

# Getting Started on the Exchange Network: Adding Business Value for Air Programs

The Exchange Network enables environmental and public health agencies to capitalize on standardized technology and extensive partnerships to exchange air-related data with national, state, and local partners. This guide provides information for air programs to understand how the Exchange Network can improve access to data that supports decision-making and can reduce business costs. It also provides information on how to become a partner on the network. An electronic version of this guide, with hyperlinks, is available at [www.exchangenetwork.net](http://www.exchangenetwork.net).

## HOW DO I GET STARTED?

### 1. Understand How the Exchange Network May Be Used to Add Business Value for Air Programs

The Exchange Network provides states and tribes with technologies, tools, services, and partners to:

- Submit regulatory air data to EPA more efficiently,
- Share air data with other states, tribes, and the public,
- Improve air data analysis, and
- Improve internal air data business processes.

Exchange Network partners have found that the Exchange Network has helped them save money, make better decisions through better data access, provide more and better quality data to the public, and enjoy other benefits described in more detail below.

#### *Submit Regulatory Air Data to EPA More Efficiently*

Many Exchange Network partners are responsible for monitoring air quality under the Clean Air Act (CAA) and reporting their data to EPA. The Exchange Network provides the means for submitting National Emissions Inventory (NEI) and Air Quality System (AQS) data directly to EPA. Submitting through the Exchange Network can **save partners time and money**, and may create other **data sharing opportunities**. Partners sending data over the Exchange Network to AQS have reported several benefits, including:

- Streamlined reporting processes that reduce the expense of sending data to EPA.
- Improved data quality through reduced manual data entry and automated error checking.
- Less personnel time for responding to data requests and doing quality assurance.
- Proven data security through state-of-the-art network security measures.
- Ability to use Exchange Network technology to exchange AQS data with other parties interested in air data, such as neighboring states, with little additional cost.

# Adding Business Value for Air Programs

## How the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe Used AQS

Prior to joining the Exchange Network, the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe had years of backlogged ambient air quality data. It needed a reliable way to electronically share this and other environmental data with EPA. By joining the Network, the tribe was able to submit AQS data quickly and easily. The infrastructure and software used for the AQS data exchange allows the tribe to exchange other types of environmental data as well. And, the Network enables other tribes and agencies to view and use St. Regis Mohawk's data resources.

## *Exchange Air Data With Other States, Tribes, and Stakeholders*

The Exchange Network allows partners convenient access to data collected by neighboring states and tribes. Several states and tribes are building on work previously done on the Exchange Network to share air data regionally. The Air Quality Data Exchange (AQDE) and the Northwest Air Quality Data Exchange, for example, are reusing AQS technology to **share air quality data automatically** among state, tribal, and other public partners to protect the environment and human health. Data received over the network can be combined with existing datasets for **more powerful environmental analyses**. By using the Exchange Network, AQDE partners are able to:

- **Efficiently deliver air quality data to the public**, as well as emergency responders, law enforcement agencies, human health services, and other stakeholders and professionals who depend on access to air quality information to do their jobs better. Air data can easily be displayed on an electronic map.
- Complete **near real-time pollutant submissions** to AQS, and **hourly updates** to AIRNow with the same system. The AIRNow website provides timely public access to national, state, and local air quality data collected by partners.
- Share **additional air pollutant data** not collected by EPA, leveraging the same technology that supports data submissions to EPA, and enable **richer data analyses** through faster access to current air quality data.
- **Save money** by re-using tools and other resources developed by network partners.

## *Improve Internal Air Data Business Processes*

States have also used Exchange Network technology to meet **internal business needs**. The Oregon Department of Health and Human Services, for example, uses the Exchange Network to receive ambient air quality data collected by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. The environmental data can be linked to occurrences of asthma, cardiovascular disease, and other public health risks affected by ambient air quality.

## 2. Determine How the Exchange Network Can Benefit Your Air Program

The following questions will help you determine where the Exchange Network can add value to your air program. We recommend that program managers talk through these questions with front line staff and information technology managers and staff in their agencies.

- Do you require or submit data for air regulatory programs?
- What additional air data do you want or need from surrounding states or tribes to support air management decisions and/or programs in your agency?
- What new datasets would you like to integrate with your air data?
- Where do you see opportunities to move air data electronically and reduce typing or

### 3. Get Started on the Exchange Network

data entry?

- Where do you enter the same air data multiple times?

With **minimal effort**, you can get up and running on the Exchange Network. If you are not yet a participant in the Exchange Network, please refer to the *Join the Network* and *Apply for a Network Grant* Getting Started Guides that will help you understand what it takes to become a partner and some of the resources available. These and other Getting Started Guides are available at <http://www.exchangenetwork.net/guides/index.htm>.

If you are already a partner on the Exchange Network and would like to join an existing air exchange, such as AQS or NEI, please see the *Join an Existing Data Exchange* Getting Started Guide. You can also visit the air exchanges pages on the Exchange Network website at <http://www.exchangenetwork.net/exchanges/air/index.htm>.

If you would like to create new air-related exchange, please consult the *Build a New Data Exchange* Getting Started Guide.

## WHO CAN I TALK TO?

The following people may be contacted to learn more about the data exchanges and other resources in this guide or to help you determine how the Exchange Network can support your agency's air program.

#### Mitch West

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#### Nick Mangus, AQS

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#### Sally Dombrowski, NEI

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#### Exchange Network/CDX Help Desk

For contact information and the services it provides, see the Exchange Network website (<http://www.exchangenetwork.net/contacts/helpdesk.htm>).

**Data Exchange pages** on the **Exchange Network website** include contacts for more air-related flows (<http://www.exchangenetwork.net/exchanges/index.htm>).

#### Other States, Tribes, and Territories

Look at the **progress pages** (<http://www.exchangenetwork.net/progress/index.htm>) on the Exchange Network website. Click on the map/links for contacts and information.