%      |

a. In 2018, DEQ developed all new goals and performance measures, and data are not available.

b. IPDES is excluded this year because the program does not have a full year of data to report.

**Performance Analysis**—Over past fiscal years, DEQ has met or exceeded a majority of its performance measurement targets. In the coming year, DEQ will continue to make action-based progress with updated

performance measures and objectives. Along with meeting new performance measures, DEQ is faced with the additional challenges as described below:

**Air Quality (Performance Measure 1)**—When DEQ developed new performance measures in 2017, the measure to reduce the number of unhealthy air quality days was based on the AQI scale during the calendar year. For CY 2017 the number was 25 days. On further review and to ensure consistency with other performance measures, DEQ changed this measure from calendar year to state fiscal year and continues to report on a state fiscal year basis.

Reducing the number of unhealthy air quality days based on the AQI is a reasonable measure to report; however, DEQ's success in meeting this measure is subject to the whim of wildfires and weather. From spring through fall, wildfire smoke can have a significant impact on the AQI. In FY 2020, DEQ reported 2 days in the unhealthy range, which were not the result of wildfires or dust events. These events were localized issues in St. Maries on October 30, 2019, and in Idaho City on December 11, 2019, and likely due to residential wood heating and/or open burning. Looking back, DEQ has seen an improvement in the number of unhealthy AQI readings recorded, but we have also seen a decrease in wildfire activity. In FY 2019, there were 11 days recorded, but 10 days were attributed to wildfire smoke. In FY 2018, there were 17 days recorded, and 16 days were also attributed to wildfire smoke. Recently, we have seen a small reprieve from wildfires that is reflected in our air quality data to date, but it may not always remain this way.

**Water Quality (Performance Measure 2)**—In FY 2020, DEQ assumed delegated authority for individual nonmunicipal IPDES-permitted facilities, bringing the total number of permitted facilities under DEQ authority to 145. DEQ continues to inherit administratively continued permits from EPA resulting in a lower amount of permits being issued before the deadline. DEQ strives to meet the performance goal of reissuing permits prior to their expiration. FY 2020 we saw a nearly 10-fold increase in the number of IPDES permits drafted and issued. This will continue to improve as staff gain experience and standard operating procedures are designed to increase efficiency and improve throughput.

DEQ has improved technical and compliance assistance to facilities permitted under IPDES and reuse permits by providing routine review of monitoring reports and the ability to respond quickly when a potential issue is identified. This results in fewer facilities having violations identified at the time of inspection or having violations compile over time without being addressed. Fewer violations means an improved rate of compliance.

**Waste Management and Remediation (Performance Measure 3)**—The number of contaminated sites identified under performance measure 3 is decreasing. However, there continues to be a number of new contaminated sites identified each year, and this results in slower progress made in reducing the overall number of contaminated sites. For example, during FY 2020, there were 126 sites closed, but 123 new sites were identified, which is a net reduction of only three sites overall for the fiscal year. This trend will likely continue as the overall number of contaminated sites reaches an asymptotic level. Some sites are not necessarily new (recent) releases but are newly identified or previously unaccounted for sites not previously included in the contaminated sites inventory.

**Agency-Wide Goals (Performance Measures 4, 5, and 6)**—Beginning in mid-March 2020, DEQ temporarily halted certain routine inspections as regulated facilities and the state dealt with the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts to facility operations and the availability of both DEQ inspector and facility staff to accommodate routine inspections. Routine inspections were resumed in early June 2020 according to an internal standard operating procedure, *Procedures for Routine Inspections During COVID-19*. Certain essential inspections, such as complaints, continued during the pandemic. In April 2020, an addendum to the DEQ Health and Safety Plan was created to address employee exposure to COVID-19 while traveling and performing essential fieldwork activities. Inspectors follow this addendum and other safety protocols while conducting inspections.

On April 8, 2020, DEQ issued the guidance, *COVID-19 Regulatory Flexibility and Compliance Assistance*, outlining DEQ's approach to regulatory requirements and expectations of regulated facilities during the pandemic. Under this guidance, regulated facilities could request postponing certain activities and requirements due to impacts related to the pandemic, subject to DEQ approval, but were still required to ensure protection of human health and the environment. This regulatory flexibility allowed by the guidance is still in effect.

Some programs within the Waste Management Division are challenged to develop timely outreach materials and to conduct outreach activities (e.g., workshops) that improve compliance rates of regulated facilities under performance measure 5. In addition, over the last couple of years, as new regulations were implemented for the underground storage tank and hazardous waste programs, the annual compliance rates have decreased under measure 5. Identifying specific compliance issues and providing education and outreach to regulated facilities on those compliance issues, as well as conducting general outreach should help increase overall compliance as measured under performance measure 5.

**Lean Improvement (Performance Measure 7)**—Forty-four lean improvement projects were scheduled this year, and five training projects were completed. Currently, 39 training projects are underway.

- **Measurement**—We counted projects submitted as a part of individual employees' completion of Lean Practitioner training. During strategic planning in June, other projects were suggested by senior management, but they were not counted because they were not submitted as a part of the training process. The other issue is our process for tracking projects did not communicate to employees who had not taken the training that they could submit project ideas. We corrected this problem by providing a continuous improvement project submission form on the intranet.
- **Project life cycles**—Project ideas submitted often required more extensive data collection and faced more difficult implementation barriers than was assumed when the strategic plan goal was established. Many projects are still in various stages of completion but have not yet been fully achieved due to the time needed to collect and analyze data and implement solutions.
- **COVID**—We have not hosted any Lean Practitioner training events since the beginning of March. A second round of Lean Champion training was scheduled that would have delivered a minimum of 10 additional completed projects by June 30, 2020, and would have created a visual management and strategic implementation team to assist with projects that were currently underway.
- **Miscellaneous barriers to project completion**—Feedback received as part of the Lean Practitioner trainings identified a number of barriers to project implementation that could not be addressed in the short term, including resource and time constraints and interpersonal conflicts.

The Air Quality Division completed one lean improvement project for the Air Information Management System (AIMS) software application. A contractor evaluated the division's permitting, enforcement, and compliance software application to assist in determining how to rebuild the application and improve its function. The evaluation identified process flow and pinch points for improvement.

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