

Lessons Learned from Getting Data into STORET: A State's Perspective

Mellony Hoskinson, Dwane Young
RTI International

David Wilcox
Gold Systems

Michael Beauchene (Presenter)
State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection

One of the most commonly asked questions organizations have regarding STORET data is, "What is the best method for getting data into STORET?" The answer will be different for each organization, but there are some general guidelines for porting data into STORET. These guidelines include considering your organization's goals for using STORET and your types of projects, as well as looking at the actual data to be ported. This presentation will cover some of the necessary steps that you can take prior to porting data into STORET.

It is helpful to first identify the ways you would like to use STORET. Some examples include using STORET as the main database system for water quality management, using STORET as the method for communicating water quality data to EPA and the public, and using STORET as a data repository for accessing data across borders.

The type of project data to be entered into STORET will determine what data elements are required. After close examination of the data, you can develop a list of required and conditionally required data elements specific to your data set. You can also create crosswalk tables to get the data into the appropriate STORET format. Although there will be specific data elements that must be provided for every result, such as Project ID and Station Location information, the required data elements will vary depending on the type of result. For example, water samples will have different required elements than biological samples.

Before porting data into STORET, the Preferences and Defaults section of STORET should contain some information. Required elements that you must define in STORET before you can enter results data include Analytical Procedures, Sample Collection Procedures, and Gear Configurations. Characteristic Groups are designed to group the characteristics frequently used. This enables you to enter data with similar metadata as a group, rather than entering the metadata for each individual result. These are a few steps that you can take before entering results data that will help simplify the overall porting process.