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Secretary for
Environmental Protection



Countdown: 35 Months

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING SYSTEM (CERS)

BULLETIN #6

UPA Grant Application and Local Implementation Plan

This bulletin provides an update to the local Unified Program Agencies on the conversion to electronic reporting. Each Bulletin will have a primary topic and will include:

- **Updates:** Information to help you implement electronic reporting in your jurisdiction.
- **Local Agency Action Items:** May apply to some or all UPAs.

Please send comments and ideas to improve these bulletins to cupa@calepa.ca.gov.

Reminder: January 1, 2013 all businesses and UPAs are required to report electronically.

Updates

- Zip Code association tool. Sites currently in CERS have been associated with the UPA based on the zip code area within the UPAs jurisdiction. Unless uploaded by the CERS Administrator (see the next bullet point), all new sites in CERS will be assigned to the UPA based on the zip code entered by the business. In areas where more than one UPA has jurisdiction within a zip code area UPAs may need to advise the CERS Administrator which agency has jurisdiction for specific regulated sites. We are continuing to work to improve this process.
- Uploading regulated sites into CERS. When a UPA is ready to allow businesses to electronically submit, the CERS Administrator can upload into CERS basic facility information for all regulated sites within your jurisdiction. When a request is received, a template is sent to the UPA to create a table including, at a minimum, the business name, address, facility ID, contact information, etc. from their local system.
- Help demos and online tour of CERS. Go to the 'Help' link in the upper right corner of any CERS page to see the latest demos of CERS functions and to view the online tour of CERS. An FAQ (frequently asked questions) section is under development now and will be posted here when completed.
- The SB 2286 grant application process is scheduled to begin in March or April of this year. See below for more details.
- Brittanie Donnachie joined the Cal/EPA team on January 4 as the Associate Governmental Programs Analyst. She will primarily be responsible for the development and administration of the CERS SB 2286 Grant Process.

Local Agency Action Items

1. Review the Draft Local Transition Plan below and provide comments to Dan Firth (dfirth@calepa.ca.gov).

The following draft is intended to give you an idea of what will be required as part of the grant application process, to get you thinking about the different steps your agency may or will need to take to make the transition, and to provide an opportunity for you to comment before the grant application process is finalized. A final version will be distributed when the Grant Application Process is launched, currently scheduled to occur in March.

DRAFT Local Agency Electronic Reporting Transition Plan Template (1/28/2010)

Overview

Each Unified Program Agency (UPA) will develop an Electronic Reporting Transition Plan to address the local agency's plans for implementing the electronic reporting requirements of Assembly Bill 2286 (2008, Feuer). This template is divided into sections that, while not mandatory, include the types of information Cal/EPA needs to make the contract and grant allocation decisions. UPAs that elect to use a data management product such as Decade's Envision Connect or Garrison's Digital Health Department, may find that many of the considerations in this template will be addressed in whole or in part by that choice. Note also that some aspects of this plan may be addressed later in the transition process. Participating Agencies must submit their Transition Plan and grant application through their CUPA (see Item 12 below). This plan will help the local agency consider and address all aspects of the transition to electronic reporting.

Additional resources can be found at <http://www.calepa.ca.gov/CUPA/EReporting/>. The Bulletins, [CERS Implementation Guide \(PDF\)](#) and [Support and Help Guide Unified Program Agency Implementation of CERS \(PDF\)](#) will be especially helpful in developing your grant application and your agency's transition or implementation plan.

1. General Description of Transition Plan

- i. The general description should include a description of what level of automation currently exists and what the UPA plans to have in place by 2013.
- ii. If the UPA is a Participating Agency, it should describe the existing and planned automation interaction with the CUPA.
- iii. Your plan should consider the following:
 - i. Initial data conversion
 - ii. Data validation
 1. Initial data conversion
 2. Ongoing data collection/submission
 - iii. Ongoing data entry
 1. Business related data
 2. Agency related data (this may be part of item 5 below)
 - iv. Business outreach

2. Needs Assessment

A needs assessment helps determine what additional capabilities and/or services should be developed. Some critical areas of assessment may include:

- i. Transferring the data from UPA hardcopy documents to CERS.
- ii. Getting "non-computer" businesses to report electronically.
- iii. Building or acquiring a data management system or upgrading and expanding an existing system so that it can upload/download or exchange UP information with CERS. (i.e., local interface; portal).
- iv. Data management system maintenance after initial implementation.
- v. Procedural changes for regulatory staff to manage electronic data..
- vi. UPA computer access for business community to local portal or CERS.
- vii. CERS and/or local system training for UPA staff.
- viii. CERS and/or local system training for the business community.
- ix. Support from the state.

3. Collecting, Submitting, and Storing Unified Program Related Information

The plan must have a section that addresses collecting, submitting, and storing Unified Program Information. For example:

- i. CERS can collect and store local UPA information specified in the title 27 data dictionary.
- ii. CERS can collect locally required non-title 27 related UPA information. Describe what system the UPA will use. Will the UPA exchange data with CERS, perform upload/download, or use CERS only?
- iii. Will the UPA use CERS or their own web portal?

4. Management of Data Changes/Updates

How will UPA Manage Business Information Change Process?

- i. Is the UPA planning for businesses to change their information in CERS?
- ii. If UPA plans to use CERS as a business interface, where are the business information changes approved, CERS or the local system?
- iii. Is the UPA planning to use the comparison tool in CERS which compares the latest HMBP information with previously submitted information?

5. Inspection/Enforcement

Describe the UPA's plan for collecting inspection and enforcement information.

- i. Will the UPA's inspection and enforcement information collection be office of field based (mobile tablet PCs)?
- ii. If the UPA uses a field based system, will it be able to access CERS through a wireless connection?
- iii. Will UPA staff use mobile tablets to access previous and current business information while out in the field?
- iv. Will UPA staff use mobile tablets to offer businesses on-the-spot assistance in entering or updating regulatory information into CERS?
- v. Note: CERS does not provide any ability to schedule inspections.

6. Billing/Invoicing

- i. CERS does not provide for billing or invoicing of businesses. UPA will need to use a local system for billing/invoicing.
- ii. UPA may need to gather business information and documents from CERS for billing/invoicing or permitting purposes.

7. Training

- i. **Staff Training:** Identify expected training needs for UPA staff that includes management, inspection staff, and administrative personnel. The state will provide CERS training, but the UPA will need to provide training for their local interface and data management system.
- ii. **Participating Business Training:** Identify training needs and proposed outreach for businesses within their jurisdiction.

8. Help System

The first level of help for businesses will be the UPA. This section should explain how the UPA help system will function.

- i. Cal/EPA will provide Help Desk support for documentation and resolution of issues related to the use of CERS. Support by Cal/EPA includes support to regulated facilities and UPAs.
- ii. UPAs that will use a local web portal will need to provide instruction to businesses on its use and its relationship to CERS.
- iii. UPAs that will not be using a local web portal still need to furnish information about CERS to their businesses. UPAs' websites still need to be informative regarding CERS and contain links to State resources.

9. Service Contract and Grant (fiscal)

- i. This section should identify the contract and grant funds needed to implement the local program. It must identify how grant funds will be used. This section will normally include reference to the attached grant package.
- ii. Monies will be distributed to UPAs from grants for the initial implementation of e-reporting. These funds are temporary and are the means to support the initial stages of the implementation process. The funds are not meant to support the ongoing costs of maintaining UPAs' e-reporting systems (i.e. local portal, data system).

10. Ongoing Support and Maintenance

UPAs must consider the ongoing support and maintenance costs of implementing e-reporting. These costs must be rolled into the normal UPA budgetary process.

11. Electronic Reporting Transition Plan Tracking

CUPAs must update the status of their Electronic Reporting Transition Plan on or before June 15 quarterly thereafter in the CERS website. See attachment A for a list of the milestones that must be reported.

12. SB 2286 Grant Application Process

Participating Agencies (PA) must submit their Electronic Reporting Transition Plan and grant application to their CUPA. CUPAs with PAs must include the PA Electronic Reporting Transition Plan as part of their grant application. PAs applying for amounts over the base amount must do so through the CUPA's grant.

Note: the grant application and information on periodic status reports on the use of the grant funds will be provided with the release of the final grant application process.

Appendix A

The following nine milestones (dates) must be reported quarterly in order for Cal/EPA to monitor the overall transition of electronic reporting in California. A reporting template will be provided.

Estimated/Actual Start date of the CUPA Electronic Reporting Transition Plan
Date CUPA Select Preferred Data Exchange Methodology
Date Electronic Reporting Transition Plan & Grant Application Submitted
Date Cal/EPA Awards Grant
Date Transfer of existing data from UPA system to CERS Complete
Date Authorized Business Electronic Submission
Date CERS Data Exchange operational: Business data
Date CERS Data Exchange operational: Inspection & Enforcement Data
Date CUPA Electronic Reporting Transition Process Complete (including PAs)