OWQ WaQI Note

January 26, 2016

Office of Water Quality Water-Quality Information Note 2016.03

Subject: Announcing new NWIS Data-Checking software and training for NAWQA and NWIS Users

The Office of Water Information, the Office of Water Quality, and the National Water-Quality Program (NWQP) announce the release of data-checking software that operates on discrete data from the National Water Information System (NWIS). These data checks replace the data checking software formerly used by the National Water Quality Assessment (NAWQA) Program for almost 20 years to screen data in the NAWQA Data Warehouse and they extend the NAWQA checks to benefit non-NAWQA users of NWIS. The existing checking software for the NAWQA Data Warehouse should no longer be used as of the end of January 2016 and will be discontinued with the implementation of the new checking software described in this information note.

The checks in this new software can be used on all NWIS sites and water-quality samples in the National Aggregated Database, which is compiled from Sitefile, Groundwater Site Inventory (GWSI), and Water-Quality System (QWDATA) systems that reside on Water Science Center NWIS servers. This software is not applicable to time-series data from the Automated Data Processing System (ADAPS) or the AQUARIUS software.

The software screens data for the presence of 124 different data quality conditions and flags records that do not pass checking criteria. By means of data-checking reports, data managers are notified of data issues that may need attention. Some checks can be useful for NWIS data managers, while other checks enforce rules specific to NAWQA, which may not be of interest to NWIS data managers. Data-checking reports are available for site checks, sample-coding checks, and water-quality-data checks. Details of all the checks are documented here.

Existing data-review procedures supported by Technical Offices and used by Water Science Centers are still in effect. This data-checking software supplements those procedures and helps data managers ensure the quality of their site, groundwater information, and water-quality data. Use of the software is required specifically by the NWQP for NAWQA data but is not required for other NWIS data.

The NWIS data-checking software provides two ways to retrieve data-checking reports. The fastest and easiest way is to subscribe to automated email alerts for user selected data checks. This method delivers data-checking reports (as Excel files attached to emails) at regular

frequencies. The other way is to use the NWIS Reporting Application's retrieval interface, which delivers tab-delimited and other file formats. Both approaches are accessed and documented in the NWIS Reporting Application using a new button for "Data Checks Resources."

Two different training sessions will be offered; one to assist NAWQA users in their transition to the new software and email alert system, and the other to introduce other NWIS users to this new data-checking software. Those attending the NAWQA training do not need to attend the NWIS user training.

All sessions are found in the scheduled Webex meetings at https://usgs.webex.com/, and no pre-registration is required. The dial-in number for all sessions is 703-648-4848, code 64144#. Training sessions are scheduled as follows:

Webinars to introduce and familiarize NAWQA users to the new software will be presented by Dave Reutter and Ken Skach:

> Thursday, January 28, 11:00 am – 1:00 pm eastern, NAWQA-only training

> Monday, February 1, 2:00 – 4:00 pm eastern, NAWQA-only training

Webinars to introduce NWIS users to the new software will be presented by Ken Skach:

> Tuesday, February 2, 2:00 – 4:00 pm eastern

> Monday, February 8, 2:00 – 4:00 pm eastern

> Monday, February 22, 1:00 – 3:00 pm eastern

For technical questions regarding use of the NWIS Data Checks, please contact Ken Skach (kaskach@usgs.gov).

WaQI Notes are archived on the Office of Water Quality web site.

Signed,

Office of Water Quality

Office of Water Information

National Water Quality Program

This WaQI note does not supersede any previous information.

Distribution: All WMA Employees