

# *Public Health Performance Management Centers for Excellence*

## 2013 Quality Improvement Grantees Learning Congress

September 23, 2013

# Streamlining Payment Processes to Improve Customer Satisfaction

Island County

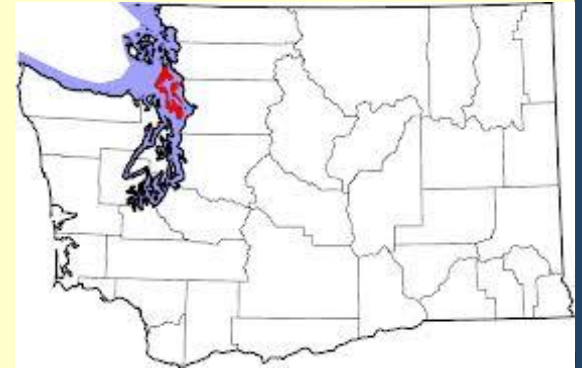
---

Jill Wood, Environmental Health Director  
Laura Luginbill, Assessment Director



# Island County

- Total population: 78,506 (US Census, 2010)
- 63% residing in unincorporated areas
- Island County Public Health (ICPH):
  - 29 FTEs
  - \$3,058,000 annual budget (2013):
  - 2011: ICPH Quality Council established
  - 2011-2013: 3 QI Projects completed



# Island County Project Team

- Jill Wood, Environmental Health Director
- Kathleen Parvin, Environmental Health Specialist
- Vanya Brown, Accounting Supervisor
- Laura Luginbill, Assessment Director



# Project Identification

WOW, now I remember why I am always a little upset at the end of these repair's, I choose to do these repairs for a couple of reason's, having the work is fine, the main reason is to prevent someone from paying double or triple what the job is worth as some installers charge, and helping people out! And we have done a few of these loan repairs , there has got to be a way to start the money coming part way thru the job to prevent it from being 60 days! Both these jobs had raw sewage running on the ground, in my book a health hazard, they where done and signed off on Dec 7 & Dec 13, the pumper has been paid, the electrician has been paid, suppliers have been paid, my employees have been paid, taxes have been paid, health hazard eliminated , so we have close to \$40,000.00 paid out and there is no money coming in. OK a payment because of a holiday? We don't get paid holidays, I don't want to be the only one with these programs, and I think they are good but I don't want to be the only one with a lot of money in today's slow economy.

The work for this job was finished in October. The invoice is dated 11/14/2011. I have called you several times regarding this invoice, but nothing happens. How long am I supposed to wait to get paid?  
If it is going to continue to take this long to get paid with this program, I will not be willing to continue doing these projects.

However, I do want you to know how distressing it is to not receive payment for their services in a timely manner. The least. If my reputation was that of being this slow, I would not have qualified for your loan, or any other loan. I have limited resources, no one had to wait for me to get paid. My contractors have gone without thousands of dollars, say, greatly distressing to me.

TO: KATHLEEN PARVIO  
SUBJECT: County Funded Repairs AT: Island County Health Dept  
DATE: 11-16-07  
KATHLEEN - The Program you have is very good except for the 6-8 week period we have to be paid. We have to fund the money from beginning the project until we complete the job then another 6-8 weeks after that.  
PLEASE REPLY TO ... SIGNED:  
IT PUTS A FINANCIAL BURDEN ON US ESPECIALLY SINCE ITS 90 TO 120 DAYS FROM START UNTIL WE GET PAID. ANYWAY YOU COULD SPEED THIS UP?  
THANKS FOR YOUR CONCERN

# AIM Statement

- *“We want to decrease the time from approval by the Health Services Director to mailing checks to OSS Contractors.”*
- *Within our dataset, the range of time to process OSS Contractor payments was 15-49 days, with an average of 30 days. We intend to reduce our process time to an average of 15 days. Our data shows that this goal is attainable and will have a significant impact on our level of customer satisfaction.*

# Project Activities

## Identifying the problem

Repayment for services takes too long, evidenced by complaints from multiple contractors to staff and elected officials.

## Describing the payment process

- **Qualitative data:** Accounting staff, Auditor's office, Treasurer's office, Board of Island County Commissioners, and WA Dept of Ecology.
- **Quantitative data:** Dated documents for 29 loans processed between 2011-2013.

# Project Activities

## Analyzing the Data

- Swim Lane Diagram
- Bar Graph with summary statistics

## Exploring Solutions

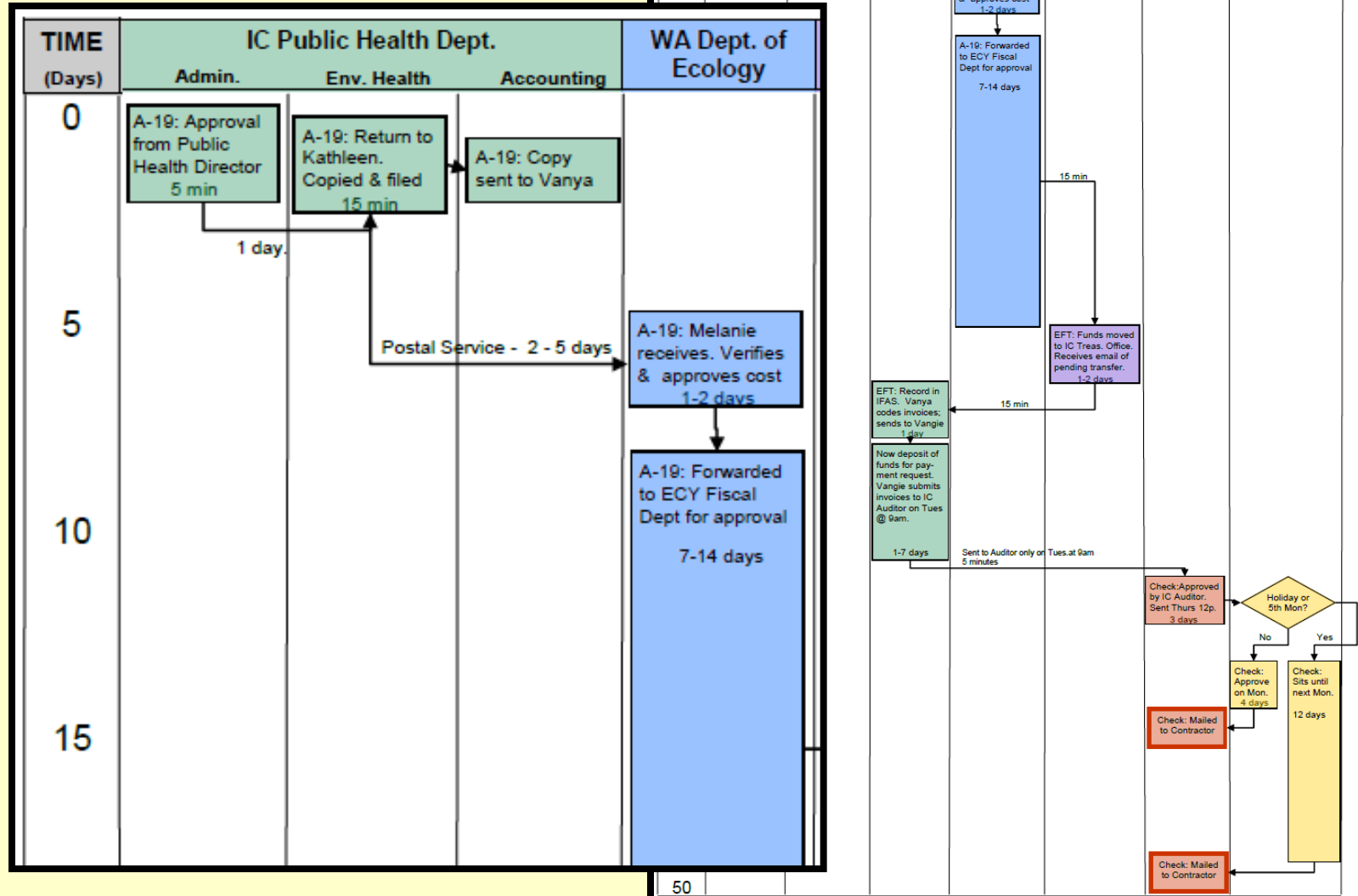
- Examine time-savings, direct, and indirect costs
- Small-group brainstorming

## Implementing

- The new contractor payment process was initiated hours after final approval.

# Quality Tools

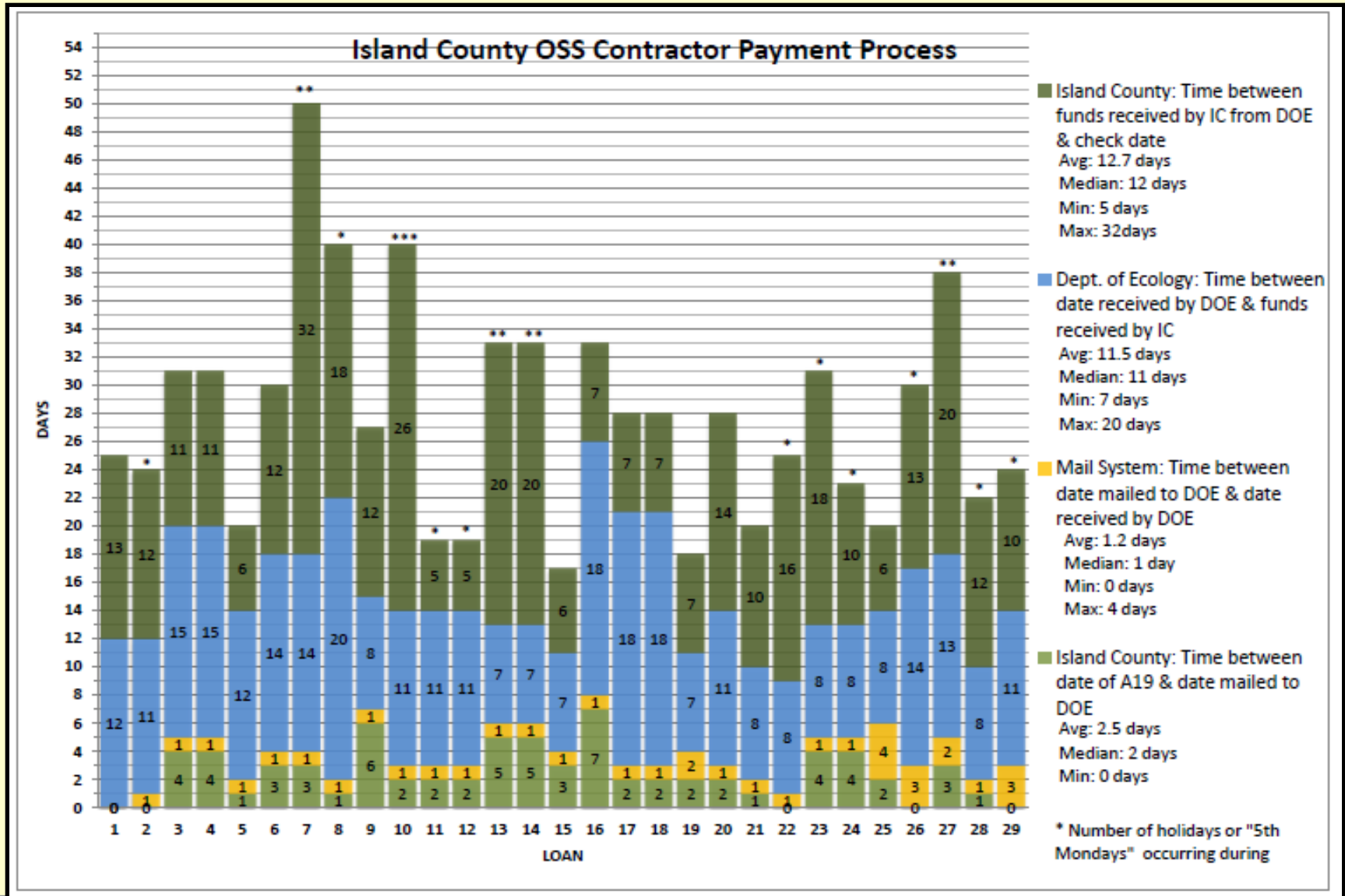
## Swim Lane Diagram





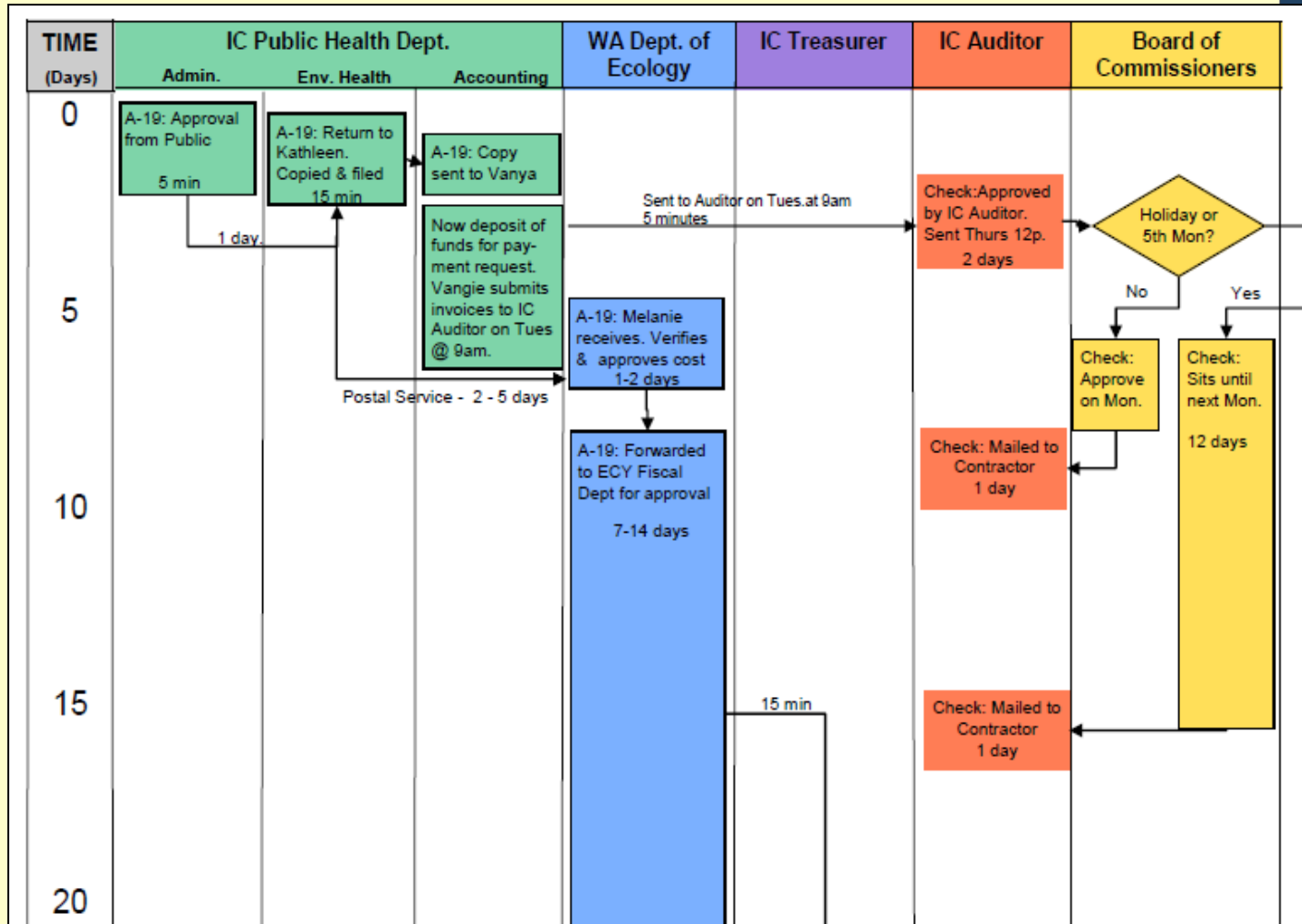
# Quality Tools

# Bar Graph



# Results

- Concurrent Processes
- No added or eliminated steps
- 15 day average processing time!



# Next Steps

- New monitoring system in place.
- Adapt as needed for customer and stakeholder satisfaction.
- Establish new Procedure Manual for repayment of OSS Contractors.



For more information, contact:

Laura Luginbill, Assessment Director

- 360-679-7350
- [l.luginbill@co.island.wa.us](mailto:l.luginbill@co.island.wa.us)
- [www.islandcountyhealth.org](http://www.islandcountyhealth.org)



The contents of this presentation were selected by the author and do not necessarily represent the official position of or endorsement by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.