

Environmental Health Management Information System (EHMIS)



Data Contact:

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Sources of Information for the Database

The Environmental Health Management Information System (EHMIS) is a comprehensive data management system designed to collect data for all the environmental health program areas. Custom Data Processing (CDP) designed and maintains the EHMIS system and stores the data for the state. The EHMIS system is a web based application allowing for remote access and real time data entry and retrieval. The system currently consists of nine major components or modules including: Activities, Accounts Receivable, Certifications, Establishments, Inspections, Onsite Sewage, Requests for Service, Report Viewers, and Water Sample modules. These different modules allow for state and local personnel to manage data and responsibilities across more than thirty Environmental Health programs.

The Division of Public Health and Safety's Environmental Health Programs regulate over 90,000 facilities or individuals, provide over 330,000 services, and collect associated fees for the permitting and inspection of these facilities and services. The Environmental Health Programs are conducted in large part at the local level with the help of local health department personnel. Inspections of facilities occur at food service and retail food establishments, bed and breakfasts, farmers markets, food processing and storage facilities, hotels, boarding homes, mobile home and RV parks, public buildings and recreational facilities, tattoo studios, schools, septic tank pumping and disposal companies, ear and body piercing studios, state owned confinement facilities, youth camps, onsite sewage systems, public beaches and public swimming and bathing facilities. Results of these inspections are entered in the EHMIS system. In addition to routine inspections, other services provided and documented in the EHMIS include accounts receivable for regulated establishments and certifications, public health complaints, rabies investigations, water sampling, public building inspections and plan review. Individuals with certifications that are regulated and entered into the EHMIS system include septic system installers, tattoo artists, ear and body piercers, lead hazard detection and abatement professionals, and food handlers and managers. Currently, the EHMIS system is supported primarily through agency funds, which are procured through state environmental fees. Although this system is not mandated

specifically, there are mandates that require the collection of onsite sewage data, as well as accounts receivable information, in an electronic database. Legal requirements for data collection are included in KRS 211.350, KRS 212:240, and 902 KAR 8:165.

Description of the Data Collected

The data is collected by local and state environmentalists and entered into the system locally. Collected data includes relevant information of establishments, as well as inspection data based on health and safety criteria. Establishment record, inspection results, enforcement actions, billing and accounts receivable, permit issuance, individual certification, request for service, animal bite records, and all non-site specific environmental service activity are the categorical headings for data collection.

Strengths of the Data

- **Comprehensive Data:** The system has a comprehensive list of all regulated facilities along with information such as number of seats, square feet of retail space, gallons of water in a pool, etc. In addition, the system details inspection and violation history, accounts receivable and owner/operator information.
- **Geocoding:** The system has latitude and longitude coordinates for use in GIS and mapping analyses.
- **Timeliness:** The data are entered on a daily basis and updated to the mainframe on a weekly basis.

Data Limitations

There are three main limitations:

- **Record Retention:** Information has been collected since the mid 1980's, but is only available live, on the website, for one year beyond the hard-copy record retention schedule.
- **Data System:** Occasional bugs and glitches may occur within the system and are continually being processed and repaired. Because of this, data should be examined and analyzed for errors.
- **Coding:** Coding/definition disparities occur across the state along with different coding standards among the local health departments which enter the information. Due to these inconsistencies, data cannot be uniformly compared across Kentucky or to other states.

Specific Uses of Information

The data is presently used to evaluate the status of environmentalist workload, fee allocation based on services, failed septic systems, quarantine of food items, animal bites, and complaint investigations. In addition, the system serves to document and retain inspection records for regulated establishments.

System Evaluation

Data is saved with CDP in real time and backed up on servers at a different location nightly. This process ensures proper data retention and integrity.

Data Set Availability

Standard reports are available through the Report Viewer. These reports include, but are not limited to, financial and accounts receivable, inspection history and status, agency and inspector performance, and work load analysis reports.

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In addition, ad-hoc queries and data reports may be accessed from the system by using Oracle Discoverer. Additional data requests and reports are available through CDP as needed.

- **Average Yearly Sample Size:** 30,000 Records
- **Smallest Geographic Level Released:** Address level
- **Data Format:** The system is web-based with export capabilities to Excel, Adobe PDF, and Word.
- **Cost of Data Set:** Cost is determined by annual CDP contract pricing.

Data Release Policy

All Environmental Program data is considered public record and is thus eligible to be released with a formal open records request. However, personal information is restricted for rabies and foodborne illness investigations, as well as complaint investigations.

Suggested Data Citation

None suggested at this time.

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