

OECA's Compliance Learning Agenda

Genevieve Soule, Program Analyst

Planning Measures and Oversight Division

Office of Compliance/OECA/EPA

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Context

Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Evidence Based Programs

Compliance Partnership Projects

Collaborating with the EELC

Promote an EPA/state/academic partnership to establish a Compliance Learning Agenda to:

- Test new and existing innovative technologies and policies
- Use data to ensure limited resources have the biggest impact on environmental compliance
- Champion communication of value of investing in evidence-based studies vs. anecdotes

National Targeting Center

Customer-focused

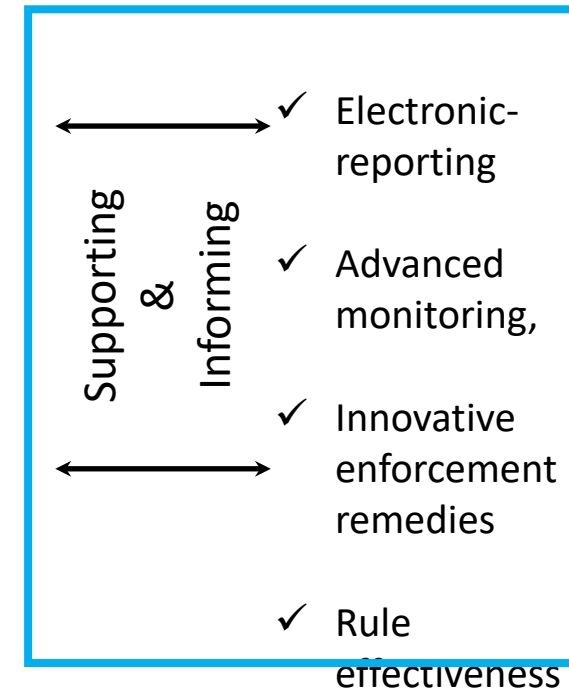
Partner regulators to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the existing tools for identifying serious violations
- Identify new tools needed
- Identify existing tools that should be enhanced
- Identify best practices to bring forward for national use

Drinking Water Learning Agenda

A multi-year effort to answer five key questions:

1. Does EPA have access to data to accurately measure drinking water compliance?
2. What factors determine system noncompliance and optimal performance?
3. Does increased use of inspections and enforcement improve system compliance?
4. How can we determine if a system has the capacity to provide safe water on a continuous basis?
5. What EPA oversight activities help state programs' ability to drive compliance?



What is a Learning Agenda?

Priority Questions

- When answered, have the biggest impact
- Broad Themes with specific, answerable sub-questions (both long and short term)
- Broad stakeholder input

Evidence- building Activities

- Determining data needs (available or need to be created?)
- Research and Evaluation plans

Information Sharing

- Products to disseminate findings
- Designed with usage and application in mind

Compliance Learning Agenda

An evidence-based compliance assurance program, formalized through a learning agenda, would:

- Strategically identify the most pressing compliance and enforcement-relevant programmatic questions;
- Establish an evaluation plan with a series of evidence-building research projects intended to answer those questions;
- Test new and existing innovative technologies and policies to ensure limited resources have the biggest impact on environmental compliance;
- Create an established venue for academics/states/tribes to partner in evidence-based studies; and
- Identify effective enforcement and compliance tools and approaches through empirical data vs. anecdotes.

Priority Topics

- Relative value of onsite vs. offsite compliance monitoring activities
- Root causes of municipal noncompliance and how these impact the effectiveness of compliance and enforcement approaches
- Identifying forms of injunctive relief obtained through enforcement case settlements and the impact of these relief elements on compliance, informing the public, addressing EJ concerns, etc

Municipal CWA/SDWA Noncompliance

Current Objectives

- Identify root causes of municipal CWA/SDWA noncompliance, the extent to which these causes are impacting the ability of municipalities to comply, and how these are affecting the success of enforcement and technical assistance efforts.
- Considering the root causes of municipal noncompliance, identify how these impede compliance and prevent technical assistance/enforcement tools from being effective in producing compliance.
- Identify interventions, either alternatives to enforcement and technical assistance, or approaches that can support enforcement and/or technical assistance, that are effective at overcoming the root cause impediments to moving municipal systems to compliance.