Distribution System Optimization Program – Getting Started

Calling all Distribution System program subscribers! Have you submitted annual disinfectant residual data for your utility? Are you considering beginning the process of performing a distribution system self-assessment? Or has your utility more recently joined the Partnership’s newest program and you are wondering about the next steps? The Distribution System Optimization Program has continued to develop and grow during 2013, providing even more resources to guide subscribers through the Partnership process.

If your utility has not yet submitted baseline data and is interested in taking the next steps to get started, Partnership staff has the following suggestions for you.

1. Confirm that you have the current version of the Partnership’s data collection software. The current versions are: Disinfectant Residual software (V1.3.2), Pressure software (V1.3), Main Breaks and Leaks (Post-Beta V1.00). The current version of the software is required for data submissions. If you have older versions of the software, contact Partnership staff to learn how to upgrade.

2. Collect your data. For baseline data submissions, only disinfectant residual data is required (no pressure or main breaks). The data points required to complete the spreadsheet include entry point disinfectant data, distribution system residuals, and DBP data. You will also need information about sample sites to complete the data entry process.

3. Verify that you have all the data that is required, and follow the directions included in the software guide to enter your data (Hint – if data is lacking, start with what you have and make a plan to collect what additional is needed in the future).

4. Begin to submit disinfectant data on an annual basis. The reporting period for data submissions ranges from June 1 through May 31 of the following year. Your disinfectant residual data is compiled with that of other subscribers and is used to build a database for the Distribution System program – eventually allowing us to quantify its impact on water quality and system operations.

If you are considering beginning the distribution system self-assessment process, here’s how you might get started:

1. Locate your utility’s copy of the Self-Assessment Guide for Distribution System Optimization. All subscribers received a copy of this guidebook upon joining the Partnership.

2. Read through the guide. It’s never too early to learn more about the self-assessment process, consider how your utility might build a team that incorporates personnel from throughout the organization, and think about developing a self-assessment approach that works within your utility’s culture.

3. When you are ready and have submitted baseline data – consider beginning the self-assessment process. The self-assessment can be completed on your own timetable and presents an excellent opportunity to learn more about distribution system operations!

No matter what phase of the program you are working on, Partnership staff are happy to help and are just a phone call (303-347-6169) or email (partnership@.awwa.org) away.