

## **Downloading & Using Data from the STORET Warehouse: ----- An Exercise for the BEACH Program to QA IDs ----- January 2012**

Parts 1 & 2 of this exercise walk you through the steps to generate and download a report to QA ORG\_ID, PROJECT\_ID (same as BEACH\_ID), STATION\_ID from the STORET Data Warehouse. The 3rd part describes how to import the data into Microsoft (MS) Excel, as one software in which you could do a QA of the IDs, and how to QA your IDs. For questions, contact STORET Technical Support at 1-800-424-9067 toll free or [storet@epa.gov](mailto:storet@epa.gov); or for BEACH Program questions: [kramer.bill@epa.gov](mailto:kramer.bill@epa.gov), 202-566-0385.

*The original STORET document upon which this is based can be found on:  
[http://www.epa.gov/storet/Downloading\\_STORET\\_Data.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/storet/Downloading_STORET_Data.pdf)  
It has a 4<sup>th</sup> part that explains how to import data into MS Access to chart monitoring trends and a final section that shows how to download data by watershed using the new Watershed Summary. Please contact STORET Technical Support at 1-800-424-9067 toll free or [storet@epa.gov](mailto:storet@epa.gov) for comments or questions on the original document.*

### **Part 1: How to Query and Download the Data**

For this example, we will search for Louisiana Beach monitoring data from all stations with 2009 as the specified monitoring timeframe. The downloaded file will be a compressed (zipped) .zip file containing result data files, and metadata files; you will be primarily looking at the results file.

#### **GO TO THE STORET DATA WAREHOUSE**

- 1) Go to STORET main page: <http://www.epa.gov/storet/>
- 2) Under Features, click the **Download Data** link
- 3) Under [STORET Database Access](#), click the **Browse or Download Modernized STORET Data** button
  - i. TIP: Legacy (pre-1998) data is also flat-filed by State/County for easy downloading

#### **DEFINE YOUR QUERY**

- 4) Under [STORET Central Warehouse](#), under [STORET Results](#), click the **Results by Project** link
  - i. TIP: More direct queries are possible given a pre-existing station list
- 5) Under **Project**, select the ORGANIZATION NAME or ORG ID – for this example [21LABCH](#)
  - i. TIP: Use Select a Project to select one or more beaches
- 6) Under **Station Type**, leave the defaults; this will capture all station types
  - i. TIP: use BEACH-Program specific Station Types (¾'s to bottom of the pick-list)
- 7) Under **Date**, for this example, change the start date to [JAN 1, 2009](#) and the end date to [DEC 31, 2009](#)
  - i. TIP: leaving the default will capture all date ranges of STORET Data Warehouse (non-Legacy datasets)
- 8) Under **Activity Intent and Community sampled**, leave as “Select All”

Because this example uses a Beach Organization ([21LABCH](#)), all results will be relevant.

9) Under **Characteristic**, do nothing

Because this example uses a Beach Organization (21LABCH), all results will be relevant.

10) Click the **Continue** button at the bottom of the screen

## DOWNLOAD YOUR QUERY RESULTS

11) Note the number of records found

- i. TIP: MS Excel holds 65K records per sheet, MS Access holds more but limited to 3 gigabytes [FOR THIS EXAMPLE, EXCEL IS FINE]
- ii. TIP: If there are too many records, you may have to go back to narrow your query
- iii. TIP: You can adjust your query by narrowing the date fields or limiting characteristics

12) Type your email address in the **Please enter your email address** box

- i. TIP: Emails are used to notify you that your download is first processing and then completed

13) Type a three character prefix like “XYZ” in **Please specify three characters to prefix your report name** box

- i. TIP: This prefix will help to identify your download file later

14) Scroll to the bottom of the screen to the **Select Data Elements for Report** checklist – for the purpose of this example, and for your state QA of the key IDs,

a. Under **Select Data Elements for Report (s)**, click “Clear All”, then “Select All” data elements.

- i. TIP: These are the fields you will see in your report, you can select/de-select any you choose

15) Under **Batch Processing**, click the **Immediate** button and note the URL and see if it has your 3 character prefix

- i. TIP: Immediate and Overnight Reports follow the same directions but small (<300K records) Immediate reports are available in 1-15 minutes while Overnights (600K max) are next day [FOR THIS EXAMPLE, IMMEDIATE WORKS FINE]

16) Go to your e-mail account. You are waiting for 2 e-mails, including a Processing e-mail and a Completed e-mail.

a. When you receive the PROCESSING email, open and check that the URL matches the earlier URL shown on the request page in your web browser (in case you are downloading one of multiple files)

- i. TIP: If you click the URL now you may go to an error page because the file is not ready yet

b. When you receive the COMPLETED email, your file is ready to download; click on the URL

17) Note the filename and click the **Save** button; save download file to your desktop or other directory; click **Close**

18) DONE.

## Part 2: Making Sense of Your Compressed Downloaded File

Now that you have your compressed downloaded file, what is it and what do you do with it? This section will first explain how to uncompress the data in your downloaded file, then answers common questions about the downloaded file, and lastly tells you how to identify the various files by their conventions. The result file will be renamed to be used in Parts 3 and 4. (Note: This exercise was written using WINZIP® 9.0. Some features may be different for other versions.)

### RETRIEVE YOUR RESULTS TEXTFILE FROM THE DOWNLOAD

- 1) Navigate to the directory where you saved the downloaded file from the STORET Data Warehouse
- 2) Create a folder in this directory and name it **storet\_data**
- 3) Double-click the downloaded file to open it and click the **Extract** button to decompress the file
  - i. TIP: Most compression engines like WINZIP® will be able to open the .zip file
- 4) Extract all the files to your new folder named **storet\_data**
  - i. TIP: Files with the Data\_ prefix denote **Regular Results (RegResults)**, Biological, Habitat, or Metadata Results **[THIS EXERCISE FOCUSES ON REGULAR RESULTS]**
  - ii. TIP: Metadata Results contain information to help you determine the quality of the data
  - iii. TIP: Files with the RefDoc\_ prefix denote Project-level Reference Documents associated with the organizations that own the data
- 5) Rename your **Data\_XYZ\_....\_RegResults.txt** file to **storet\_data.txt**; this file contains your requested data.
- 6) **DONE.**

----- YOU WILL OPEN THE FILES IN PART 3, - PAGE AFTER NEXT -----

### QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FILES IN THE DOWNLOAD

#### What is a .zip file, anyway, and why isn't my download a textfile?

- As noted in Part 1, the downloaded .zip file is a compressed (zipped) file. This means that you will need compression software like WINZIP® to open the file. It was necessary to move to this compressed format for both Immediate and Overnight downloads as all downloads now contain multiple files, including your results textfile.

#### Why are there more files than just my query results in the downloaded file?

- In addition to the results data that you queried, you now automatically receive the metadata file and any (if any) project-level reference documents associated with the organizations that own the data. This is so that you can better determine the quality of the data you downloaded. The result file(s) contain the raw data that you queried; regular, biological, and habitat result queries are found in individual files. The metadata file includes information about the organizations that own the data including contacts, methods, labs, and other info. The reference documents can be pictures, datalogger results, QAPPS, or any project-level documents associated with the data owning organizations.

#### I can't make sense of my Results file when I open it.

- All result (RegResult, BioResult, HabResult, and Metadata) files are in a tab “□” delimited format and can be easily opened in a [text editor \(word pad or note pad\)](#), a [spreadsheet \(Microsoft Excel\)](#), or a [database \(Microsoft Access\)](#). This is important when loading files into Excel, Access, or another database that can organize the file (make it readable) using the delimiter. How to do this is explained in Part 3. Additionally, metadata files **Is there any useful information in the metadata file?**

- The metadata file contains the following summaries that can be used to contact the data owners, create a station list, describe the methods and procedures used, qualify the labs, correctly cite the data, and generally determine the quality of the data for yourself:

Organization Summary; Cooperating Organization Summary ;  
Project Summary; [Program Summary](#); Sample Collection/Creation Procedure Summary;  
Sample Gear and Equipment Configuration Summary; Sample Preservation and Handling Profile Summary;  
Analytical Procedure and Equipment Detail Summary Laboratory Summary;  
Lab Sample Preparation Procedure Summary; Bibliographic Citation Summary

**CONVENTIONS:**

The files found in the download have four main components

- 1) Type of Document \_\_\_: Prefix denoting the document file is a data or reference document (Data\_, RefDoc\_)
- 2) Unique Identifier \_\_\_: 3 char ID given, followed by the date/time stamp (\_XYZ\_'yearmdd'\_'24hrmmss'\_)
- 3) Type of Data \_\_\_: Suffix denoting the document contains results data, metadata, or reference data (\_RegResults, \_BioResults, HabResults, \_Metadata, \_Project\_'PROJECTID'\_'filename')
- 4) Type of File \_\_\_: Extension denoting the format of the document file (.txt, .pdf, .bmp, .gif, .jpg)

**Examples:**

Data\_XYZ\_20070322\_205714\_Metadata.txt  
Data\_XYZ\_20070322\_205714\_RegResults.txt  
RefDoc\_XYZ\_20070322\_205714\_Project\_COPSBDC1\_cua0001.pdf  
RefDoc\_XYZ\_20070322\_205714\_Project\_SWMM\_streamphoto.jpg

## Part 3: How to Import and Analyze the Data in Microsoft Excel

Now we're going to import the downloaded data into Microsoft (MS) Excel-(Note: This exercise was written using MS Excel 2007. Some features may be different for other versions.)

### IMPORT THE DATA INTO EXCEL

- 1) Open Microsoft Excel
- 2) From the main toolbar, click **Data>From Text**
- 3) In the **Import Text File** window
  - a. Navigate to the directory or folder where you have saved your downloaded STORET file
  - b. In **Files of Type** textbox, select "**All Files**" or "**Text Files**" from the drop-list
  - c. Select and double click your saved STORET File (renamed **storet\_data.txt** in Part 1 of exercise)
- 4) In **Text Import Wizard**
  - a. The STORET Warehouse query application returns data requests in a tab delimited, text file format. Because tab is the default delimiter in Excel just click the **Next** button. (This is a change to the previous tilde (~) delimited text files that the Warehouse formerly served out. **This also means that if you are submitting to WQX/STORET and you use a tab in any field, then that tab should be replaced with a ¶ (paragraph symbol) in your submission file.**
  - b. Click **Next** button then click **Finish** button
  - c. The **Import Data** window will pop up asking if you want the data in the Existing Worksheet, cell A1. Choose OK.

THIS HAS BEEN AN EXAMPLE TO FAMILIARIZE YOU WITH HOW TO CREATE AND DOWNLOAD A STORET REPORT AND PREPARE IT FOR ANALYSIS IN EXCEL. YOU ARE FREE TO SELECT THE SOFTWARE THAT BEST MEETS YOUR NEEDS TO QA THE ORG, PROJECT (BEACH), AND STATION IDS.

Please review your IDs. All Beach Program data for your state should be present, correct, and associated with one BEACH\_ORG\_ID for your state; and with the national project "EPABEACH" and BEACH Program Station Types, so as to facilitate nation-wide data pulls.

All PROJECT\_IDs (aka BEACH\_IDs) should be present, correct, and associated with your BEACH\_ORG\_ID

All STATION\_IDs should present, correct, unique in your state, and associated with the correct BEACH\_ID(s) and with the ORG\_IDs

----- **END OF BEACH EXAMPLE** -----

### SORT THE DATA

- 5) Select the whole worksheet by clicking the grey box in upper-left corner of the worksheet
  - a. From the main toolbar click **Home>Format>Autofit Column Width**
  - b. Familiarize yourself with the data by browsing the column names and rows of the data
- 6) Select the whole worksheet by clicking the grey box in upper-left corner of the worksheet
- 7) From the main toolbar click **Data>Sort**

- a. Using the **Sort by** drop-list, select “**Station ID**”, sort on “**Values**”, and set the order as “**A to Z**”
- b. Click on “**Add Level**”
- c. Using the **Then by** drop-list, select “**Characteristic Name**”, sort on “**Values**”, and set the order as “**A to Z**”
- d. Click on “**Add Level**”
- e. Using the **Then by** drop-list, select “**Activity Start**”, sort on “**Values**”, and set the order as “**Oldest to Newest**”
- f. Click **OK**.

### ANALYZE THE DATA

- 8) Select the numerical (no header) values under the **Result Value as Text** column for Station **CNST1** and Characteristic Name **Enterococcus** (rows 2-34)
- 9) From the icon toolbar in the **Home** menu, click the ▼ arrow to the right of the  $\Sigma$  button
  - a. From the drop-list select and click “**Average**”
  - b. From the drop-list select and click “**Max**”
  - c. From the drop-list select and click “**Min**”
  - d. Scroll to the bottom of the **Result Value as Text** column to find **Average**, **Max**, and **Min** calculations
  - e. Label **Average**, **Max**, and **Min** respectively
    - i. You can experiment with other analysis functions and even write your own equations

### GRAPH THE DATA

- 10) Select the Activity Start Dates (Column AE - no header), then holding the Control key select the numerical (no header) values under the **Result Value as Text** column (Column BX) for Station **CNST1** and Characteristic Name **Enterococcus** (rows 2-34)
- 11) Choose **Insert**.
  - a. Under **Charts**, select **Line** and choose the line chart style of your choice.
- 12) Double Click in the chart area.
  - a. Under **Chart Layouts**, choose the style that provides a chart title on top, the axis labels on the left side and bottom and a legend on the right side.
  - b. Click on the chart title and change it to “**Enterococcus**”.
  - c. Click on the left axis label and change it to “**MPN**”.
  - d. Click on the bottom axis label and change it to “**Date**”.

### ANALYZE THE GRAPH

- 14) Click and drag the graph to the bottom of the spreadsheet near the labeled **Average**, **Max**, and **Min** values
- 15) Resize the Graph to be easier to read by clicking and dragging the small **marks** in any corner of the graph
- 16) General questions regarding the graph
  - a. Is there a regular pattern to the data? Are there any breaks in the pattern?
  - b. Between what values do most of the data points lie? Any outliers?
  - c. What does this tell you about the Enterococcus values at this Station?
- 17) **DONE.**

## Part 4: How to Import and Analyze the Data in Microsoft Access

Now you are going to import the downloaded data into Microsoft (MS) Access and perform some rudimentary analysis for every station in the dataset. MS Access can hold more records than MS Excel and is only limited to a file size of two gigabytes, more current versions of MS Access may have graphing features. STORET data can also be imported into statistical and GIS software packages, but is not covered in this exercise. (Note: This exercise was written using **MS Access 2007**. Some features may be different for other versions.)

### IMPORT THE DATA INTO ACCESS

- 1) Open Microsoft Access and [click on the icon for Blank Database](#)
- 2) [On the right side of the screen, name the database “storet\\_data.accdb” and browse to the location that you want it on your hard drive by clicking on the folder icon. Click OK, then Click Create](#)
- 3) [Close the blank table that initially opens when creating a new database](#)
- 4) [From the main toolbar, click “External Data”, then choose “Text File”](#)
  - a. [Browse to and double click on your downloaded STORET file \(renamed storet\\_data.txt in Part 1 of exercise\)](#)
  - b. [Click OK](#)
    - i. [TIP: You can also import data from .xls or .xlsx spreadsheets if you choose “Microsoft Excel”](#)
- 5) [From the Import Text Wizard](#)
  - a. [Click Delimited radio button then click Next button](#)
  - b. [Click Tab radio button](#)
    - i. [TIP: STORET Data Warehouse Result downloads are all Tab delimited textfiles](#)
  - c. [Check the First Row Contains Field Names checkbox then click the Next button](#)
  - d. [Use the horizontal slide bar to peruse and click each column in turn, noting the Data Type: drop-list](#)
  - e. [Change ALL field values in the Data Type: box to “Text” EXCEPT any Latitude or Longitude fields, and the Result Value as Number field](#)
  - f. [Click the Next button then click the No primary key radio button then the Next button](#)
    - i. [TIP: This step is not strictly necessary but useful if you plan to add additional downloads to the same dataset \(if a larger dataset was partitioned by date, for example\)](#)
  - h. [Click the Finish button then click the Close button](#)
    - i. [TIP: If you get any import errors, repeat the above steps and re-check step 5f \(Data Types\)](#)
  - i. [Click storet\\_data table and familiarize yourself with the data, this table contains your requested data](#)

### ANALYZE THE DATA

- 6) [Under Create, click the Query Design button](#)
- 7) [Choose the table that you imported by double clicking it and click the Close button](#)

- 8) Double click on the following fields to put them in the query design view: “**Station Id**”, “**Characteristic Name**”, and “**Result Value as Number**”. Put in the “**Result Value as Number**” field in 2 additional times, so that you have 5 fields in your query
  - a. Under **Criteria** in the “**Characteristic Name**” field, type in “Enterococcus”
- 9) Click the **Design** menu, select the **Summary** button
- 10) Change the “**Group By**” in the “**Total**” line of the query under each “**Result Value as Number**” field to **Avg, Min, and Max**, respectively
- 11) Run your query by clicking on the **Run** button with the red exclamation point on the **Design** menu
- 12) Adjust the column sizes by clicking and dragging the edges of the columns
- 13) Familiarize yourself with the new information
  - a. Do most of the values fall within the same range across the stations?
  - b. Are there any data gaps? Are there any outliers?
  - c. What does this tell you about Dissolved Oxygen across the County?
- 14) **DONE.**