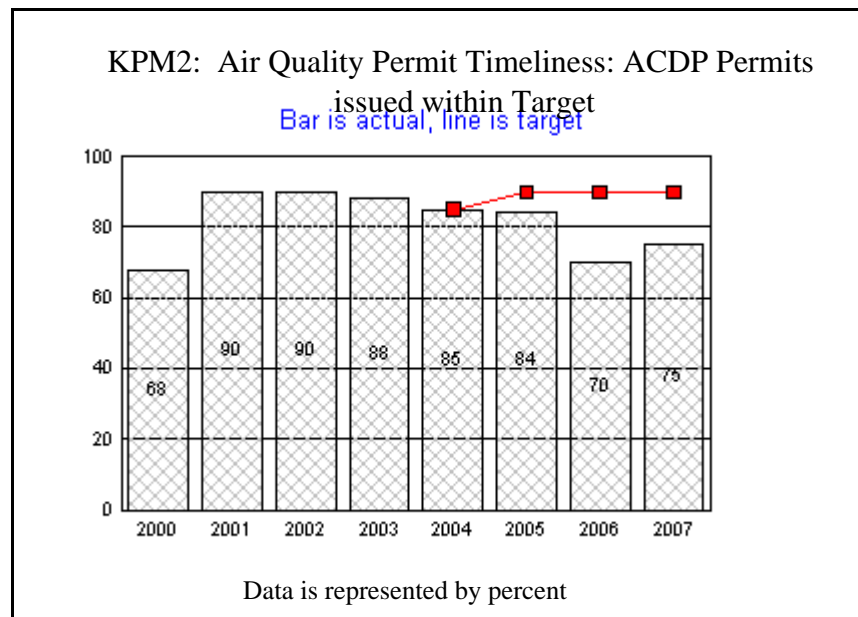


<b>KPM #2</b>	PERMIT TIMELINESS: Percentage of air contaminant discharge permits issued within the target period.	1992
<b>Goal</b>	IMPROVE OREGON'S AIR AND WATER.	
<b>Oregon Context</b>	KPM #2 is also Oregon Benchmark #10a. It links to: (1) Oregon's Statewide Planning Goal 6: Air, water, and land resources quality (OAR 660-015-00 (06)); (2) Oregon Shines Goal 1: Quality jobs for all Oregonians, and (3) Oregon Shines Goal 3: Healthy, Sustainable surroundings.	
<b>Data Source</b>	DEQ Air Quality Permit Tracking database.	
<b>Owner</b>	DEQ Air Quality Program. Margaret Oliphant, (503) 229-5687.	



**1. OUR STRATEGY**

Air Contaminant Discharge Permits (ACDP) are required for construction of new and modified point sources of all sizes as well as operation of medium sized point sources. DEQ prioritizes air quality permitting resources based on the applicable target period for several categories of ACDP

applications to ensure that permits are issued in a timely manner.

## 2. ABOUT THE TARGETS

DEQ's goal is to issue 90% of ACDP permits within the target periods set by the agency. This target sets a high standard for issuing permits in a timely manner. Businesses need quick turn around times on permits to construct, expand or modify their operations. A high percentage of timely permits issued is a key economic development benchmark tracked by the Oregon Progress Board and one indicator of an efficient permitting program.

## 3. HOW WE ARE DOING

Although still below target, DEQ's percentage of timely permits issued in 2007 has started to improve and is up five percent from 2006, when the measure hit a six year low brought on by revenue shortages and staffing cuts. An ACDP fee increase adopted in late 2006 should improve performance in the coming years.

While the measure is a good indicator of a successful permitting program, it doesn't tell the full story of DEQ's ongoing permit streamlining efforts that have reduced the target times for permit issuance and reduced compliance costs for permittees. DEQ streamlined the ACDP process in 2001, which significantly decreased permit processing time. Accordingly, DEQ shortened the target period for timely permit processing from an average of 167 days to an average of 69 days. Phase two of ACDP streamlining, adopted in October 2007, will further streamline and update the permitting process by clarifying requirements, eliminating duplicative and conflicting standards and keeping rules in line with federal requirements. This streamlining will reduce the time and paperwork for permitted facilities to comply with permit regulations.

Even with a shorter permit processing time (on average 98 days quicker), DEQ was able to exceed the timeliness target during 2001 through 2004. By 2005, however, staff reductions led to a decline in timely permits followed by a significant drop in 2006.

## 4. HOW WE COMPARE

There are no formal public or private industry standards for permit issuance; however, there is a clear expectation that permits be issued in a timely manner.

## 5. FACTORS AFFECTING RESULTS

The two main factors that contributed to the increase in permit timeliness in 2007 are increased management and staff attention to permit timeliness and implementation of a new permit tracking system. During the past year, DEQ managers focused on more frequent review of permit timeliness measures. Managers intensified their efforts to closely manage workload to ensure timely issuance of permits. In addition, DEQ implemented a new permit tracking system in 2007. Permitting staff spent a significant amount of time in 2006 helping with development and testing, and training on the new software, leaving less time for permit work. In 2007, the new software reduced the amount of time staff spent on data management activities.

The drop off in timeliness from 2002 through 2006 is largely related to permanent staffing cuts and operating below budgeted staffing levels in anticipation of ongoing revenue shortfalls. Over the past six years, budgeted FTE in the ACDP permit program have been cut by more than seven positions, or more than 20% to a current level of approximately 28 FTE. Extensive permit streamlining made this staffing level barely acceptable, but the program was also forced to hold vacancies in anticipation of revenue shortfalls. As a result, ACDP permit timeliness suffered.

#### **6. WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE**

The ACDP fee increase approved by the 2007 Legislature will allow DEQ to fill vacancies as they occur and maintain staff levels to improve timeliness. DEQ managers will continue to regularly review staffing and permitting activity demands and consider shifts that will facilitate timely permitting. In addition, DEQ will implement a second round of permit streamlining rule changes that were adopted in October 2007. While these rule changes focused on decreasing compliance costs for permittees, they should also help reduce permit processing times.

#### **7. ABOUT THE DATA**

The reporting cycle is a calendar year. The strength of the data is that records exist on each of the ACDP permit actions taken by DEQ during the year. The primary weakness of the system is that the data's validity depends on accurate entry by multiple individuals. People interested in more details can contact DEQ's Air Quality program.