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2014 Achievement Awards

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2014 VACo Achievement Awards

Deadline: June 2, 2014

Application Form

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 2, 2014.**

Program Information
Locality Henrico County
Program Title Standing Water Initiative Mobile Application
Program Category Information Technology
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2014 VACo Achievement Award Application

Locality: Henrico County

Program Title: Standing Water Initiative Mobile Application

Program Category: Information Technology

Overview

The Standing Water Initiative group (SWI) of the Henrico County Public Works, Engineering and Environmental Services Division, executes a multi-faceted approach to mosquito education and awareness as well as risk reduction of West Nile virus and other mosquito borne diseases. The approach includes: addressing citizen complaints; routinely inspecting mosquito breeding areas; and collecting adult mosquitoes for West Nile virus testing.

While the SWI group had been operating at an efficient rate, resources were over-allocated to redundant data entry steps involving recording field data on hard copy paper and then entering the data in-house into the main Access database. Several years were spent discussing the need to do more data management in the field. Due to the high cost of using an outside vendor, Henrico County's Department of Public Works (DPW) decided to pursue potential in-house mobile solutions to help streamline SWI's efforts, making it a more cost-efficient, effective and greener process.

The new Standing Water Initiative Mobile Application (SWIMA) is the result of the collaboration between DPW and Department of Information Technology (IT). The objective was to increase employee efficiency by replacing the antiquated Access database with a new web-based, user-friendly, mobile data management system. The new system allows employees to enter and query data in real time as well as access GIS data while working in the field. The IT Department's innovation in delivering a high quality and user-friendly product as well as managing the development phase by supporting an inclusive team has greatly increased customer service and improved daily productiveness and working conditions of Department of Public Works field employees.

The Challenge

With the demand for services rising and departmental resource levels remaining constant or in some areas diminishing, employees have strived to be creative and find ways to "do more with less". The SWI group's redundant data entry needed to be addressed to find efficiencies. Additionally, hard copy maps of each mosquito breeding site (approximately 600) were necessary to assess where the site was located and to get directions. New mosquito breeding sites are continuously added and constant maintenance of hard copy map updates was extremely time consuming and inefficient. This interfered with time better spent responding to citizen complaints and mitigating mosquito populations.

Field inspectors were also spending valuable time each morning planning their daily schedules. All citizen complaints required in-office, historical and GIS-related research. This task often resulted in printing maps and complaint specifics. The printed documents were not useful after complaint resolution and the paper was either thrown away or recycled. Once the inspector left the office each morning, new citizen complaints could not be addressed until the next business day.

Program Criteria

Several years were spent discussing the need to do more data management in the field. The new SWIMA is the result of the collaboration between Henrico County's DPW and IT departments. The objective was to increase employee efficiency by replacing the antiquated Access database with a new web-based, user-friendly, mobile data management system. The new system allows employees to enter and query data in real time as well as access GIS data while working in the field. The entire process of development and implementation took approximately five months. Employees from the DPW and IT departments coordinated through weekly face-to-face meetings and email updates. The project team was able to work

constructively together, creating an environment that was both cordial and professionally productive. DPW field employees have been using the new mobile system for one year.

The SWIMA provides mobile and real time access to eleven years worth of SWI data, including citizen complaints, mosquito breeding site inspections, pesticide applications and adult mosquito collections. The web-based program has improved efficiency allowing data to be entered and edited in the field as opposed to being recorded on a sheet of paper and entered into the database at a later time. The precise and instant access to data provides information to be continually analyzed in an error-free environment.

The database component of the SWIMA is directly linked to a GIS web site where employees can access and edit GIS aerial maps, complaint locations, mosquito breeding site locations and mosquito trap sites. This feature eliminated the time consuming and wasteful task of constantly updating hundreds of hard copy aerial photographs and maps (Figures 1 and 2). Mobile access to GIS map data saves a tremendous amount of time getting from point to point in the field. Each inspector can now cover more sites over a wider geographic range each day.

All citizen complaints require that the inspector conduct an on-site visit. The ability to show citizens an on-line aerial map of their property during these site visits improves customer service. For example, the SWI responds to hundreds of drainage-related complaints and displaying an image of the natural topography, streams, floodplains, etc... can be useful in describing why they experience drainage problems and what potential solutions may exist.

Given the amount of data and the demand for on-going data analysis, the IT Department incorporated customized reports into the SWIMA (Figure 3). A tremendous amount of reporting data is now readily available at the press of a few buttons. Prior to the SWIMA, employees had to create complicated and lengthy Access queries. These reporting capabilities not only save time but fulfill a wide range of different needs. These reports are a tremendous benefit for

supervisors, regulatory agencies and rapid, error-free data analysis. A few examples are noted here and specific examples are provided in the Results and Supplemental Materials sections:

- Providing annual or real-time reports to upper management (citizen complaint details)
- Providing annual reports to regulatory agencies (total pesticide amounts applied)
- Annual data comparisons (number of citizen complaints, total mosquitoes collected by species, total number and location of West Nile virus positive mosquito samples)

The SWIMA's administration and security is completely controlled by the DPW employees. Different levels of database access are granted to both inter and intra departmental employees, which enhances internal customer service. There are many instances when DPW employees and other department employees (Public Utilities, Building Inspections, etc...) receive the same complaint. The citizen may be transferred to several departments before reaching the correct contact. The mobile database is searched for history related to the complaint location or specific complainant. Notes from any employee responding to a particular complaint are entered in one shared, central location and viewable by multiple county employees.

The SWIMA was developed and implemented entirely in-house with no outside assistance or development costs. The IT Department worked closely with the SWI group to develop an extremely user-friendly and completely customized product. Four touch screen laptops were purchased for a total project cost of \$11,600. In comparison, a vendor produced system could have cost \$20-30K not including required hardware, annual fees, software upgrade fees or technical support fees.

The SWIMA project required the creation of a Business Data database and a Spatial Database that are integrated for seamless operations. Remote access is gained using Dell laptop

computers with connectivity established through Net Motion software providing field employees access to both databases.

The Business Data database was created in-house using Oracle APEX which is a web application development tool for the Oracle database. The SWIMA database application is built on top of an Oracle database that utilizes Oracle Real Application Clusters (RAC) for a high level of current availability and flexible scalability for future enhancements.

The Spatial Database is built upon Microsoft SQL Server 2008r2 using Esri's Spatial Database Engine (ArcSDE) version 10.1. The SQL Server database utilizes Microsoft's Active/Passive Clustering to provide a highly available environment. The mobile mapping solution is built on Esri's ArcGIS Server 10.1 in a network load balanced setting utilizing Esri's ArcGIS API for Silverlight.

The two separate databases are joined using database connections allowing sharing of essential data. This eliminates duplicate data entry into both databases.

Program Results

Although Henrico County has experienced funding reductions, the level of service has not been compromised. Creation of the SWIMA greatly improves SWI inspectors' working conditions and efficiency. This allows employees to become more focused on providing a higher degree of service.

The SWIMA is a proven success. Benefits include:

<u>Citizen complaint response time has decreased</u>. With access to real time data while
working in the field, complaints are often addressed the same day received. An extra
notification was built into the mobile application to alert field inspectors how many new
calls have been received each day (Figure 4). Prior to the mobile application, inspectors

would spend time in the office each morning printing maps or forms and planning their daily schedule. Any citizen complaints received that day were not accessible until the end of the day when they returned to the office. Therefore, the earliest a complaint was addressed was the next business day. Thanks to the SWIMA, citizens are pleasantly surprised to often receive an in-person response within hours after placing a complaint.

- Increased efficiency by eliminating redundant data entry has saved each inspector approximately six hours per week (24 total man hours saved per week). The time savings results in more employee hours spent in the field, which results in higher daily productivity.
- Increased county-wide coverage each day, especially for mosquito breeding sites. The ability to view a county-wide aerial map and the approximately 600 points in the field has doubled the amount of sites the inspector is able to visit each day (Figure 1). Prior to the mobile application, big binders of individual, printed aerials were used to navigate from site to site (Figure 2). Required data was written on a paper form and entered into the database at day's or week's end. Data is now entered real time from the field into the SWIMA. Other field staff can view what portion of the county is being covered each day by a fellow field inspector, thereby preventing any overlap and maximizing coverage. The more potential mosquito breeding sites visited and controlled each day contributes to the short and long term public health protection of county residents.
- Expanded and customized reporting was built into the mobile application. The reporting
 capabilities save endless man hours otherwise spent organizing data and conducting
 calculations. Just a few of the many reporting opportunities include:
 - State record keeping requirements and total pesticides applied. Henrico County's pesticide use is a regulated activity under the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS). For each pesticide application there is specific

information that needs to be recorded. Required information includes applicator name and certification number, pesticide(s) applied and application date, pest controlled, area treated, application rate, and total pesticide applied. All records must be kept for two years. Prior to the SWIMA, this information was recorded on paper and necessary conversion calculations were done by hand. With several field employees each recording their pesticide application activities, organization of these hard copy records was a cumbersome task. In the mobile application, any time a pesticide application is made the details are entered and automatically saved into a customized "VDACS Report". This report includes all VDACS's record keeping requirements and the information is stored in one, organized, and easy-to-read table (Figure 5).

The amount of pesticide applied is automatically calculated based on the specific pesticide's application rate and the area treated (Figure 6). This built in calculation saves time and is error-free. In addition, DPW is able to view total pesticides applied (per product) for any given date range (Figure 7). This is relevant because there are regulatory mandates if pesticide amount thresholds are met or exceeded. The ability to easily calculate how much pesticide product is normally used during a given time period is also beneficial for budgeting purposes. Last year the Henrico County Manager implemented a spending freeze that extended several months beyond the start of mosquito season. DPW was able to compare their current inventory to the total amount used during the same time period the previous year. This simple step assured DPW their inventory would most likely last through the end of the spending freeze.

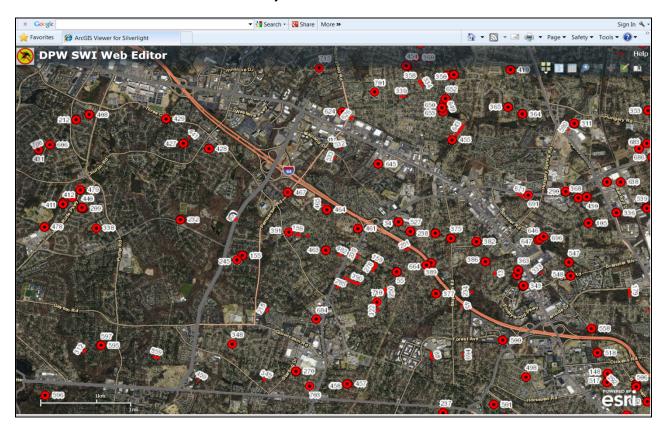
- Statistical analysis. The SWI team uses a statistical method known as Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE) to calculate West Nile virus (WNV) infection rates of collected Henrico County mosquitoes. The MLE takes into account the size of each mosquito sample tested during a specific time period and the corresponding results (WNV+ or WNV-). Prior to the SWIMA, at least two hours were spent each week compiling several data sets and performing calculations. The SWIMA's built-in MLE report now calculates the weekly MLE in as little as 30 seconds. This is a tremendous time-saving tool which assists in evaluating public health risk.
- The ability to compare annual data. Tracking public health risk and mosquito populations relies heavily on annual data comparisons so it was crucial to maintain the integrity of previously collected data. Several years of data previously stored in an Access database were converted to the new mobile database and the ability to compare annual data with the custom reports and the click of a few buttons is nothing short of incredible (Figure 8).
- Reporting is beneficial for upper management and/or the public. For example, it is not uncommon for the DPW Director to inquire annually about how many drainage-related complaints were received (Figure 9).

Supplemental Materials

The information included in this submittal skims the surface of promoting the development, management and implementation of Henrico County's Standing Water Initiative Mobile Application.

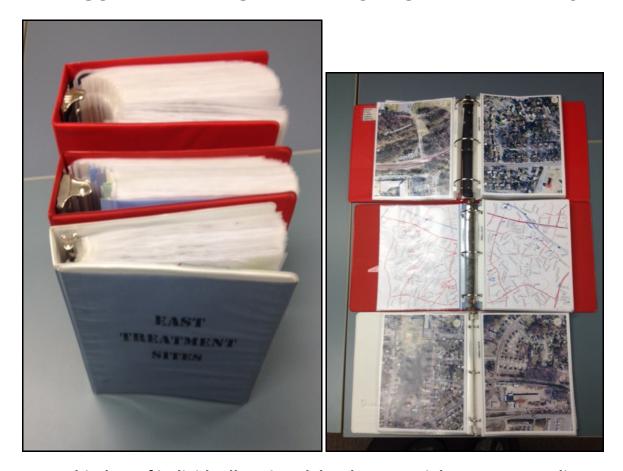
- Figure 1. WEB-BASED, MOBILE APPLICATION MAPPING
- Figure 2. PRE MOBILE APPLICATION MAP BINDERS
- Figure 3. CUSTOMIZED REPORTS
- Figure 4. DAILY COMPLAINT NOTIFICATION
- Figure 5. VDACS REPORT
- Figure 6. PESTICIDE APPLICATIONS AND TREATMENT SITE INSPECTION FINDINGS
- Figure 7. PESTICIDE TOTALS BY DATE
- Figure 8. MULTI-YEAR MOSQUITO COLLECTION TOTALS
- Figure 9. COMPLAINT TYPES

FIGURE 1. WEB-BASED, MOBILE MAPPING APPLICATION



Increases efficiency in the field and replaces large binders of individuallyprinted, hard copy aerial maps.

FIGURE 2. PRE MOBILE APPLICATION MAP BINDERS



Large binders of individually-printed, hard copy aerial maps were tedious.

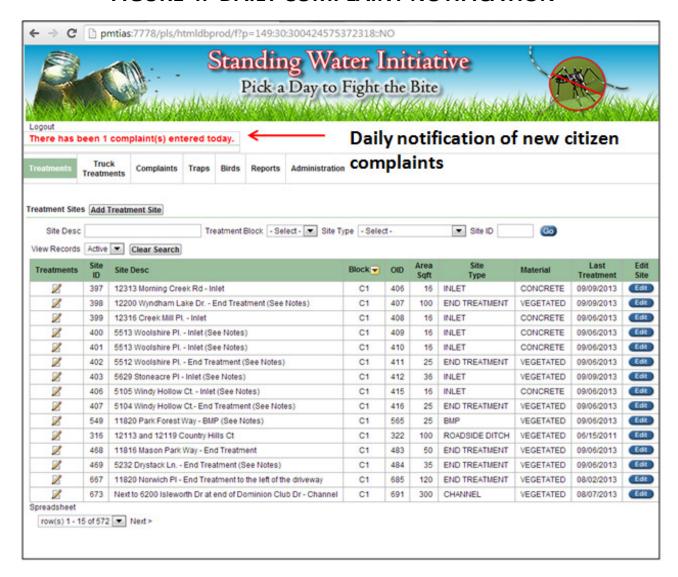
Constant in-office updates decreased valuable field time. The SWIMA provides the same information in one on-line screen (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 3. CUSTOMIZED REPORTS



Reports save numerous hours previously spent on spreadsheet manipulation and calculations.

FIGURE 4. DAILY COMPLAINT NOTIFICATION



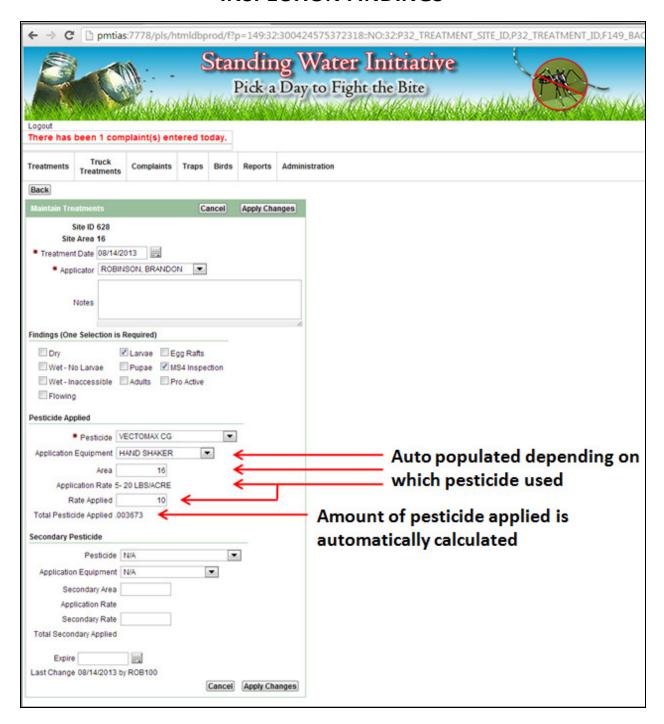
New citizen complaints are real-time accessible from the field.



FIGURE 5. VDACS REPORT

State record keeping requirements are stored in one, organized table and can be viewed for a given date range.

FIGURE 6. PESTICIDE APPLICATIONS AND TREATMENT SITE INSPECTION FINDINGS



Form is consistent with regulatory agency's reporting requirements. Real time and built-in calculations eliminate error and save time.

18

18

18

19

19

33

Spreadsheet

row(s) 1 - 15 of 1246 - Next >

4410 Penick Rd. wetlands behind property (see note)

4410 Penick Rd. wetlands behind property (see note)

4410 Penick Rd. wetlands behind property (see note)

11849 Blandfield Street - Inlet (See Note)

6717 East Davista Ave - Channel behind home (see note)

6717 East Davista Ave - Channel behind home (see note)

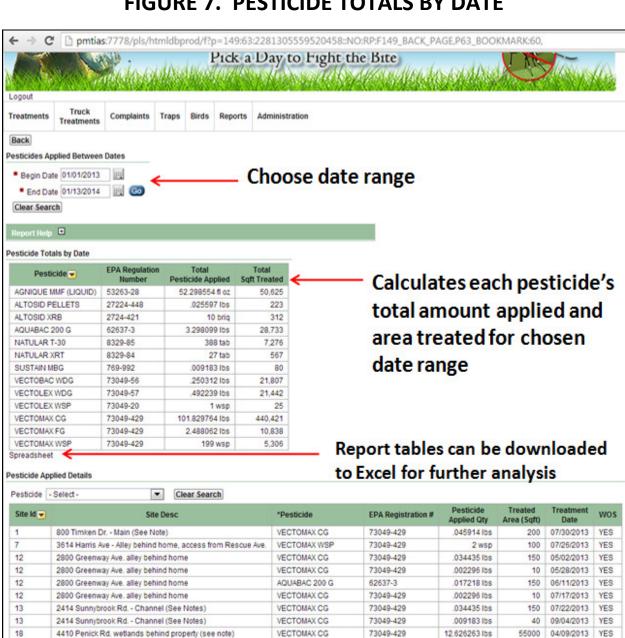


FIGURE 7. PESTICIDE TOTALS BY DATE

Helpful for permitting requirements, budget predictions and date range comparisons.

AGNIQUE MMF (LIQUID) 53263-28

AGNIQUE MMF (LIQUID) 53263-28

73049-429

73049-429

73049-429

8329-84

VECTOMAX CG

VECTOMAX CG

VECTOMAX CG

NATULAR XRT

43560 05/30/2013 YES

25000 08/30/2013

250 06/11/2013

250 07/23/2013 YES

64 05/29/2013 YES

08/15/2013

YES

YES

YES

5000

45 fl oz

1.147842 lbs

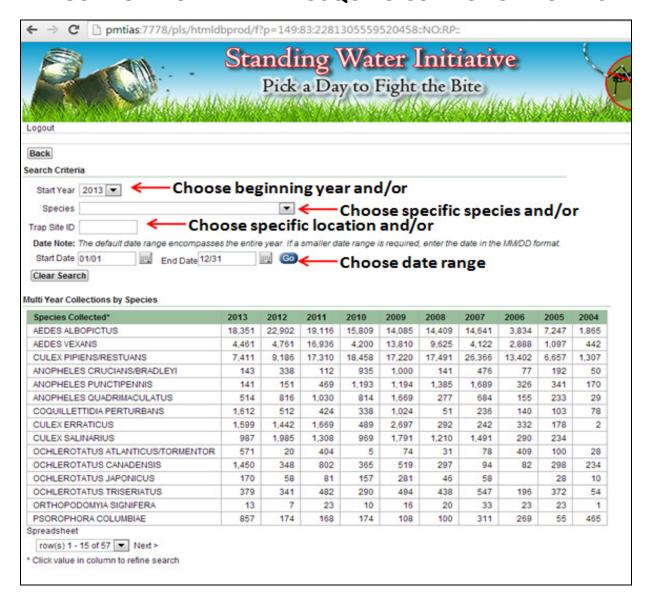
5.73921 lbs

.057392 lbs

.258264 fl oz

1 tab

FIGURE 8. MULTI-YEAR MOSQUITO COLLECTION TOTALS



Tracks mosquito populations, public health risk and annual collection data.

FIGURE 9. COMPLAINT TYPES

How many drainage-related complaints in 2013?

