

Reporting 319 grant and CWP loan data in eLINK

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Purpose: This guidance is intended to assist Project Sponsors in accurately reporting information about water quality implementation accomplishments in eLINK, a web-based software tool used by local governments across Minnesota and state agencies to manage and report on watershed projects. The project information provided in eLINK is used to fulfill reporting requirements to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and track the progress of watershed implementation activities throughout Minnesota. All eLINK Guidance Documents referenced in this document can be found at <http://bwsr.state.mn.us/elink>.

Who should use this guidance to enter project information into eLINK?

- You are a recipient of a Federal Clean Water Act Section 319 Grant (319) or Clean Water Partnership (CWP) loan
- Your implementation project has an anticipated pollutant reduction component

What information needs to be entered in eLINK?

- Practice types and count
- Mapped location of implemented practices
- Indicators associated with practices

When should you enter project information into eLINK?


Currently, you are required to enter information into eLINK each year you implement on-the-ground activities and can estimate a pollution reduction for your project. Enter the data after projects have been completed. The specific date required for eLINK reporting is included in the contract for your grant. Contact your MPCA Project Manager or Grants Manager if you have any questions.

How do I access eLINK for entering project information?

Project Sponsors and MPCA Project Managers are issued individual eLINK accounts upon registration.

1. Access the eLINK log in screen at <https://elink.bwsr.state.mn.us/>. Your email address is your username. If you don't remember your password, click on "Forgot Password."
2. If you don't have a current account, click on "Register." For MPCA Project Managers, please request to have your role set as "Individual Grant Manager" within the Notes field.
3. If you need additional assistance, send an email to elinksupport@state.mn.us, or—if you are logged in to eLINK—click on the "Support" link in the left menu to create and submit a support ticket.

How do I find my loan or grant in eLINK?

After logging into eLINK, click on Grants item in the left menu, and then click on the Grants subitem. Your 319 or CWP Project will be set up by MPCA or BWSR staff and listed as a *grant* in the grid on this page, using the Project Title from your workplan/contract. Click on the adjacent Edit icon  to open the record.


Where do I enter accomplishment information in eLINK?

Any grant or 319/CWP Project will have accomplishments that will be reported as activities. An **Activity** is a project or group of projects of the same category (e.g. Agricultural Practices), under which practices, mapped location, and indicators are reported.

For information about navigating within eLINK and adding Activities to your loan or grant, we recommend viewing the video [Adding Activities and Creating a Work Plan in eLINK](#) or the [Managing Activities](#) guidance.

How do I enter estimated pollution reductions?

After you have created your Activity or Activities, you will need to enter **Activity Details**. This is where you will enter the practice details, map the practice, and enter pollution reduction estimates (also called “indicators”).


From the Activity Details page (accessed by clicking the Edit icon  for a given activity detail), click the “Add Indicator” button.

1. **Indicator Category:** select the primary category for the indicator; this will filter the next list. These categories are used to query data.
2. **Indicator Name & Units:** select the specific indicator name; units are specified by the indicator name.
3. **Indicator Value:** enter the resulting pollutant reduction value from your calculation based on your implementation activities. These values could be estimated based on the BMP design (i.e. stormwater pond), models, monitoring activities, or literature. **Note: This is the most important value you will report in eLINK.**
4. **Waterbody:** enter the waterbody the indicator is intending to address.
5. **Calc. Tool:** select the calculation tool used to determine the value.
6. **Comments:** enter additional information about the calculation, or if the calculation tool was not available, enter the name of the tool used.
7. Click on the “Update” button at the bottom of the window box to save the indicator.
8. Repeat for additional indicators.

Do I need to enter expenditures?

For CWP and 319 records, you will have already reported expenditures and other narrative reporting to MPCA, and it is not necessary to duplicate this reporting or to submit a progress report in eLINK.

However, if you have BWSR grants in eLINK, and wish to “link” the activities in order to show the true cost of a project and avoid double-reporting of Activity Details, you may choose to add a lump expenditure under your 319 or CWP record.

To add new activities to an existing grant, first navigate to the desired grant and then click on the adjacent Edit icon  to open the grant. If you can’t find your specific grant, send an email to eLINKsupport@state.mn.us with the subject line “MPCA 319 or CWP assistance needed.” Be sure to copy your MPCA Project Manager.

From the **Grant Activities** screen, click the “Add a New Activity” button. Enter the information consistent with the [Managing Activities](#) eLINK Guidance. Note that while reporting activity budget amounts and expense information is not required for 319 and/or CWP grants, eLINK requires a value to be entered for each Activity Budget row. This value can be “\$0”.

Reporting 319 or CWP Project accomplishments will primarily take place on the **Activity Details** screen for a given project. Within the Activity Details, be sure to enter practices and indicators, and map the details.

As a MPCA Project Manager, how do I ensure that funding information has been properly entered into eLINK?

Once notified by your Project Sponsor that their project information has been entered into eLINK, please verify that the information was properly entered by reviewing the Grant Progress Report. If any information is inaccurate due to technical issues within eLINK, please send an email to elinksupport@state.mn.us with the subject line “MPCA 319 or CWP assistance needed.”

From the **Grant Activities** screen, navigate to the bottom of the screen and locate the Generate Reports box. Select “Grant Progress Report” from the Generate Reports drop-down box, then select “Go” to generate the file. Open the downloaded file, and verify the following information in the following tables has been entered and is accurate:

■ Indicator Summary

- Verify that all relevant pollution reduction indicator types are listed
- Verify that total value and unit entered are valid

■ Grant Activities

- Verify that the correct Activity Category has been selected
- Total number of Activity Actions should match number of projects reported to MPCA elsewhere

■ Activity Actions (for completed BMPs)

- Verify practices are lumped/split under the appropriate Grant Activity (corresponds to Activity Budget row) according to [Grouping & Splitting Activities](#) guidance
- Verify that correct Practice Type(s) selected
- Verify that practice Size/Units entered
- Verify that practice is mapped
- Indicator Name, Units, Value, Calculation Tool, and Waterbody should be complete (if applicable)