

# Verbatim Transcript for ECHO Webinar: Intro to Navigating ECHO State Dashboards and Comparative Maps Demonstration

May 31, 2016

Good afternoon. Welcome to the third of a series of EPA ECHO web presentations. Today's presentation will include a live demonstration of the ECHO website, including the State Dashboards and Comparative Maps. As a side note, if you do see the potential for a webcam, we will not be using webcams today and you can disable that function in the upper left-hand part of your screen. Select "webcams," a drop down menu will come down and you want to select "hide webcams." That will make your screen larger to see the presentation. In addition, for today's webinar, you will be in listen-only mode. To ask questions, please type them into the question box. During the course of the webinar, there will be two short polls. Please select the appropriate multiple choice answers when the poll pops up on your screen. In closing, the webinar will end with a short survey. Enjoy the presentation.

Good afternoon everyone. Today, we will be exploring the Dashboards and Comparative Maps in the ECHO website. Today's webinar is likely not going to be as long as the previous webinar, just some examples from the Dashboards and then plenty of time for questions and answers.

As an introduction to the Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO), the ECHO website is a public resource that can be used to identify facilities in violation of environmental permits. On this website you can access the history of a facility and current violation status of permits. Data for the Dashboards come from the national system of record. The 2011 to 2015 data are frozen, but 2016 data are updated weekly. The one exception to this is the air data. Air data is due to be updated in the next month.

[Poll Question: Would you like to see some practice queries with an updated user guide?]

The largest percentage as you can see, answered "Yes" to the question would you like to see some practice queries with an updated user guide?"

First we're going to look at the Comparative Maps. From the ECHO website, you can access these maps with the Create Maps link and you select "State Comparative Maps."

In these maps, you can see national average data along with state average data and the activities of the EPA and state agencies through the years. One of the features of this map is that you can see the trend throughout the years by hitting the play button. As the map shifts, the map changes to show the different data. Right now, we're viewing total facilities for hazardous waste; you can also view air and water. This gives you a national perspective of inspections and enforcement actions as well as violations and penalties. We can select different views on the side bar where you can see facilities, inspections, violations, significant noncompliance, enforcement actions, and penalties. It's important that whenever you change what you're viewing on a map, you select "Refresh Map." This is how you can update the data that you're seeing in the map. You can also view EPA and state actions separately.

One important feature of this map is the Download Map Data button. When you download the map data, it brings you to a different link and you can open up a .csv file; this is how you can look at the data in more detail outside of the color-coding of the map. You can also select each individual state and get a summary of that state, and from here you can also open the dashboard.

Another way to open the dashboard is the top of the Comparative Maps page. Select "Navigate to State Dashboard."

There are two different dashboards that you can view. There's a Performance Dashboard that shows the national state inspection and enforcement goals. From this dashboard you can select different media. You can pick different states to view, and this is how you can see the summary of their inspection and enforcement plans. The Activity Dashboard shows a number of activities performed by EPA and state agencies. Again, you can select the state to view. There are six different dashboards displayed on the screen. The Inspection Dashboard includes monitoring activities at regulated facilities. This includes onsite inspections as well as reviews of information provided to the state and EPA. You can see state and EPA activities are color-coded. You can also break it down by facility type and number of inspections by state and EPA. And again, just like with the maps, the years the 2011-2015 data are frozen and the 2016 data are updated. In each dashboard, you can export data. By doing this, you can export to Excel and download the graph that you view on the screen right now. You can also download a .csv format and see the table; and that's going to help you analyze the data that you're seeing. The Violations Dashboard shows violations of environmental regulations at facilities. This again, breaks down by state and EPA activities. The Serious Violators, this definition varies by media; pesticides, water, drinking water, hazardous waste, and air have different definitions of what a violator is. To find out more about the dashboard you're viewing and the definition of a serious violator, you can select the Help button in the corner of each dashboard. Each activity medium; air, drinking water, hazardous waste, pesticides, and water; have a different Help page with their definition specific to that act. Enforcement Actions is a summary of enforcement actions from EPA and the state at regulated facilities. You can see number of formal enforcement actions, informal enforcement actions, facilities with formal, and facilities with informal. This graph right now that you're viewing, has all four displayed in different colors. You can also export different variations of this graph as well. The Penalties Dashboard provides the summary of what penalties regulated facilities have received from both the state and EPA. In the top left corner, the Facilities Regulated, each medium has different facilities that are regulated. You can click the Help button and learn more details about that specific medium and the facilities that are regulated. And this tells you the number of facilities overall. Again, you can change the year from 2011 to 2016, you can also change if they are regulated by EPA or state. As I said, you can export the data as a PDF, in Excel, PowerPoint, or a .csv file, these offer different views. I'm not going to download data today, that takes a little bit of time on my computer with the Internet connection right now. However, I encourage you to explore different graphs and try out different data downloads and see which works for you and your purpose for data.

As I said, each medium has its own Help page. This gives you an overview of the dashboard and also explains in more detail an Activity Dashboard, and what a Performance Dashboard is, and it tells you where we get that data for that specific medium. It also goes into the facilities regulated, the definition of what each medium regulates, and what the different inspections are. So, again, I encourage you, if there's a medium you're very interested in, or a medium more specific to your goals, to read this Help

page to learn more about what you're seeing on your dashboard screen. I don't want to go into each medium and read the page to you, but you can definitely check it out. It's easy to get to.

You can also click the Critical Information link and see more about the data and data program assessments and that will give you more information as well.

For the next poll, we're asking "What tool do you use the most?" You can select all of the answers that apply. Hazardous Waste Facility Search, Water Facility Search, Drinking Water Facility Search, Air Facility Search, or State boards. You can also use this time after you complete the poll to type in a question in a question box so that we can answer it during the question and answer time.

[Poll Question: What tool do you use the most?]

Okay, most of you have answered at this point. So you can see the tool most used is the Hazardous Waste Facility Search and you can see on there the rest that are used—the Drinking Water Facility Search the least.

There are a couple links I want to point out very specifically. There is a Contact Us button. You can use this link to get more detailed information about specific states, specific questions you have about a graph you are viewing, and also how we get our data. Also, on the ECHO Home page, is our Resources button and our Help button. From the Help button, there is a Dashboards Help page which gives an overall view of the dashboards and state comparative maps that is not specific to the medium that you are looking at. And the Resources button provides information about how we get our data as well.

These are our helpful links. These are the links that I just pointed out to you as well, by the way.

I know we brought up an Enforcement Case Search and I want to let you all know that we're working on guided queries for the Enforcement Case Search. We believe that that will help you to get to the know the tool a little bit better if we have some queries that you can work through and send out in advance. So, I just want to remind you to check out our video tutorials. We are making more. We're using the feedback that you give us about the tools that you use to plan tutorials. And you can use the Contact Us button for specific questions about graphs that you see on the dashboards and how we get our data.

I'd like to take this time for everyone to think of questions that they have and type them into the question and answer box. I just want to let you know that we are going to try to get to all the questions. If there's a question that takes a little more time to answer or it's a little more detailed, we will follow up with an email. So, if you don't hear your question read and answered, stay tuned for an email from Rebecca or I.

Our first question is, where do we find how often the data are updated?

The data is updated weekly. Rebecca, is there more specific information about that?

Yes. In general, that's true of course there is a page in ECHO called the About the Data page and it's linked from many places. If you're on the ECHO Home page and there's a little green square with a book in it, and you click that, and then under that there's a link called About the Data, and on that page we do list all the different data sources used in ECHO and when they're updated. So, that's where you can find any exceptions to the general weekly rule.

In regards to the Comparative Maps, can you look at the Comparative Maps by region?

No. The data is divided by state. You can within a state, you can look at the data based on actions that the EPA region took versus the state, but you can't look at totals by region.

Can someone get graphs shown previously by their individual state?

Yes. I'm assuming this question is referring to the dashboard graph that Jessie was showing. So, on any of the dashboards that has the six panels of graphs, the view can be changed to a particular state. So, whatever state you'd like to look at, from the menu toward the top left, just pick that state and then the whole page shifts to apply to that state, then you can select different years within that state. So, once you select the state, you can select the year, and you can export the graph and the data behind the graph.

In regard to the dashboard, for frozen data from 2011 to 2015, if a particular data set is indicated as unavailable, is that unavailable right now or until a certain date?

I'm sorry, but I'm not sure what that refers to. Eva, do you know of an example of something where we say it's unavailable? Frozen means that the data for that year, that just means we don't refresh it. For example, the fiscal year 2015 frozen data. The fiscal year ended in September 30th, 2015 and we went through a data verification period to allow the data stewards to check the data and then we froze it at the end of January 2016 so that that data set is always the same and is never refreshed. And as far as off the top of my head the only thing I can think of that's not available is 2015 for Air. The reason that's not available is because we had a system modernization project with the EPA source system and we just haven't updated ECHO yet to handle that. So, that data will be added in a month or so. I hope that answers the question. If not, please feel free to enter a clarifying question that then we'll answer your question.

Is there a way to access the names of serious non-compliance violators from the dashboard?

When you export the .csv table, it's a more detailed table of violators and what their violation was. I just did not go through the example of downloading because it often times is a larger table and takes time.

Right, so that's one way. Most of these charts make the data underneath the bar available. So, as Jessie said, one way to do that is to download the data and many cases you can click on the bar to get the underlying data. I'm not asking Jessie to do that right now because it'll take a while to load the national list, but especially once you switch to a state, almost all of these bars by year are clickable and so you just click on it, and then the page will load a list of the facilities that are underneath that data. So, the short answer is yes. Click the bar or download the data.

What can a company do when the data are flawed or incorrect?

On the Contact Us page, a category where you can "Report a Data Error." I think that's the best way to get a hold of us.

That's a good point Jessie. So, if you have a general comment about the data on the dashboard and think the rolled out data is incorrect, then always this Contact Us form is open to you and we'll respond to that. Another option is when you click on a bar and you get the facility list, from that list then there's a link to the facility report, what we called the Detailed Facility Report, and that is a great way to report a specific error that then is tracked through our error tracking system at EPA. So, when you get to the Detailed Facility Report on the top right of the report, there's a Report Error link, and if you click that

and then after that click the specific line on the report that's incorrect, and then it'll go through our official error outage system.

Another company-specific question. How do I look at a specific company's performance?

That would be the same route I just described to report an error is also how you would look at more details on a specific facility. I'm sorry, Eva, did you say company or facility? You said company, didn't you?

The question said "company."

ECHO is mostly regulated facility-based and the data is not rolled out by a company. So, you could, if you're truly interested in finding out a general idea of a company's environmental record, then you would probably want to do an ECHO facility search and enter the company name and you get a list of facilities that match that name and that's probably the best way to do a company analysis. If you're in the dashboard and you are looking at a bar of the facilities that have been inspected and you click that bar, you get the list of facilities that have been inspected. And if you're curious about diving into the details of a particular regulated facility, then you just click the link from the dashboard and it gives you the Detailed Facility Report that has much of the compliance history that we have in our national systems of record. So, there's a couple different ways in ECHO to get down to the facility details. But there's no official company records. You'd have to like do some of that analysis yourself using the facility searches.

Can the dashboards be filtered either by state or EPA for specific Standard Industry Classification (SIC) code?

No. If you're interested in looking at data for a specific industry using an SIC or NAICS code, then it's best to use the ECHO facility searches, which from the Home page are located under Explore Facilities, but that's not possible from the dashboard at this time.

This question is about users of either ECHO or the dashboard. Do you know if non-government users are using the system very much or is it mostly regulatory program staff?

We use Google Analytics to track log in information to link to ECHO and our last check was actually that our public users were growing. I cannot remember those numbers off the top of my head and I don't want to give you false numbers, but we are getting more and more public users. Right now, there's still more state users than public users, but we're excited to see the numbers increasing.

If a data error is reported on the ECHO website, who corrects the data and what is the process for making these corrections or investigating them?

When the error is reported from the Detailed Facility Report, then the report enters EPA's error tracking system and it is routed based on the data owner, EPA or state, depending on the piece of data. So for example, if you report that an inspection date is incorrect and the inspection was done by EPA, then that error notification will be routed to the data steward, usually in a EPA region, and if a correction needs to be made, that person is responsible for correcting the data in our EPA source system. Similarly, if the piece of data is state information, a state inspection or state enforcement action, then the error notification is routed to the state data steward who's responsible for researching the error notification

and correcting it in the EPA source system, if it needs to be corrected. And so when I say the state, I'm talking about somebody in a state environmental agency who's responsible for entering data.

Is all information pulled the Integrated Compliance Information System (ICIS)?

ICIS is a national data system of record where state and local agency data, as well as EPA data, is fed into and then eventually a lot is presented on ECHO. The information from the Clean Water Act from discharges, that comes from ICIS and then as soon as we've updated these Air dashboards with the 2015 data, that data will also come from ICIS. But the data for the Hazardous Waste program and the data from the Drinking Water program and the Pesticides program, those are different data sources, those do not come from ICIS.

Using the Resources button, on the About the Data page, you can get detailed information again. Not only the date, you can see what data comes from what source as well because there are many different sources.

That's all the questions we've received so far.

There's going to be a survey displayed on your screen. We don't have a date for the next webinar yet. We're looking at different ways to help you with guided queries for Facility Searches and Enforcement Case Searches to help you become more familiar with the systems and the tools. We'll be taking a look at the feedback everyone's given about what tools they use and that'll help us prioritize what training we do when. Meanwhile, please answer our poll questions at the end, and we look forward to participating with you in the future webinars.

Thank you, Jessie that was a great presentation and just as a reminder to everyone, a survey will pop up momentarily. We do appreciate your feedback today.