

Agency Description: The Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) was created July 1, 1993, as the state's primary environmental regulatory agency to administer programs protecting Oklahoma's air, land, and water.

Mission & True North: Protect and improve public health and the environment in a manner that supports and advances a prosperous Oklahoma for current and future generations.

Values: Our values represent the three pillars we believe best represent our unwavering responsibilities as public servants: environmental protection, fair application of the law, and service.

- Consider innovative ways to achieve environmental compliance.
- Promote voluntary compliance with environmental laws.
- Base decisions on the law, common sense, sound science, and fiscal responsibility.
- Ensure agency rules/requirements are necessary, effective, and current.
- Apply agency rules and permitting requirements in a clear and consistent manner.
- Ensure consistent, fair, and timely enforcement of environmental laws.
- Encourage meaningful public participation.
- Serve each other, the public, and the regulated community in a transparent, ethical, professional, honorable, and respectful manner.

Executive Summary: DEQ is committed to continuing our bold, forward-thinking transformation toward a Lean Management System (LMS). LMS is a comprehensive, agency-wide management approach supporting the concept of continuous improvement – seeking small, incremental changes in processes to improve efficiency, quality, and service for our customers while remaining laser-focused on our mission and True North. The 10 strategies in this plan summarize critical needs of our agency and outline the best way we know, today, to address those needs. In the spirit of continuous improvement, we may revise and refine these efforts as new information is received, or data shows we are not meeting established goals.

Summary of Multi-Year Strategic Priorities

#	Five-Year Strategy	Description	Start FY
1	Implement an integrated talent management strategy	A proactive, adaptable process to manage agency employees, focusing on leadership development, technical development, recruitment, and retention.	2024
2	Update Operator Certification platform	The Operator Certification program trains and licenses more than 12,000 operators of public water and wastewater systems to ensure those systems are operated safely and according to DEQ requirements. The current database management system runs on antiquated software that does not have the security and functional capabilities required for modern needs. The result is a high potential for data loss, security breaches, and loss of productivity.	2024
3	Implement electronic submittal of permit applications	Current agency rules require nearly all permit applications and associated correspondence to be handled via US Mail. Workplace policies during the Covid pandemic made complying with these rules nearly impossible and identified a need to update the rules.	2024
4	Improve emergency response activities	Develop protocols for rapid deployment teams and emergency response sampling to improve agency preparedness to respond to emergencies.	2024
5	Implement the Water Quality Standards program	Water Quality Standards are a requirement of the federal Clean Water Act to provide protection of surface waters. Through the Water Quality Standards, each waterbody is assigned beneficial use designations based on several factors. Water quality criteria and antidegradation policies are established and implemented to protect the waterbody's designated uses. The legislature transferred this program to DEQ from OWRB in FY 2022 but did not transfer funding or staffing.	2024
6	Update customer & revenue management platform (invoicing)	The current platform is inadequate for modern needs related to security, potential for data loss, enterprise support, and customer service.	2024
7	Implement a comprehensive revenue planning protocol	The agency does not have a comprehensive plan to fill revenue gaps. This strategy will identify ways to fully fund programs, reduce various costs, and/or increase efficiencies.	2025
8	Improve processes for managing laboratory service fees	Laboratory service fees (Chapter 305) have not been formally evaluated and updated since 2008. As a result, they are incomplete, inaccurate, and do not represent actual costs. This strategy will develop and implement a much-improved process to update, manage, and maintain fees associated with laboratory services.	2025
9	Implement the Public Water Supply Lead/Copper Rule (LCRR)	New and proposed federal regulations require the inventory and replacement of all lead service lines, increase sampling requirements, and lower action levels. This strategy is to stand up a new PWS Section to implement all drinking water lead and copper rules.	2025
10	Upgrade Events Management System (EMS)	DEQ's current EMS, implemented in 2011, is antiquated due to discontinued support for Internet Explorer. As such, functionality has been lost and system security degraded. This strategy will replace the current EMS with a modern platform that will improve functionality and security.	2025



#	Progress & Successes	Short-Term Objectives (FY 2025)	Long-Term Objectives (FY 2026+)
1	FY 2024 - People Systems workgroup established. Value Stream Improvement Plan developed. Hiring process flow board established	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10/1/2024 – Establish teams. Report back to leadership what milestones will be recorded and establish metrics 6/30/2025 – Finalize plans for each short-term goal 	FY 2026 to FY 2027 – Implement plans.
2	FY 2024 – RFP developed and sent to OMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish benchmark dates after RFP closes Complete vendor selection within 21 days after RFP release Initiate contract within 30 days of RFP closing Develop project benchmark dates based on SOW and contract timelines within 10 days of contract initiation 	Implement modernized Operator Certification platform.
3	FY 2024 – AQD formed workgroup. Rulemaking initiated for Chapter 100 rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate with divisions on draft language for OAC 252:4. Identify language in division-specific regulations requiring updates 	Promulgate rules consistent with agency practice.
4	FY 2024 – Team leaders selected. Drafts of SAPs, HSPs, SOPs, and templates developed and undergoing internal review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q1 FY 2025 – Identify ER teams and begin training. Identify Incident Command training vendors. Update WQD ER plans re: boil advisories Q2 FY 2025 – Begin agency-wide IC training. Update WQ ER plans re: harmful algal blooms Q3 FY 2025 – Update WQD ER plans re: Muni/Ind. Wastewater 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q4 FY 2027 – Complete alignment of protocols. Finalize and implement the framework for emergency response. Ongoing training and exercising.
5	FY2024 – (1) Program budget incorporated into FY 2025 budget workplan. (2) Chapter 690 and 740 rule changes approved. (3) Standard work for triennial reviews under development. (4) Standard work for EPA-requested WQS updates completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8/12/2024 – Three new staff members hired 11/1/2024 – Complete WQ Assessment training 12/31/2024 – Complete WQS Academy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8/2025 – Complete triennial review. FY 2026 – Complete WQS rulemaking.
6	FY 2024 – Business Analyst hired. Business process analyses completed with Divisions and Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8/1/2024 – Select vendor to replace FileMaker with a more robust invoicing software suite 9/1/2024 – Create formalized Help Desk process in anticipation of a true ticketing system 10/1/2024 – Conduct discovery sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q4 FY 2026 – Replace FileMaker with a more robust invoicing software suite. Q4 FY 2026 – Standardize DEQ customer interactions with an agency-wide Customer Relationship Management suite.
7	New strategy for FY 2025	Q2-4 FY 2025 – (1) Each division research fees and identifies current revenue streams to project a tipping point under current ad hoc system. (2) Identify low-hanging fruit for efficiency. (3) Each division identifies and documents efficiencies to assist with revenue for sustained annual salary adjustments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q1 FY 2026 - Develop written plan to address key issues. FY 2026 thru 2027 - Implement continuous improvement to ensure revenue meets needs.
8	New strategy for FY 2025	FY 2025 – (1) Establish a new matrix (worksheet) to determine fees. (2) Apply the new worksheet to all testing and services. (3) Establish cost/value matrix for on/off boarding for analytical testing	Develop rules to implement a reliable and representative revenue mechanism to ensure maintenance and viability of lab services.
9	New strategy for FY 2025 ORWA and OSU Extension identified as training partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8/15/2024 – Include staffing requests for agency budget request based on timeline established by agency. Complete development of templates to be used for reporting, public notice, and other aspects of LCRR rule 1/1/2025 – Complete development of training materials and begin training 2/2025 – Rules for Chapter 631 to EQB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12/1/2025 – Submit primacy application for LCRR to EPA. Fully implement the suite of lead and copper drinking water rules.
10	New strategy for FY 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7/2024 – Begin vendor review process 10/1/2024 – Establish benchmarks 	Fully implement upgraded EMS.