



Water Contaminant Information Tool



A Versatile and Secure Tool for the Water Sector

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is committed to ensuring the safety of the nation’s water supply. A key part of EPA’s commitment is protecting drinking water and wastewater systems from the effects of intentional or accidental contamination. WCIT—the Water Contaminant Information Tool—is a powerful new information resource for water utilities, public health officials, and agencies responsible for the safety of water supplies. Along with other EPA efforts such as early warning detection systems, WCIT is a major element of EPA’s support of water utility incident prevention and detection capability.

Introduced in late 2005, WCIT is a password-protected online database that currently contains information on 93 contaminants of concern: chemical, biological, and radiological substances that pose a serious threat if introduced into drinking water or wastewater systems.

WCIT’s functionality, and the data in it, were shaped and validated by water utility professionals, scientists, and public health experts. EPA established a User Workgroup, consisting primarily of water utility representatives, to provide guidance on WCIT’s content design and functionality. A WCIT Expert Workgroup, including authorities on chemical and pathogen properties, fate and transport, contaminant monitoring, and health effects, reviewed all technical information and continues to provide feedback on current and planned WCIT data. Unlike other resources or databases, WCIT supports water-specific data (not just general data on environmental contamination). Moreover, WCIT covers both regulated and non-regulated contaminants, including data on many substances—such as chemical warfare agents—for which information is not readily available.

Supports Planning, Response, Training, and Research

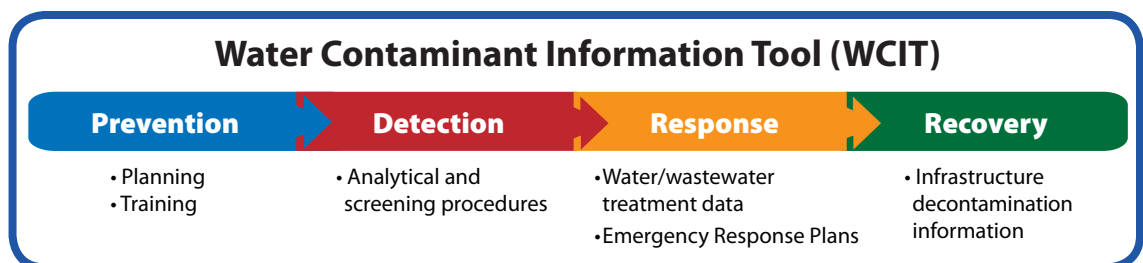
WCIT supports preparedness planning, incident response, response training, and contaminant research:

Planning – WCIT provides in-depth information needed to update and maintain Emergency Response Plans. WCIT supports development of site-specific response guidelines and can aid utilities in making decisions about facility infrastructure during planning for system expansions or upgrades.

Response — For incident response, WCIT provides quick access to vital information, including drinking water and wastewater treatment recommendations and drinking water and wastewater infrastructure decontamination processes. WCIT includes easy access to reports that summarize useful information that can be used to communicate with the public and with the news media.

Training — WCIT is a highly practical tool for table-top drills and emergency exercises needed to ensure readiness. For example, federal authorities have used WCIT as part of disaster planning exercises. The depth of information in WCIT makes it an ideal resource for formal or informal training programs.

Research — WCIT supports gap analysis efforts cataloging research in areas such as infrastructure decontamination.



Detailed Contaminant Information Listed

For each contaminant, WCIT contains detailed information describing the substance, its behavior in water, and potential health effects. WCIT information includes:

- Name, Chemical Abstracts Service (CAS) ID
- Physical or pathogen properties
- Availability
- Fate and transport
- Medical and toxicity information
- Early warning indicators
- Field detection and analysis information
- Drinking water and wastewater treatment
- Environmental impacts
- Infrastructure decontamination

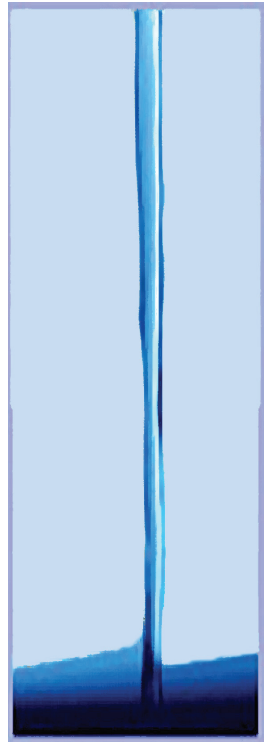
Up to Date

Over time, EPA will add new contaminants and data fields to WCIT as EPA and its water sector partners identify additional needs or data sources. EPA is committed to keeping the data in WCIT up to date as new research is published. For example, in late 2006, EPA added 45 new contaminants of concern to WCIT, as well as information on drinking water and wastewater treatment and infrastructure decontamination.

Intended Users

WCIT contaminant data are considered sensitive, so EPA restricts access to the tool to individuals in the water sector. Eligible organizations include:

- Drinking water and wastewater utilities
- State drinking water primacy agencies (and their regional and local agencies)
- Drinking water and wastewater associations partnering with EPA
- State and local public health officials
- Federal officials (including government laboratory staff)
- State laboratories



How to Register for WCIT

Registering to use WCIT is easy and free. To apply for access to WCIT, visit <http://www.epa.gov/wcit> or <https://cdx.epa.gov>.

For More Information

For more information on WCIT, visit www.epa.gov/wcit or contact the WCIT Help Desk at WCIT@csc.com.

Information on EPA's Water Security Division and WSD activities, tools, products, and the latest scientific advances to protect drinking water and wastewater utilities is available online at www.epa.gov/watersecurity.