



CERS Business User Group Newsletter *for* September

Mission Statement:

The California Environmental Reporting System (CERS) Business User Group has been established to evaluate and provide feedback to Cal/EPA on the CERS' statewide web-based system used to electronically collect and report various hazardous material-related data as mandated by the California Health and Safety Code, and AB 2286. The CERS Business User Group will be comprised of the web-based system regulated end users and their representatives. This group will meet routinely, e.g. monthly, until a general consensus is reached that the web-based system no longer needs changes to address significant end users needs. The meeting frequency will be adjusted to meet the group's needs. Cal/EPA, the CUPAs, and others will participate as deemed appropriate by the group.

Implementation

- Early July
 - [Updated Data Dictionary changes](#) released
- Mid-July
 - Release Candidate 1 of XML data exchange schemas distributed for public comment
- August
 - Cal/EPA released an [updated version of the CERS XML Schemas](#) on the 24th which includes:
 - A number of corrections/clarifications identified by community and Cal/EPA Technology Services Unit staff.
 - Renaming of several Schema file names to avoid future issues if organization-based XML submittals are implemented.
 - Modifications to the UST and Chemical Description submittal element schemas to better align with Data Dictionary/UPCF business rules
- September 20
 - Deadline for comments on Cal/EPA RC2 release
- October
 - Begin [freeze](#) of new users in CERS1 until CERS2
- October/November
 - CERS1 [closed for ~10 business days](#) prior to deployment for data migration
 - CERS2 business and regulators portals [deployed](#); Includes "training" versions of both portals
- Mid-January 2012
 - XML data exchange for [CUPAs becomes available](#)
- Throughout 2012
 - Many CUPAs ["seed"](#) (load) facility data into CERS2

Questions/Topics

- What is the best way to determine which HMBPs will be pre-seeded?
 - The amount of data that will be seeded by the local agencies will vary between agencies based on what data they historically have entered into local data systems. At minimum local agencies should have basic business name, address and contact information for billing purposes.
 - Other agencies will have entered significantly more business data, including hazardous materials inventories. At this time we do not have information regarding what each CUPA is planning to include in their seeding, but we will have a tentative seeding schedule available later this year that will indicate the anticipated order of seeding.
 - Note that it is likely that UST data will need to be manually entered into CERS2 either by the business or the CUPA as the complexity of the data will prevent any automated seeding.

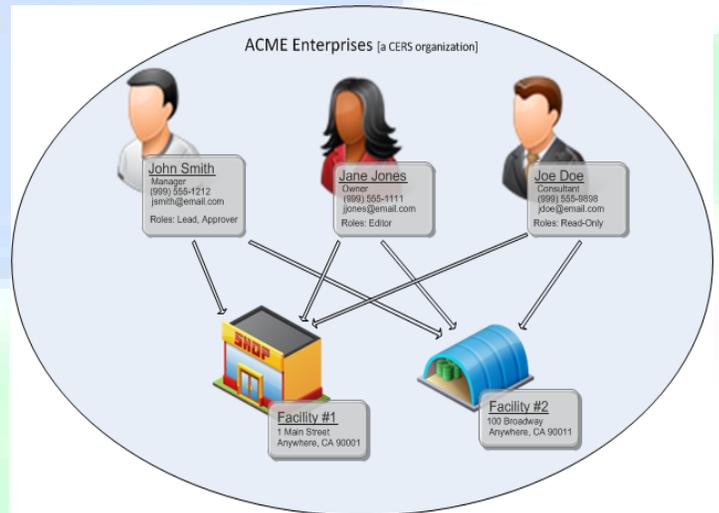
Other Businesses:

- ❖ *CERS Regulator User Group next meeting. September 13 8:30am-10:00am.*
- ❖ *Conference Panel Discussion on the "CERS Business Users' Group" at Statewide Environmental Summit. November 9-10, 2011. <http://ieasdc.org>*

- If an HMBP is only due for an annual update in 2013, will the complete plan need to be input?
 - Most CUPAs are seeding CERS with basic owner/operator information and with the Business Activities information for facilities that are not already in CERS. Businesses will need to validate this information and revise as necessary typically within two to three months as notified by the CUPA.
 - Many CUPAs are uploading any previously submitted documents such as the Emergency Contingency Plan to reduce demands on the regulated business. Any other data or documentation not provided by the CUPA may need to be entered into CERS by the business in 2013.
- Is 1/2013 a deadline for businesses to have all HMBPs resident in CERS or is the deadline extended to the date an individual plan is normally due after 1/2013?
 - After January 1, 2013 businesses and local agencies must report electronically. Whenever the next reporting requirement is due would not change. For example, if your business is required to submit an annual Hazardous Materials Inventory Statement on March 1st of each year, you would abide by that date, but since it is after 1/1/13 you would be required to report it electronically.
- Penalty/fines that businesses will face if the 1/1/13 submittal deadline is missed?
 - Enforcement would be handled by the local CUPA or Participating Agency and would be dependent on the circumstances. As mentioned above, the 1/1/13 deadline refers to the requirement to submit electronically after that date. The reporting requirements have not changed other than that. If you will be unable to report electronically after 1/1/13 please contact your local agency well in advance to discuss your situation and possible solutions.

Organizations

- “Organizations” were created in CERS2 to help regulators maintain user security with businesses that have more than one facility
 - CERS1 security grouped user rights by facility
 - CERS2 assigns user rights by organization (may apply to one or more facilities)
- An organization with multiple facilities may have several users responsible for reporting different entities - though businesses may be divided (e.g., by region), the same set of user rights apply for all facilities within that organization. The different levels of user rights are:
 - **Viewer:** may view facility information (read only)
 - **Editor:** may view & edit facility information, but cannot submit data to regulators
 - **Approver:** may view, edit & submit facility information
 - **Lead User:** may view, edit & submit facility



information; ability to manage individual users' rights within their organization

- Setting up Organizations in CERS2
 - Businesses with just one facility in CERS1 will

For further information:

Raymond R. Skow, SKOWRR@airproducts.com
 Armand A. Delgado, Armand.Delgado@VerizonWireless.com
 Dan Firth, dfirth@calepa.ca.gov
 CERS Help Center, cers@calepa.ca.gov

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- be transferred to CERS2 as a new Organization with a single facility
- Businesses with more than one facility in CERS1 will need to mail a formal letter to Cal/EPA in later 2011 indicating which facilities belong to them so that a multi-facility Organization can be created for them in CERS2
- Letter to Cal/EPA should be on official letterhead (must keep "legal paper trail"); more details about this letter format in coming weeks
- Note: each Organization should have one Lead User that is *not* a consultant to help the transfer of duties among users & to ensure consistency throughout the reporting of different facilities

Questions/Topics

- Cal/EPA letter to businesses
 - This will go out around mid to late September to multijurisdictional businesses in CERS and will be copied to the Business and Regulator User Groups.
- Participating in CERS2 testing
 - Cal/EPA will let selected businesses and regulators know when the beta version of CERS2 is available.
- Deadline for business response with organizations structure
 - The letter will include a firm date but plan on an October/November timeframe.

- Process for managing ongoing changes in Organizations structure
 - This may be done by business in the CERS2 User Interface (web pages) or may be handled through the CERS Help Center, depending on the complexity of the changes.
- Will HMBP submission dates be standardized?
 - No. Submission dates for the HMBP and HMIS are required tri annually and annually, respectively, or when there is a significant change. Specific dates for the tri annual and annual submissions are managed by the CUPA.
- Will CUPA invoicing be managed in any way via CERS or will it continue independently?
 - CUPA invoicing will not be done through CERS. Each CUPA has their own billing process.
- General review of what will and won't be standardized as CERS is fully implemented
 - All California Code of Regulations, Title 27 data dictionary elements and the additional data elements identified in the CERS Data Registry website (<https://cers.calepa.ca.gov/Data/Registry/>), and all PDF documents in CERS will be standardized. We plan to provide a mechanism in CERS2 for a local agency to identify any additional local information requirements that are unique to that agency.

Hyperlinks, contact info & additional notes

- ✚ An emergency plan template was posted in CERS to help maintain a standardized format among businesses. You can upload it at <http://www.calepa.ca.gov/CUPA/EReporting/> under Business Reporting to CUPA/ Electronic Reporting templates (PDF & Word documents), or click on the link, <http://www.calepa.ca.gov/CUPA/Documents/eTemplates/Contingency.pdf>

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Raymond R. Skow, SKOWRR@airproducts.com
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