

# Mission: Modernize, A Strategic Transformation

## Oregon State Department of Environmental Quality

Category: Modernization Award

Project Title: Your DEQ Online

Project Dates: Feb. 2017 – Jun. 2025

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# Table of contents

Executive summary.....	2
Idea.....	2
Implementation.....	4
Impact.....	6

## Executive summary

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is committed to advancing environmental protection and justice for all communities and ecosystems in Oregon, now and for future generations. DEQ is inclusive, working respectfully and engaging intentionally with communities for a safe and healthy environment.

The way we accomplish our mission and vision is by providing accessible, standardized, and secure ways for the public to join us in these efforts. The largest modernization in DEQ’s history, the Your DEQ Online (YDO) project, has been instrumental in transforming how we foster transparency and access to information, address data security and integrity, connect with the regulated community and public, and apply our unique expertise in issuing permits, certifications, and licenses. YDO ensures the regulated community and public are our partners in advancing environmental protection.

## Idea

### What problem or opportunity does the project address?

DEQ had a series of aging, outdated, and siloed legacy tools and custom-built systems that were used to manage the processes of over 23 DEQ programs and the associated regulated community. DEQ could either choose to continue to support and upkeep these outdated disparate tools, systems, and processes or look for a long-term solution that could continue to evolve to meet the needs of the technology and business needs of the agency.

Technology needs:

- Replacement of over 100 core business systems near or beyond their expected end of life.
- Centralized and secure data storage, shared across DEQ’s Air, Land, and Water divisions.
- Electronic permit, certification, and license processes instead of paper and manual entry.
- Ability to accept electronic fee payment, rather than only cash and paper checks.

Business needs:

- Transparency of accurate information to stakeholders including permit backlogs.
- State-wide standard business processes for each type of permit, certification, and license.
- Integrated processes across inspections, reporting, issuances and compliance actions.
- Easier searches for permit documentation and public information.
- Transparency across the Air, Land, and Water divisions for DEQ and for customers.
- Consistency and standardization of invoicing and accounts receivable across DEQ.

### **Why does it matter?**

DEQ identified a solution that could address the technical debt wrapped up in outdated systems and consolidate 104 systems and data sources into one secure, vendor-supported Software as a Service (SaaS) to be shared across the agency. This would include online portals for the regulated community to apply for permits, certifications, and licenses and a portal for DEQ employees to manage their work. In addition, this solution would allow DEQ to offer modern payment methods such as credit cards and electronic checks.

The YDO solution would also meet several environmental protection mandates across air, land, and water programs including Cross-Media Electronic Reporting Rule (CROMERR), Clean Water Act (CWA), Clean Air Act, and EPA Administered Hazardous Waste Permit Programs. In addition, the YDO solution would meet Oregon's cybersecurity, cloud first strategies, and WCAG 2.1 compliance.

### **What makes it different?**

Your DEQ Online is different because it allows for:

- A flexible approach to meet the needs of individual programs while still using the same platform and offering opportunities for more standardization.
- The ability to share data across programs.
- Provides a scalable and adaptable system to address current and future needs.
- Reduces the dependency on agency resources for maintenance of the system and provides a system that is updated on a regular basis (quarterly).
- Provides self-service opportunities for the public to access records.

### **What makes it universal?**

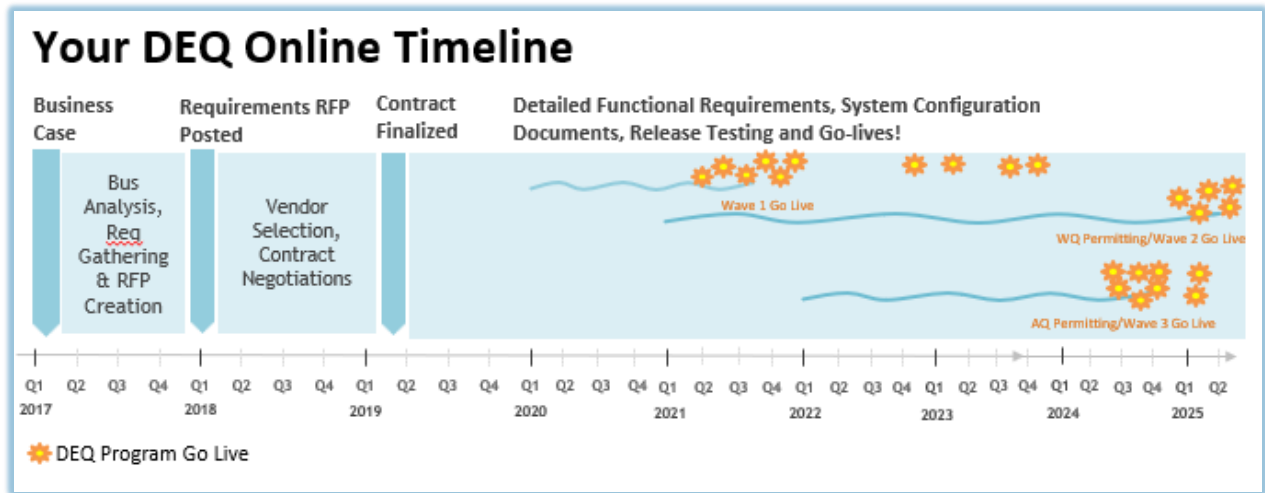
The project addresses challenges that many state government agencies encounter:

- The challenges of maintaining outdated, critical systems by internal agency staff.
- Addressing a backlog of technical debt.
- Balancing consistency with opportunity for continual improvements.
- Providing transparency for the public and regulated communities.

# Implementation

## What was the roadmap?

The YDO project used the Oregon State Stage Gate process to ensure accountability and manage risks throughout the project lifecycle. The YDO project kicked off in 2017 and the final program from the original scope went live in 2025.



The phases of the project, and what was completed for each phase are outlined below:

- **Phase 1 (2017):** Business requirements and Request for Proposal creation
- **Phase 2 (2017-2018):** Vendor selection and contract negotiations
- **Phase 3 (2018-2019):** Implementation Planning
  - Schedule baseline
  - Scope baseline
  - Budget baseline
  - Functional Requirements Specification documentation
  - System Configuration Documentation, Data Migration Plan
- **Phase 4 (2019-2025):** Implementation
  - Three waves consisting of the following milestones
    - Release 1
    - Release 2
    - Release 3
    - User Acceptance Testing
    - Training and Change Management
    - Go-Live
    - Post live support

## Who was involved?

The project relied on many individuals from DEQ as well as several outside entities:

- **YDO Executive Sponsor:** Provided guidance, oversight, and served as final decision maker. Also served as DEQ executive team liaison.
- **YDO Business Owner:** Provided guidance, oversight, and served as a key decision maker. Also served as the primary business liaison.
- **Project Lead:** Managed the project team and served as enterprise project manager.
- **Project Manager:** Led the YDO project team throughout the implementation and provided support to the Project Lead.
- **Risk Manager:** Provided analysis of risks and communicated current risk status.
- **Change Manager:** Guided the agency through the “people side” of the YDO project.
- **Trainer:** Developed and delivered training in partnership with the programs.
- **Business Systems Analysts:** Provided knowledge for Air, Land, and Water divisions.
- **DEQ IT Department:** Assisted in data migration efforts between old data sources to the new platform.
- **Program Managers:** Assigned subject matter experts, provided guidance, and served as key decision makers.
- **Subject Matter Experts (SMEs):** Provided insight into workflow requirements, system design, developed program specific documentation, and completed testing.

Oversight and governance were critical in the success of the YDO implementation. The YDO Steering Committee was composed of members of DEQ’s leadership team, managers, and staff representing the different divisions and regions. The EIS P3 team, the Oregon State Chief Information Office (OSCIO), and the Legislative Fiscal Office also attended the YDO Steering Committee meetings. In addition, the YDO project had an independent quality assurance vendor that helped DEQ to assess and mitigate risks and issues.

## How did you do it?

DEQ requested and received two five-million-dollar bond requests to pay for the implementation of YDO. This funding helped to pay for the hiring of a specialized team including roles of enterprise project manager, risk manager, change manager, and several business analyst roles.

DEQ partnered with enfoTech, as the vendor providing the platform, and implemented the YDO project by applying comprehensive project management planning and then executing those plans, some of them were:

- Governance, Oversight, and Accountability Plan
- Organizational Change and Communication Plan

- Scope Management Plan
- Budget Management Plan
- Schedule Management Plan
- Risk and Issues Management Plan

## Impact

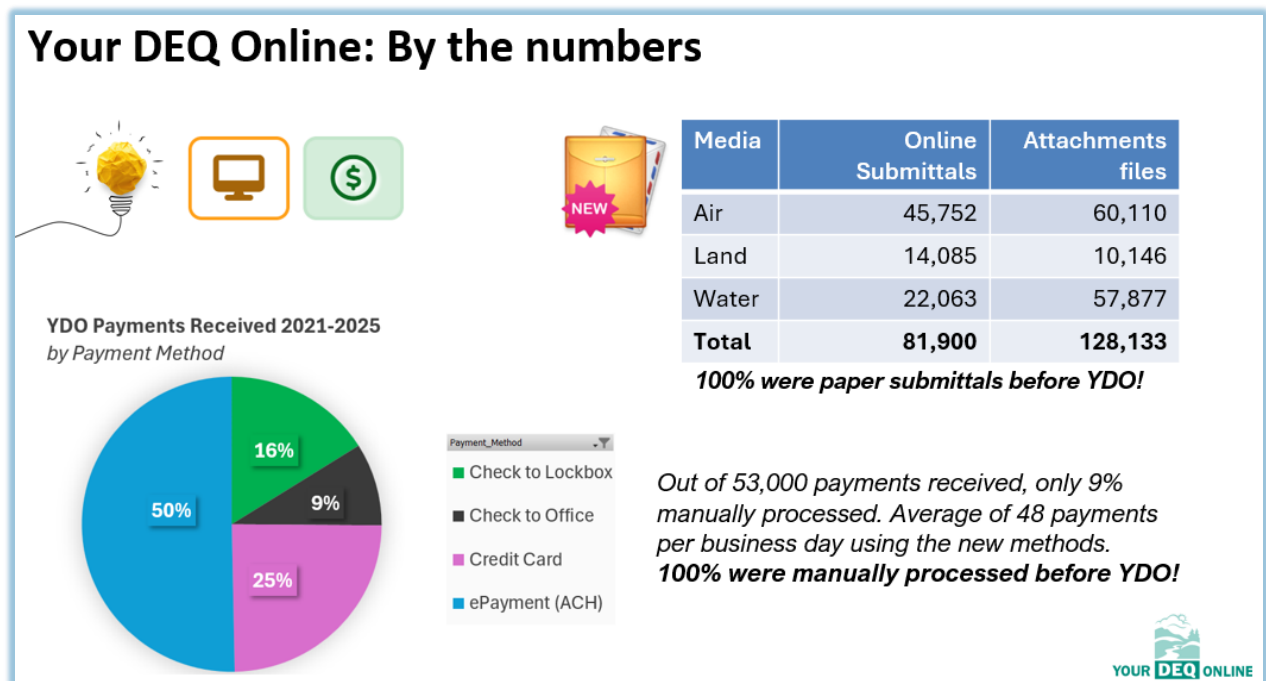
### What did the project make better?

The YDO project is the largest modernization effort in our 56-year history. It helped us with:

- **Standardization:** Standardized business processes for permits, licenses, certifications, e-reporting, and financial transactions across the agency.
- **Transparency and Engagement:** Customers now use the public portal for permits, certifications and licenses, tracking progress, and making payments.
- **Improved Security Posture:** System is a secure, vendor hosted Software as a Service cloud platform.
- **Access to Data:** YDO replaced approximately 104 legacy systems and data sources with one centralized platform.
- **Modernized Payment Methods:** YDO includes an e-commerce component for credit card and ACH payments.

### How do you know?

Measures of success:



- YDO remained unaffected by the April 2025 DEQ cyber incident demonstrating the value of YDO as a secure solution safeguarding the environmental data that is central to DEQ's work.
- DEQ employees can now see and manage their work through their personal dashboard, and access data across the agency.
- Members of the regulated community can access status of their activity in real time.
- Members of the public can access record published to YDO without logging in and without the time and expense of a public records request.
- In early 2025, DEQ executed an Interagency Agreement with the Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI) to support the implementation of the same e-Permitting technology used for Your DEQ Online. Leveraging lessons learned, DEQ has loaned two YDO experts to DOGAMI to ensure a successful system launch in 2027.
- Throughout the years and from beginning to end, YDO has presented at the annual Northwest Environmental Business Council (NEBC) conference and received strong engagement with our regulated community stakeholders.
- Testimonials from internal staff and the regulated community:
  - "User friendly. I didn't have to solve my own problems." (comment from a regulated community member)
  - "I manage 52 projects through YDO. I enter all my report review notes and use those for my NFA. If a colleague takes on the site, my entries make their work easier. I also share with consultants before we meet, and it helps with discussions. It's really helped me keep up with all my sites." (comment from DEQ staff)
  - "I've never seen a more intuitive state run website." (comment from a regulated community member)
  - "We are in a way better situation than where we were before YDO. We knew there would be things that needed to be fixed over time, but all of this is better than before." (comment from DEQ staff)

## What now?

Your DEQ Online project serves as the foundation for continued improvements and innovations as the agency adapts to an ever-changing regulatory landscape:

- **Enhancements:** The system and vendor are set up to make continuous improvements.
- **Scalability:** DEQ is poised to add new and additional existing programs to the YDO platform.
- **Day-to-day support:** DEQ has established a dedicated YDO Helpdesk that provides support to both internal and external users.
- **Work with other agencies:** DEQ is partnering with DOGAMI to implement their own system on enfoTech's platform.