



Media Release

State Water Boards Release Tenth Web-based Performance Report That Showcases Data Storytelling

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The State Water Boards' 10th annual [Performance Report](#), the result of compiling and synthesizing massive amounts of data from fiscal year 2017-18, tells the ongoing story of water regulation throughout California and makes the information readily accessible for public scrutiny and accountability.

The recently released document, consisting of 160 report cards representing the work of the State Water Board and each of the nine regional boards, assesses a range of performance-based management programs aimed at achieving water quality measurements and improvements over the previous 12 months.

In an era of climate change, tightening water supplies, debates over habitat protection and the inevitable budgetary challenges, the Performance Report offers two major views for the public – the quality of California's waters and the performance of the Water Boards in protecting them.

When the companion Accomplishments Report is released in early 2019, the two documents will strive to show the progress the Water Boards are making to protect and allocate California's water resources.

To create these reports, a team of scientists, engineers and geologists at the State Water Board's Office of Information and Analysis spent months wrangling data, crunching numbers and designing visuals that create a vivid, multi-dimensional picture for public consumption, complete with a new automated, open platform that incorporates digital storytelling.

One example of that data/storytelling synergy revealed itself on numerous occasions throughout 2018 with the marked increase of harmful algal blooms (HABs) outbreaks. HABs are known to kill fish and can be lethal to dogs that swim in waters with toxic algal blooms, so it is imperative that the public receive timely and accurate warnings.



A Water Board team [collected HAB data from routine sampling](#) and was able to turn it into information readily available to the public that allowed recreational water users to make safe and informed decisions.

Internally, assessments of goals and outcomes in the Performance Report help the Water Boards management teams shape new plans, with the aim of being more accurate with planning projections and more efficient and productive with outcomes.

Indeed, the general public can comb through the Performance Report and find a wealth of statistics.

Here are just a few examples. Collectively, staffers throughout the state oversaw more than **38,000** dischargers; processed about **500** individual permit actions; inspected more than **7,500** facilities; completed **2000-plus** penalty and compliance actions and collected more than **\$20 million** in liabilities; and adopted plans to address more than **25** “listings” for polluted waterways.

To learn more, check out the Performance Report [here](#).

Key Details:

- July 10, 2018 [resolution](#) by the State Water Board called for an open-access data platform
- This is the 10th annual Performance Report; consisting of 160 report cards
- The companion Accomplishment Report will be released in early 2019
- The Office of Information and Analysis at the State Water Board creates these reports
- All the data used to develop this report will be published as curated dataset(s) at the State of California’s open data portal located at <http://data.ca.gov>.

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