

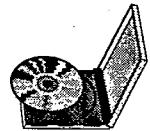
**Sometimes managing the ICR
can be a real balancing act!**

ICR Update
Jim Walasek, Editor
Technical Support Center
October 1999

Data Analysis Underway!

ICR Update Issue Number 19 - This information sheet, the **ICR Update**, is the nineteenth one to be issued by the Technical Support Center (TSC) of the Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water (OGWDW). Future issues will be distributed as needed to maintain information flow related to the ICR.

Editor's Note: Twelve months of ICR data have now been verified and final reports have been sent to ICR utilities and labs. They have also received a **CD-ROM** containing the first six months of validated ICR monitoring data. The ICR data will be used to support regulatory impact analysis and to validate the water treatment plant model.



Speaking of data analysis, the ICR data analysis team is hard at work going over the first year of validated data. See the article, **Where's the Data?** in this issue for more details.

ICR Utility Data Validation Packages for Sampling Periods 13, 14, and 15 (July, August, and September 1998) have been sent out for review. Resubmission diskettes were due back to EPA by October 15th. Following the upload and validation of the resubmission diskettes, final validation reports will be produced and mailed out in mid-November.

"Straggler" diskettes have been on the increase lately. These are diskettes that are received **too late** to be validated during the normal validation cycle. We are now trying to validate these straggler diskettes and get reports out to the utilities and laboratories.

Remember, we are still **uploading three months of data at a time** for validation. The current set of reports that you received were for July, August, and September 1998. Initial reports for the **last three months** of data (yippee) from the ICR project (October, November, and December 1998) will be printed and sent out to utilities and labs in early November. Once again, you will only have one opportunity to review the three months of data and resubmit diskettes (if needed). Also, if you haven't yet sent in your **Final Design** diskette try to do so as soon as possible. Thanks.

One more time...as we near the end of the ICR project, I have noticed that there have been personnel changes, reorganizations, moves, area code changes, etc. that have affected the information we have in the

"Official" ICR files here at TSC in **Cincinnati**. Therefore, I want to remind you folks at the utilities to please update your ICR contact, address, phone/fax information (for both the Technical and Official Contact) when data items change. All you have to do is drop us a note on your **letterhead**. Besides, who knows, it may speed up the arrival of the next **ICR Update**. Remember, utility validation reports are sent to the name and address listed on the **data transfer diskette**. So, even if you send in your contact person changes to Cincinnati, we can't guarantee that the **validation reports** will be sent to the new contact and/or address unless the correct information was on the "last" transfer diskette that was loaded into the system. *(This is not a problem for labs because TSC controls the lab addresses that are used by ICR-FED.)*

Where's the Data? - Twelve months of data have been extracted from ICR Fed into the Aux 1 database and are being analyzed to support the development of the Stage 2 D/DBP Rule and the LT2ESWTR. This work was introduced in "Just the FACA, Ma'am" in **ICR Update**, No. 18.

Because of your efforts in reviewing the data, correcting data entry errors and ensuring that the data accurately reflects the reported monthly status of your treatment plant, this is the largest data set of such quality that can be used to support rule development. At the September Technical Workgroup (TWG) and FACA meetings, the TWG expressed their satisfaction with the high quality of this large data set that they are working with.

The TWG that assists the stakeholders, chartered under the FACA, have been meeting monthly (face to face) and even more frequently on conference calls to speed up the analysis process. Many utility representatives are working diligently, along with AWWA representatives, EPA staff, consultants, industry representatives, and other state and federal agencies to statistically analyze the data. Some of these analyses statistically describe the distribution of the DBP precursor concentrations of the ICR plants. Other analyses show the microbial distribution in treatment plant influents and DBP occurrence in both finished waters and distribution systems. The preliminary results are evaluated by the TWG and data summaries are presented to the FACA committee.

The next TWG meeting is scheduled for October 25 - 26, 1999 and the stakeholders meeting (FACA) follows on October 27 - 28, in Washington, DC. The data analysis, using 12 months of ICR data, will be used to provide the baseline for the status of the ICR plants at the time of monitoring under the ICR, and this will be presented to the FACA. If you are interested in viewing these presentations, you can log on to the TWG web site: www.ecradlab.com/twg. A user ID (GUEST) and password (USERNAME) are required. Type in the generic word "GUEST" for the user ID and the generic word "USERNAME" for the password. Neither user ID, nor the password is case sensitive. The presentations are uploaded to the website as quickly as possible after the meetings.

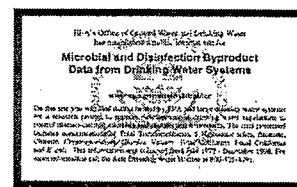
The other auxiliary data bases (Aux 2 - 6) are in various development stages. **Aux 3** - Enhanced Coagulation, **Aux 4** - Sludge Production, **Aux 5** - Washwater Return, and **Aux 6** - Distribution System Analysis of DBPs are ready to be used for data analyses and have either 9 or 12 months of ICR data extracted into them. **Aux 2** - CT and Disinfection Decay and the Query Tool are ready for beta testing and **Aux 8**, which is to support the Water Treatment Plant model, is still in production. These data bases, and their respective uses, were explained in the **ICR Update**, No. 18. Copies of these databases can be downloaded from the above mentioned web site. EPA has already sent you a CD ROM of the 6 months of ICR data that was extracted into Aux 1 and plans to send the utilities another copy with the 18 month data, once it is available, after validation and review.

The TWG is now working in subgroups to manage the workload of data analysis using these auxiliary databases and to incorporate ICR data with non-ICR data for the FACA. There are 17 subgroups. Examples of these **subgroups** are: ICR Data Analysis, Impact Analysis Assessment, Microbial Treatment, Technology Costs, and Treatment Studies. A number of participants in each subgroup have expertise to support the subject data analysis.

Just as your comfort level with the data entry and review process has increased over time—as you review more of your ICR data, so has everyone else's. This is the first TWG and/or FACA meeting where TSC received no data validation complaints – it is a record and we are ecstatic. Thanks to everyone's hard work, the TWG now has **manageable databases** populated with most of the ICR data to continue the analyses. Keep up the good work, we are almost there - It really is the home stretch.

Envirofacts ICR Data Website Announced-

Recently, ICR utilities were sent information by fax, phone, email or snailmail announcing a new public Internet site established by EPA's Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water. The **Envirofacts** (Data Warehouse and Applications) website is a single point of access to select U.S. EPA environmental data. The address of the new site is www.epa.gov/enviro/html/icr. On this site you will find data collected by large drinking water systems for the ICR. The data presented includes concentrations of Total Trihalomethanes, 5 Haloacetic acids, Bromate, Chlorite, *Cryptosporidium*, *Giardia*, Viruses, Total Coliforms, Fecal Coliforms, and *E. coli*.



Snailmail Version

Currently, six months of data are on the Internet and within the next month, twelve months of data are scheduled to be online. In addition, some changes are being made to the site in response to comments that have been received from a few water systems. Thanks to the water systems for their diligent review. For more information call the **Safe Drinking Water Hotline** at **800-426-4791** or provide feedback regarding the website on the Internet feedback form.

The Jury's Still Out - The EPA Technical Support Center has provided two rounds of **protozoan performance evaluation (PE) samples** to laboratories interested in evaluating their performance for *Giardia* and *Cryptosporidium* analyses using an outside source of materials. Ten laboratories participated in the first round and 19 laboratories participated in the second round of testing. Laboratories are initially sent eight samples and then three samples every three months. In the first round, recoveries for Method 1623 were slightly higher than for the ICR method and precision was substantially better for Method 1623. However, in the second round, no significant differences were seen between the two methods. At this point, it is too early to make a judgement about the relative merits of the two methods. Many laboratories are just beginning protozoan analyses and have very little experience. We believe that a year of testing data should provide adequate information to make a reasonable judgement about the methods and the laboratories. A **summary report** for the first two rounds of testing is available by faxing your request to **Mary Ann Feige, 513-569-7191**. To receive a copy of the individual laboratory results, you must contact the laboratory directly.

R.A.I.D. Tracks Down Bugs - As data transfer disks continue to be uploaded onto ICR-FED, issues arise from time to time regarding the successful operation of the system. Although many of the original "bugs" have been cleaned up, EPA continues to find new glitches in the validation process. These issues may involve data entry, data validation, or generation of reports containing ICR data. Consequently, in order to better understand and remediate problem issues, the **Technical Support**

Center has developed an issues tracking database called "Resolving Abominable Issues Database" or **R.A.I.D.** The database is used to track QC issues such as missing extraction batches, calibration check standard failures among optional analytes, and missing reject reasons. After the discovery and remediation of these issues, TSC routinely checks subsequent validation runs by ICR-FED to see if the issues have been resolved and can be "closed" in the tracking database. As an illustration of the issue remediation process, consider the problem of "**missing reject reasons**" on reports. Through a thorough review of reports generated by ICR-FED, TSC staff noticed that a handful of samples were being rejected, but had no associated reject reasons. Upon discovery, TSC then constructed "queries" from ICR-FED tables. These queries help to determine the number of samples rejected without reasons. After running the queries, TSC then determines if the samples should have been rejected and if so, what reject reason should be assigned. All labs, batches, samples, and analytes impacted by the reject reason issue are then entered into **R.A.I.D.** Once issues are entered into **R.A.I.D.** and new reports are generated, TSC can check the reports against the issues in **R.A.I.D.** to determine whether glitches/bugs in ICR-FED have been eliminated.

Have You Got Our Number? - The ICR Data Validation (aka Chemistry)

Hotline number has changed. The new number is **703-676-8496**. Please use this new number for questions you may have about validation of your ICR data. If you have questions about ICR software problems, please note that the number for the ICR DMS Hotline remains the same (703-292-6170).



TSC Support Group! - Or maybe I should say, TSC/OGWDW staff will **bend over backwards** to help. This photo was taken at a recent staff retreat where a magician requested four people to assist him in a demonstration of teamwork. He had them sitting on chairs, 90 degrees to each other, had them lean way back, and then pulled out the chairs! There just might be something to this teamwork approach.

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