Regional Spill Hotline
Feasibility Study

SWG Meeting – November 18, 2020
Acknowledgements

The regional spill hotline feasibility study is a Source Identification Information Repository (SIDIR) project that is being implemented through the Stormwater Action Monitoring (SAM) program with oversight from the Stormwater Work Group (SWG).

Other Contributors:
- Washington State Department of Ecology
- Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
- SurveyMonkey Participants
- Herrera Environmental Consultants
- Hardwick Research
- Interview Participants
- Vendors
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Goal: Gather information and conduct an assessment on the feasibility and desire for a regional or statewide common “hotline” for citizens and municipal staff in Washington State to report spills and environmental incidents.

The evaluation involved documenting industry knowledge and experience through a survey, a series of interviews, and discussions with vendors:

- SurveyMonkey Survey
- Municipal and State Agency Interviews
- Technical Interviews
- Vendor Research

Detailed study findings are documented in the appendices to this report:

APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW SUMMARY REPORT
- Survey Results
- Case Studies (Technical Interviews)
- In-Depth Municipal Interview Summary Report
- In-Depth State Agency Interview

APPENDIX 2: OPTIONS MATRIX NARRATIVE
- Vendor Research
- Implementation Considerations
- Case Studies
Overview

• Project goal
• Project process review
• Key findings
• Recommendations
• Questions
Project Goal

Gather information and conduct an assessment on the feasibility and desire for a regional or statewide common “hotline” for citizens and municipal staff in Washington State to report spills and environmental incidents.
Project Process Review

Municipal/State Agency Research

- SurveyMonkey
- Municipal interviews
- State agency interviews
- Technical interviews
- Interview Summary Report

System Research

- Vendor research
- Options matrix
- Technical memorandum (narrative)

Data Analysis and Report

- Draft report
- Final report
- Presentation to SWG
Key Findings

- A regional spill hotline is not broadly supported by most jurisdictions or state agencies.

- Municipalities interpret and use ERTS for regional spill reporting purposes. However, Ecology did not intend for ERTS to function as a regional spill reporting system.

- Implementing a multi-jurisdiction regional spill reporting system is technically feasible.

- A regional spill reporting system could streamline Municipal NPDES Permit annual reporting activities and promote regional analysis while allowing local procedures to remain in place.
Results and Discussion

→ Is a regional spill hotline system feasible? **YES**

→ Is a regional spill hotline system preferred? **NO**
Results and Discussion – Regional Benefits

• Central web form/call center: unified public-facing program & inter-jurisdiction coordination
• Centralized data accessibility and standardized data reporting
• Automated geodynamic workflows, regardless of geographic location
• Potential cost savings for group implementation, benefit to smaller jurisdictions
• Promote equity and accessibility by providing a hotline number, multiple language options and anonymous reporting
Recommendations

• Centralized system vs. “Hybrid” system
• If not regional, partnership between jurisdictions is highly recommended
Recommended Core Components for a Centralized Regional Spill Hotline System

• Create or identify a primary coordinating entity
• Centralized web form
• Central call center
• Centralized data storage with configured user permissions
• Do not create a downloadable mobile application
Recommended Core Components for a Centralized Regional Spill Hotline System

Option 1: Central Web Form
- Community Member wants to report a spill in jurisdiction "A"
- Receive auto notification on "closed" spill status

Option 2: Central Call Center 1-800-XXX-XXXX
- Community Member wants to report a spill in jurisdiction "A"
- Receive auto notification on "closed" spill status

Central Cloud Data Storage
- Auto notifications alert local staff in jurisdiction A
- Spill Report status is "closed"

Local Spill Responders respond to spill
Create or identify a primary coordinating entity

• New or existing state/public agency or non-profit organization to house and manage regional system

• Benefits

  • Manages data and reporting as a central system
  • Can coordinate needs/input of multiple jurisdictions
  • Can be a centralized billing/funding entity
  • Does not rely on a single jurisdiction to manage/coordinate

Example: Northwest Clean Air Agency (respond to complaints in Island, Skagit and Whatcom counties)

Example: WA Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) manages tri-state Squeal on Pigs Hotline and WA Invasives App
Recommendation for a Hybrid System: Centralized System with Hybrid Features

- Implement central system and include specific hybrid system features for individual jurisdictional workflows
- Spill routing logistics and complicated workflows for local jurisdiction configurations
- Technically feasible with select vendors
- Higher cost due unique configurations and systems for each jurisdiction
- In-Network vs Out-of-Network coverage workflow and technicalities
Technical Research

Top choices SeeClickFix and Rock Solid

Note: Intent of this study was not to make a product selection. Evaluation did not include all available products on the market.
Recommendations - What about **ERTS**?

- Post clarifying language on the purpose, function, and limitations of ERTS
- Configure regional system for compatibility with ERTS and WQWebIDDE reporting
Recommendations – Next Steps

• Re-survey jurisdictions to measure respondent changes based on study research
• Form preliminary structure with centralized entity to begin inter-jurisdictional coordination and define cost variables
• If broad regional implementation is not desired, consider recommendations identified in this study for local or sub-regional implementation
• Survey public for community input on spill reporting accessibility
• Consider jurisdiction statements requesting increased support with public outreach
Questions?