

Editor's Note: This is the third in a series of articles prepared by the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) focused on providing assistance to small and medium sized facilities regarding environmental permitting.

Electronic Tools for Environmental Permitting and Information Sharing

The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) is striving for continual improvement in our ability to share information with the all of our stakeholders which includes the public and the people and facilities we regulate. We began a process of allowing public access to data via the internet in August 2002 when we made our first information access tool available. We continue to add new features and tools in response to the requests and needs of our stakeholders.

MDEQ has developed a number of electronic tools to provide information, applications, and assistance documents to our customers on demand. These tools encourage more interactive information management and reduce the reporting burden for companies. This can result in a faster, more seamless permitting process. Additionally, the same tools allow for public to access environmental information. MDEQ's electronic Environmental Site Information System (*enSite*) manages most permitting and compliance information submitted to the agency. The *enSite* family of software includes *enSearch Online* and *enDx*, which allow a company to review its own information and request changes.

enSearch Online <http://opc.deq.state.ms.us/default.aspx>

enSearch Online is MDEQ's public access tool for searches of public information about permitted facilities maintained in *enSite*. *enSearch Online* allows users to search for general information on permitted facilities by agency interest name, city, county, permit number, Standard Industrial Classification (SIC), and water basin. **A newly added feature allows an interested party to determine the status of an application for a permit action, request for coverage under a general permit or a request for plans and specifications review on demand.**

Other available searches include:

- Active Permits and Coverages -- Search active permits and coverages by number, type, agency interest name, city, and county.
- Permitting Activity Search -- Find recently issued permits & coverages or recently received permit & coverage applications. Users may filter by city, county, and media.

enSearch Online also offers online reports to the public including:

- Permit Applications -- Permit applications received by EPD.
- Draft Permits at Public Notice -- Permits drafted by EPD currently at public notice. A newly added feature allows the review of the public notice ***and the draft permit***.
- Permits Issued -- Permits issued by EPD.
- General Permits Application (NOIs) -- Notice of Intent received by EPD.

- Coverages Granted -- Coverages granted by EPD.
- Compliance Inspections -- Inspections conducted by ECED.

