CERS NextGen Questions and Answers

Question	Answer
What is the project timeline?	The Project has been split into two phases. A 12-month Phase 1 to build significant majority of the foundational system functionality and all functionality for the UST Program. Phase 2 will complete the other 5 Programs and is anticipated to take 6 months. The version with complete functionality for all CUPA Programs is anticipated to be required in 2027 but available in 2026.
How do I subscribe to the e-mail list for project communications?	Visit the CERS NextGen web page to subscribe the listserv: https://cers.calepa.ca.gov/cersnextgen/
How will Emergency Responders access information after CERS NextGen goes live?	Emergency responders will retain access within CERS to applicable emergency response information. Data extracts may also be made available for emergency responders through existing tools Chem Responder and PEAC.
How should software vendors prepare for CERS NextGen?	CalEPA anticipates providing an integration control document with the new interface specifications in March 2025. Once the new solution is in production, CalEPA will provide an onboarding process for the use of CERS NextGen interfaces similar to the one currently used.
What data will migrate to CERS NextGen?	CalEPA will be implementing the existing Office of the Secretary (OOS) data retention policy. Seven years of data will be migrated to the new system. Seven years of data will be maintained in CERS NextGen in accordance with the policy. Additional information pertaining to data removal will be made available as the project progresses.
Will the chemical inventory data not migrate to CERS NextGen if incomplete or will facilities just not be able to certify/resubmit the migrated submission if this information is missing?	CERS NextGen will implement new system rules to ensure future submittal requirements are clear to users and data provided is of higher quality. A user will not be able to certify or submit if data does not meet the new system requirements.
How should proprietary mixtures be entered into the system?	Proprietary information prevents disclosure to the public, but mixture composition is required to be provided to emergency responders. If you believe that information pertaining to a hazardous material is a trade secret, please complete the Trade Secret Disclosure Form for Chemical Inventory Submittal Form (available here) https://calepa.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2023/03/Appendix-D-Trade-Secret-Disclosure-Form.pdf and work with your UPA

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Is there a way to attach a Safety Data Sheets (SDS) to NextGen?	No, SDS are required to be retained at the facility for hazardous materials present. The business must provide required information through CERS which does not support the upload of pdf SDS.
How should software vendors prepare for CERS NextGen?	CalEPA anticipates providing an integration control document with the new interface specifications in March 2025. Once the new solution is in production, CalEPA will provide an onboarding process for the use of CERS NextGen interfaces similar to the one currently used.
Why do I need to provide a CAS number for chemicals and mixture components?	A CAS Registry Number is a unique and unambiguous identifier for a specific substance that allows clear communication and, with the help of CAS scientists, links together all available data and research about that substance. Governmental agencies rely on CAS Registry Numbers for substance identification in regulatory applications because they are unique, easy validated, and internationally recognized.
How will CERS Nextgen work for a new business?	Facilities will be able to create accounts and complete submittals within CERS NextGen in accordance with the new business rules.
Will Nextgen be owner operator submittal based, or regulator based?	Regulated entities are responsible for complying with applicable rules and regulations. A UPA's role is to enforce applicable rules and regulations. CERS is a reporting tool to facilitate implementation of the Unified Programs. Both UPAs and facilities are required to submit information to the tool.
Will the CERS NextGen have a document library for users similar to UNIDOCS?	Unidocs predates CERS and should not be used as the sole source for information pertaining to compliance with Unified Programs. Many templates have been converted to data entry within CERS NextGen. CERS is a designated reporting tool for regulated sites.
How can I stay up to date on the project?	Join the project e-mail listserv by going to the project website: http://cers.calepa.ca.gov/cersnextgen/

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Can you define concurrent development?	Local regulators will need to update their systems in parallel with the development of the CERS NextGen solution so that, upon 'go-live', they are prepared to interface with the new system.
Will businesses be required to take any action before implementation?	To retain system access you must log into CERS annually to comply with new State Security requirements starting in 2024. To stay up to date on the project and receive updates that may impact users please sign up for the project listserv and check the project website.
What data will be migrated to the new system?	The retention of historic submittals will follow the State Office of the Secretary's records retention policy. In general this means 7 years of historical data will be retained.
UPAs need to download facility submittal information to meet local Retention Schedules. Will CalEPA enable a data dump of submittal information prior to data migration to CERS NextGen?	Yes, CalEPA will make data available to UPAs prior to data migration. More information will be released regarding this as the project proceeds.
Will inventory imports still be available via Excel as they currently are?	Yes, the excel inventory import will continue to be available.
How can businesses prepare for CERS NextGen?	Ensure the current data within CERS is as accurate and complete as possible. Ensure every business has a lead business user.
What new options are being included for compliance monitoring and enforcement data?	The concept of inspection types is being replaced and expanded to reflect Compliance Activities. This provides UPAs the ability to document inspections AND other administrative actions. The relationship between inspections, violations, and enforcements will not change.
Will vendors have access to an environment for development?	A development/testing environment will be made available to stakeholders as early as practical in the project schedule. At this point we anticipate this being mid-year 2025.
How many new submittal statuses are coming and will they all generate automated emails?	There will be 5 Statuses. They will be draft, submitted, accepted, not-accepted, and administrative complete. Automated emails will be sent as appropriate.

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Will facilities have an option of whether they can submit RTC documents to either the CUPA or CERS?	Yes, facilities will be able to choose how they submit their RTC documentation: Directly to the regulator, or to CERS.
New Owners will be assigned a new CERS ID for the facility. Does that mean new UST Owners will be assigned new UST CERS Tank ID?	An ownership change will result in a new facility (including CERS ID) being created. The UST (record) will be transferred to the new facility (owner). UST Tank IDs will remain the same.
Will my SPCC Plan be required to be uploaded?	No.
Can the public see inspection histories and open violations through the new system?	CERS NextGen will not provide access to the general public. Information will continue to be made available on the Regulated Site Portal.
Has CalEPA collaborated with other state agencies in the development of the new system?	Yes, other agencies were involved in the development of the solution requirements.
Will the vendor provide a test environment to make sure that the work flows all work prior to going live?	Yes, CalEPA will provide a test environment for the UPAs and UPA vendors providing CERS-related IT Services for the Unified Program. UPA vendor access to the test environment will be at the discretion of each UPA."
Can there be control over which people who receive automated emails for particular sites?	Notifications will be configurable in the new system. Specific rules for these notification have not yet been finalized.
What is the link for the CERS NextGen Project Website?	http://cers.calepa.ca.gov/cersnextgen/