

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 Rules may be adopted, amended, or repealed by the board.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 agencywide 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. Regional 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 cleanup 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 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
Air Quality Permitting	\$931,006	\$1,126,068	\$793,865	\$1,214,168
Public Water System Oversight	\$1,651,657	\$1,620,766	\$1,747,254	\$1,570,492
Water Pollution Control	\$4,829,865	\$4,823,587	\$4,823,194	\$4,804,852
Environmental Remediation	\$1,970,968	\$2,110,912	\$2,081,704	\$365,641
Cooperative DEQ-Federal	\$20,838,643	\$23,280,316	\$21,414,464	\$18,618,610
Cooperative DEQ-General	\$19,621,100	\$20,751,696	\$22,013,564	\$20,963,476
Cooperative DEQ-Other	\$1,921,310	\$2,115,232	\$4,268,183	\$2,602,490
Bunker Hill Consent Decree	\$568,222	\$179,326	\$287,571	\$2,124,981
Underground Storage Tank Fees	---- ^a	\$196,085	\$198,558	\$199,816
Idaho Pollutant Discharge Elimination System	--- ^b	--- ^b	\$764,771	\$1,170,992
Total	\$52,332,771	\$56,203,988	\$58,393,128	\$53,635,518
Expenditures	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
Personnel Costs	\$30,425,221	\$30,856,108	\$31,381,508	\$30,027,626
Operating Expenditures	\$12,234,514	\$13,397,042	\$12,333,133	\$12,494,236
Capital Outlay	\$475,410	\$542,398	\$414,156	\$404,646
Trustee/Benefit Payments	\$5,880,173	\$6,368,776	\$7,202,156	\$5,773,975
Total	\$49,015,318	\$51,164,325	\$51,330,953	\$48,700,483

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 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
Air Quality Division				
Air Quality Permits to Construct Issued	90	72	70	68
Air Quality Tier I (Title V) Permits Issued	15	18	13	14
Air Quality Tier II Permits Issued	1	1	1	1
Air Quality Permits by Rule Issued	---- ^a	26	40	31
Inspections of Stationary and Portable Air Pollution Sources	125	197	212	214
Number of Crop Residue Acres Approved and Burned	34,247	40,104	34,312	54,347
Water Quality Divisions				
Wastewater Grants Awarded	\$347,500	\$343,500	\$326,625	\$303,460
Wastewater Loans Awarded	\$66,972,863	\$53,423,000	\$65,765,815	\$38,577,250
Drinking Water Grants Awarded	\$398,958	\$248,935	\$339,250	\$347,500
Drinking Water Loans Awarded	\$21,015,156	\$6,058,650	\$62,679,141	\$19,285,914
401/404 Water Quality Certifications Issued	87	48	57	47
Wastewater Reuse Permits Issued	19	23 ^b	12 ^b	5
IPDES Direct Discharge Permits Issued	---- ^a	1	9	7
Total Wastewater Engineering Plan and Specification Reviews Completed	302	256	400	402
Total Drinking Water Engineering Plan and Specification Reviews Completed	296	409	470	492
Drinking Water Sanitary Surveys Completed	394	441	342 ^c	390
Source Water Assessments Completed	110	102	110	83
Active Nonpoint Source Projects Administered (Previous Calendar Year)	32	45	42	47
Nonpoint Source Projects Completed (Previous Calendar Year)	8	9	3	19
Beneficial Use Reconnaissance Program (BURP) Sites Surveyed	280	242	235	0 ^d
Waste Management and Remediation Division				
Leaking Underground Storage Tank Cleanups Completed	16	16	21	11
Underground Storage Tank Training and Inspections Completed	407	338	285	487
Hazardous Waste Inspections Conducted	102	111	85	93
Three-to-five-year inspections of municipal solid waste landfills completed (three are required)	---- ^a	6	2	6
Snake River Plain Environmental Samples Analyzed (for INL)	5,780	6,027	5,809	6,159
Pollution Prevention Technical Assistance Efforts	98	110	78	96

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.

d. All BURP monitoring occurs in summer (Q1); BURP was suspended due to COVID and budget reductions.

FY 2021 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, and in combination with EPA Diesel Emission Reduction Act grant funding, DEQ has completed two VRP application periods, the 2019 and 2020 VRPs. DEQ awarded \$7.5 million dollars in settlement funding projects in the 2019 VRP to replace 130 diesel vehicles, of which \$2 million in rebates were paid in FY 2021 toward 41 heavy duty diesel vehicle replacements. The 2020 VRP application period closed on June 1, 2020; DEQ awarded \$5.2 million in settlement funding projects to replace 69 diesel vehicles, of which \$239,485 was paid in FY 2021 to replace 5 heavy duty diesel vehicles. DEQ has also approved four applications for funding toward six electric vehicle-charging stations and currently has one additional application under review. Two of these projects were completed with \$151,257 paid in FY 2021 to install two EV charging stations. DEQ works closely with the Office of Energy and Mineral Resources on the electric vehicle supply equipment portion of the settlement.

Water Quality—In federal fiscal years 2020 and 2021, EPA provided DEQ with an additional \$87,000 and \$126,000 in Public Water System Supervision grant funding, respectively. This additional funding will be used for activities that deal with emerging contaminants such as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). The Drinking Water Bureau developed a drinking water source sampling project to evaluate the presence and sources of PFAS in Idaho's public drinking water. This monitoring will complement the monitoring done under EPA's Third Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule, where 33 of Idaho's systems participated between 2013 and 2015 (none of these samples were over the method detection limit). Sampling is voluntary. Sampling began in spring 2021 and will continue through 2022 or until funding is exhausted.

The Surface and Wastewater Division completed evaluation and negotiated rulemaking under Executive Order No. 2020-01 (Zero-Based Regulation) for IDAPA 58.01.09 Rules Regulating Swine Facilities. This effort resulted in removing 115 restrictive words and a total of 2,394 words removed from the chapter.

Waste Management and Remediation—The Hazardous Waste Bureau developed a number of outreach materials to help the regulated community achieve better compliance. The program developed facts sheets on satellite accumulation areas and paint waste disposal in response to requests from generators. In March 2021, the Bureau held a virtual workshop covering a new rule, Management Standards for Hazardous Waste Pharmaceuticals, and developed a storyboard about the rule for the DEQ website. The universal waste fact sheet was updated to reflect the addition of aerosol cans to the list of hazardous wastes that may be managed under the streamlined universal waste rule.

The Hazardous Waste Bureau utilized EPA multipurpose grant funding to update the Idaho Hazardous Waste Annual Report (HWAR) software. The original HWAR software application was developed in 2004, and the software was no longer supported and did not meet current server, network, and cybersecurity requirements. Between May and December 2020, DEQ contracted with a company to develop a new HWAR application that has improved functionality. Additionally, the Hazardous Waste Bureau has been working to put together an electronic Inspector Toolbox, which includes regulatory interpretations, templates, brochures and fact sheets, and checklists. The program has also implemented a training program for our new inspectors and implemented monthly trainings for the entire group.

The Waste Management and Remediation Division completed evaluation and negotiated rulemaking pursuant to Executive Order No. 2020-01 (Zero-Based Regulation) of two rule chapters: (1) the Rules and Standards for Hazardous Waste Management (IDAPA 58.01.05), removing 45 restrictive words and 957 total words from the chapter; and (2) the Land Remediation Rules (IDAPA 58.01.18), removing 50 restrictive words and 3,498 words from the chapter.

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 2022 targets are provided in the Goals and Performance Measures table.

Performance Measure 1—The target of zero days is based on 2 days in unhealthy range in FY 2020. 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 2018–2020 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—Since issuing the strategic plan in July 2021, the numbers for this measure have been updated. Based on the beginning of the state fiscal year, the target of 204 sites is a 10% reduction in the 227 open contaminated sites (3,010 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. Annual updates will be made to the benchmark.

Performance Measure 6—This performance measure includes air quality permits to construct, water quality reuse and IPDES permits, and hazardous waste permits. The IPDES Program inherited 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.

Performance Measure 8—This newly developed performance measure will evaluate employee engagement and retention over time. As an organization, DEQ wants to ensure employees feel connected to the agency, our mission, and the strategic plan. If employees are engaged, they are happier and more productive, which results in less turnover, an expensive issue for DEQ. Assessing engagement and turnover will help us determine if we are achieving this goal.

Goals and Performance Measures						
Performance Measure		FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022
Goal 1						
<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	16 days	-----
	target	n/a ^a	0 days	0 days	0 days	0 days
2. Increase the percentage of assessed rivers and streams supporting beneficial uses	actual	33%	33%	33%	35%	-----
	target	n/a ^a	35%	35%	35%	35%
3. Reduce the number of known contaminated sites	actual	275 sites	237 sites	234 sites	227	-----
	target	n/a ^a	247 sites	213 sites	211 sites	204 sites
Goal 2						
<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%	66%	-----
	target	n/a ^a	82%	82%	82%	82%
5. Increase the compliance rate of inspected facilities	actual	73%	82% ^b	80%	74%	-----
	target	n/a ^a	82%	82%	82%	82%
Goal 3						
<i>Foster a culture of continuous improvement</i>						
6. Increase the percentage of permits issued before deadline	actual	67%	88%	80%	61%	-----
	target	n/a ^a	81%	81%	81%	81%
7. Conduct 50 Lean improvement projects per year	actual	-----	-----	12%	42%	-----
	target	n/a ^a	n/a	100%	100%	100%
8. Reduce the amount of elective, non-retirement turnover in the agency by 20%.	actual	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	target	n/a ^c	n/a ^c	n/a ^c	n/a ^c	13.5%

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.

c. In 2021, DEQ developed a new performance measure and objectives under Goal 3, and data are not available.

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 Goal 1 (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 SFY 2021, DEQ reported 16 days in the unhealthy or

worse AQI category of which one was not the result of wildfires or dust events. This event occurred on July 4, 2020, and was due to fireworks. Looking back, DEQ has observed a similar number of days with unhealthy AQI readings recorded. In SFY 2019, there were 11 days recorded, but 10 days were attributed to wildfire smoke. In SFY 2018, there were 17 days recorded, and 16 days were also attributed to wildfire smoke.

Water Quality Goal 1 (Performance Measure 2)—This represents the total percentage of stream miles assessed as Category 1 or 2 in Idaho's 2018–2020 Integrated Report approved on October 1, 2020. The next Integrated Report will not be submitted for EPA approval until approximately April 1, 2022; this number will remain unchanged until then.

Waste Management and Remediation Goal 1 (Performance Measure 3)—The number of contaminated sites identified under performance measure 3 fluctuates. 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 2021, there were 124 sites closed, but 144 new sites were identified, which is a net increase of 20 sites overall for the fiscal year. These contaminated sites are the result of petroleum and chemical releases that are not predictable. Therefore, for some years the number of contaminated sites may increase while in other years the number may decrease. In addition, some sites are not necessarily new (recent) releases, but are newly identified or previously unaccounted for sites that were not previously included in the contaminated sites inventory. Note that there was an adjustment to the total number of general remediation sites; the total number was decreased by 27 sites (there was an error in the tracking, some sites were double counted). The net increase of 20 sites and the reduction of open sites is due to the tracking error resulted in a net decrease of 7 open sites under this performance measure.

Agencywide Goals 2 and 3 (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 followed this addendum, other safety protocols, and the current version of the DEQ Return to Office Plan while conducting inspections. These protocols were utilized through fiscal year 2021.

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 was retained through fiscal year 2021.

In FY 2021, DEQ assumed delegated authority for non-storm water, generally permitted discharge facilities, bringing the total number of permitted facilities under DEQ authority to over 300. 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.

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.

Some programs within the Waste Management and Remediation Division are challenged to develop timely outreach materials and to conduct outreach activities (e.g., workshops) that improve compliance rates of regulated facilities under the agencywide 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 performance 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 Goal 3 (Performance Measure 7)—Forty-one lean improvement projects were scheduled this year, and 21 projects were completed. Currently, 23 projects are underway.

- **Measurement**—Senior management staff were asked to have their staff submit completed or ongoing project descriptions for inclusion toward the strategic plan goal. Projects were to include a basic description of the problem and the countermeasures implemented or proposed to solve the problem. This measurement is a modification from the prior year, which only counted projects that were specifically generated from staff following their participation in a Lean Practitioner training event. The previous measurement method did not accurately represent the continuous improvement work being undertaken agencywide. Thus, the trajectory toward our target goal is positive, but it is significantly impacted by the change in measurement. We are still working to identify and implement predictive actions that will lead to higher rates of implementation of lean and continuous improvement projects.
- **COVID**—We have successfully transitioned to virtual trainings since the start of the pandemic, holding our first virtual Lean Practitioner training in October, and following up with subsequent trainings approximately every 4 to 5 weeks. Virtual trainings have allowed for greater flexibility to include regional office staff and new hires.
- **Miscellaneous barriers to project completion**—Numerous barriers to project implementation continue to be described by staff surveyed after their completion of Lean Practitioner training. Time constraints are the most frequently cited cause, in addition to individual staff members not having control over a process that would require action and consensus on the part of multiple people in a group. Strong group facilitation and collaboration appear to be associated with higher rates of implementation. DEQ is currently working to encourage opportunities for group collaboration on continuous improvement projects with the hope of achieving higher completion rates.

Employee Engagement Goal 3 (Performance Measure 8)—This effort will measure employee engagement and retention over a 3-year time frame. DEQ believes engaged employees will reduce the amount of elective, non-retirement turnover, which is expensive for the agency. In April 2020, DEQ conducted an initial assessment using a Gallup survey in which 94% of the agency participated, and 42% of employees considered themselves engaged. Employee engagement will be measured every 6 months over the next 3 years. Between assessments, managers are encouraged to use tools and training that has been made available to address areas where employees feel less connected. DEQ is also asking every employee to perform a personal strength assessment to provide information to team leaders so they can improve collaboration and problem-solving efforts by agency staff. Understanding personal strengths will help staff work together more effectively and provide better services to our customers.

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