

Oregon's 2024 Integrated Report Call for Data Submission Guidelines



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Quality

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DEQ is a leader in restoring, maintaining and enhancing the quality of Oregon's air, land and water.

Purpose of this document

This document describes the elements required to ensure the use of high-quality data for the water quality assessment, which results in the Integrated Report and updates to the 303(d) list of water quality limited waterbodies. For this assessment, surface water quality will be assessed by comparing measured chemical, physical and biological parameters to water quality criteria and standards. The methods used to make these comparisons and determine a final assessment conclusion are covered in the DEQ assessment methodology document that will be released in draft form in January 2023. Below is a data submission guide for those organizations interested in submitting data for inclusion in the assessment process. The information is also summarized in a checklist at the end of the document.

Note: Organizations that are ongoing participants in DEQ's Volunteer Monitoring Program can continue to use data reporting procedures established for that program. Data submitted under that program do not need to be resubmitted under this call for data. Additionally, data submitted to DEQ in recent data calls, including the Temperature TMDL Replacement data solicitation does not need to be resubmitted.

Data quality requirements

Organizations submitting data to DEQ must sign a virtual verification form when submitting the data online confirming that the following requirements have been met:

- **Must have a project plan** – A document that includes a purpose statement, the number of samples collected, and quality assurance and quality control protocols for collecting and analyzing samples. Organizations must submit a project plan along with the data.
- **Use widely approved methods** – Sampling and laboratory analysis must follow widely accepted scientific methods and protocols. These may include ORDEQ-MOMs, USEPA, USGS and Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater. All acceptable methods include applicable precision and accuracy checks and are listed in the respective data submission templates.

Data submission requirements

For submitted data to be considered for the Integrated Report, data must meet all of the following requirements:

- **Oregon waters** – Data and information submitted to DEQ must be collected from waters under the state of Oregon's jurisdiction.
- **Collected within the data window** – DEQ will be using a five-year data window for the 2024 IR cycle. This data window will overlap with the 2022 Integrated Report to ensure any unreported data will be included. For this reason, DEQ is requesting data from the past five years (**1/1/2018 to 12/31/2022**). This requirement means that a sample date and/or analysis date is required for each result.
- **Related to a specific location** – Assessing water quality is highly dependent on the accuracy of the sample location. All data submitted to DEQ for assessment purposes

must include the location of each monitoring station in latitude and longitude, ideally with the associated reference datum (example – NAD83), and a description of the monitoring location that includes the waterbody name.

Priority data

DEQ will review all data submitted within the data window. However, some types of data are more readily usable for the assessment process. Please consider the following when considering submitting data to DEQ:

- **Representative of the waterbody** – The water quality assessment process is intended to characterize a water body and determine if the designated beneficial uses are being supported. Prior to submitting data, please consider if the data represents ambient conditions in the waterbody. Examples of non-ambient samples include effluent data, data collected in mixing zones, storm event sampling, samples collected in stagnant side-channels or isolated pools, spills or toxic releases, and other sampling outside of normal conditions.
- **Parameters with an assessment methodology** – The assessment methodology provides the framework for interpreting numeric and narrative criteria and making an assessment conclusion (impaired vs. non-impaired) for a water body. DEQ will prioritize data with established methodologies. The table below provides a quick reference to parameters for which DEQ currently has methodologies in place to interpret numeric and narrative criteria. More information on the methodology can be found at <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/wq/Pages/Integrated-Report-Improvements.aspx>.

Parameters with assessment methodologies	
Parameter	Water type
Alkalinity (Table 30)	Freshwater
Ammonia (Table 30)	Freshwater; Estuarine; Saltwater
Aquatic Weeds	Freshwater; Estuarine; Saltwater
Biocriteria – Macroinvertebrates	Freshwater
Chlorophyll <i>a</i>	Freshwater; Estuarine; Saltwater
Dissolved Oxygen	Freshwater; Estuarine; Saltwater
<i>E. coli</i>	Freshwater; Estuaries (Non-Shellfish Growing)
Enterococci	Estuarine; Saltwater
Fecal Coliform	Estuaries (Shellfish Growing); Saltwater
Nuisance Algae – Harmful Algal Blooms	Freshwater; Estuarine; Saltwater
Nitrates (Table 40)	Freshwater; Estuarine; Saltwater
pH	Freshwater; Estuarine; Saltwater
Phosphorus Elemental	Estuaries; Saltwater
Temperature	Freshwater; Estuarine; Saltwater
Total Dissolved Gas	Freshwater
Toxic Substances – (Table 30: Aquatic Life Water Quality Criteria for Toxic Pollutants*)	Freshwater; Estuarine; Saltwater
Toxic Substances – (Table 40: Human Health Water Quality Criteria for Toxic Pollutants)	Freshwater; Estuarine; Saltwater
Turbidity measured in NTU	Drinking Water; Freshwater; Estuarine; Saltwater
*Aluminium will be included in Table 30 once the EPA criteria is adopted by DEQ. A method for analyzing bioavailable is under review for ASTM certification.	

How to submit data to DEQ

Data submission procedures vary depending on whether data are numeric or non-numeric. Numeric data must be submitted in electronic format using the templates provided on the call for data website <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/wq/Pages/irCallforData.aspx>.

There are three types of data submission templates: grab, continuous and biological. The templates include associated meta-data, detection limits and information confirming that the samples were collected and analyzed according to established quality assurance procedures. DEQ expects that organizations submitting continuous data have processed the results according to their respective quality control procedures. All template column headers in green are required. If any of the required columns are empty, the data may not be used. If entering data qualifier codes, a definition must be provided for each code. DEQ may request additional documentation, such as project plans, instrument calibration records, and lab reports. If you need assistance with these templates, email datahelp.ir@deq.oregon.gov.

Examples of non-numeric data include journal articles, state and federal reports and findings and observations. To be used for assessment purposes, non-numeric data that cannot be tabulated in a spreadsheet must meet the following requirements:

- **Related to a specific location** – DEQ cannot assess water quality based on regional (e.g., state, basin or west coast) conclusions. Latitude and longitude where the data were collected are required.
- **Reference the beneficial use impairment** – This will help DEQ understand the context of the submission.

Data validation

Data submitted through the call for data should meet all quality control and assurance guidelines outlined in the submitting agency's project plan. DEQ will screen for completeness, data quality and reasonable range of results. A reasonable range of results is determined by comparing the data to existing data from the region (sub-basin or basin scale). If data meet this first screen, DEQ will include it in its 2024 assessment. If the data are incomplete or outside the reasonable range, DEQ will analyze quality control data and/or follow up with the submitter for supporting documentation. The intent of the validation is not to eliminate data that may be showing a shift outside of a reasonable range, but rather to ensure that there is not an error in transcription or reporting units.

Quick checklist

- I have not submitted this data as part of the volunteer monitoring program or Temperature TMDL Replacement data solicitation.
- I have prepared and followed a project plan, quality assurance project plan, sampling and analysis plan or other similar document, to ensure that data collection, analysis methods and quality control steps are built into the project from the beginning.
- All sample collection and analysis follow widely approved methods. This includes, but is not limited to, methods outlined in or accepted by ODEQ-MOMs, USEPA, USGS and Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater. Methods used must be specified in the data submission template.
- I am willing to sign a verification form declaring that all methods and quality control protocols were followed.
- My data were collected in Oregon.

- My data were collected and/or analyzed between 1/1/2018 and 12/31/2022.
- My data characterize a specific location, and I can provide the following information about the location.
 - Location of each monitoring station in latitude and longitude and the reference datum (example – NAD83).
 - Waterbody name and description of the monitoring location.
 - Date the sample was taken.
 - Parameter(s) measured.
 - Measured result for each parameter.
 - Unit of measurement.
 - Method used for measurement, including method detection limits (MDL) or reporting limits (RL) where applicable.
 - Name and contact information of the entity submitting the data.
 - Name of all analytical laboratories used.
 - Definition of any qualifier used.

If you have checked all of these boxes, you are ready to submit to DEQ using the templates provided on the call for data website <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/wq/Pages/irCallforData.aspx>. When the call for data is initiated, the website will be updated to include an online form for submitting data. Please email datahelp.ir@deq.oregon.gov, if you need assistance submitting data or have additional questions. If you are not able to confirm any of the above statements, DEQ will likely not be able to use the data to make conclusions on water quality in Oregon. If you are interested in learning about preparing monitoring project plans and data quality, visit DEQ's Volunteer Monitoring Program website at <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/wq/Pages/WQ-Monitoring-Volunteer.aspx>.

Alternative formats

DEQ can provide documents in an alternate format or in a language other than English upon request. Call DEQ at 800-452-4011 or email deqinfo@deq.oregon.gov.