



WEST VIRGINIA HIGH TECHNOLOGY CONSORTIUM FOUNDATION >>>>

> EPA OPPORTUNITIES

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL METHODS INDEX (NEMI)

Opportunity

The EPA and the US Geological Survey, through the WVHTC Foundation, are seeking collaborative partners for the further development and improvement of the National Environmental Methods Index (NEMI) (<http://www.nemi.gov>).

Overview

The EPA and the US Geological Survey (USGS) co-chair the Methods and Data Comparability Board (MDCB), organized under the National Water Quality Monitoring Council and the Advisory Committee on Water Information. The MDCB, a partnership of experts from all levels of government, industry, and private organizations, has developed the National Environmental Methods Index (NEMI).

NEMI is an online database that allows users to search and compare the performance and relative cost of regulatory and non-regulatory environmental monitoring methods. For each analytical, text, and sampling method contained in NEMI, the database provides a summary of the procedures and performance data a user needs to assess implementation requirements.

NEMI provides various benefits to users, including that it:

- Makes comparison of methods easy to accomplish
- Is no-cost
- Can easily be accessed through the Web
- Provides up-to-date information since it is online (no new software is ever needed)
- Is user-friendly
- Ensures reliability and consistency of data due to the involvement of the MDCB

The goal of the cooperative partnership is to expand NEMI in numbers of method summaries and in extent of method and analyte types by adding new analytical methods, from both foreign and domestic sources. Additional field analytical methods and protocols for sample collection and handling, including but not limited to those used by volunteer groups, will be added. More methods for other media, besides water, will be included (i.e., air, soils and sediments, and wastes). Further development will also include prioritizing the types of additional regulatory information to be added to the database. All these efforts will foster the continued development and improvement of NEMI.

Significance

NEMI is part of a larger endeavor to enhance comparability of water quality data nationally. Since the database allows for comparison of the characteristics of available methods, NEMI supports the user in project design and helps establish potential comparability of data produced by different methods. This information also assists in dealing with field and laboratory safety and quality assurance/quality control concerns and requirements. Overall, NEMI ensures that the consideration of analytical methods is more actively included in the planning and implementation of programs.

Benefits

Further development will enhance NEMI's benefits by providing more methods, and media and analyte types. Cooperative partners will benefit by gaining visibility through public-recognition of the partnership and NEMI. The partnership will also allow for strategic interaction with other leaders in the industry.

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