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DEQ: UPDES Permit Process Efficiency Evaluation

A Process Improvement Evaluation by

The Legislative Fiscal Analyst's Office and
Governor's Office of Planning and Budget

June 16, 2026

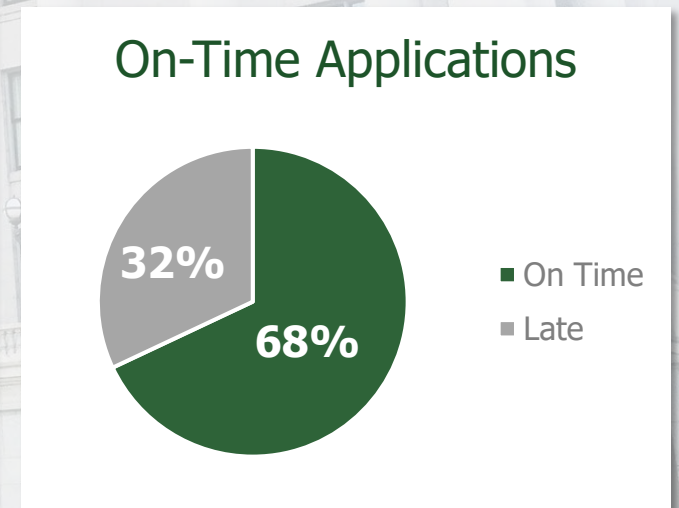
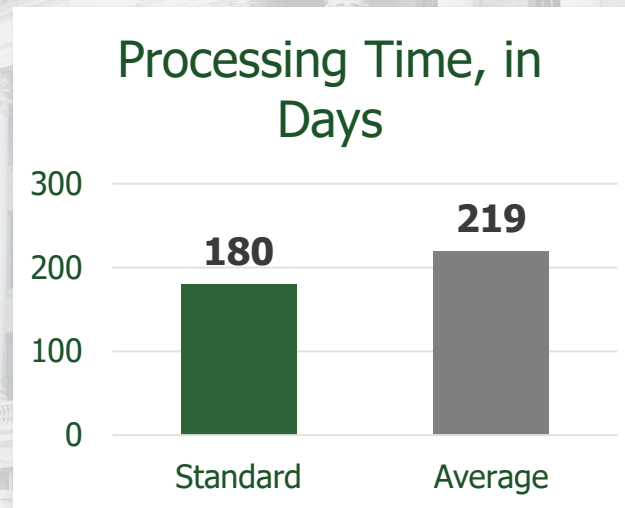
Individual Utah Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (UPDES) Permits

The Process

- Regulates pollutant discharges into Utah's waters to protect environmental quality and public health
- Majority of permit holders are industrial facilities and municipal water treatment systems
- Division of Water Quality (DWQ) evaluates applications, conducts analysis, and issues/renews permits

The Challenges

- Delays in permit processing
- Need to prepare for IT improvements





Performance Measures

Timeliness



% On-Time Renewal Applications



% On-Time Permit Issuance

(Current Line-Item Measure)

Quality



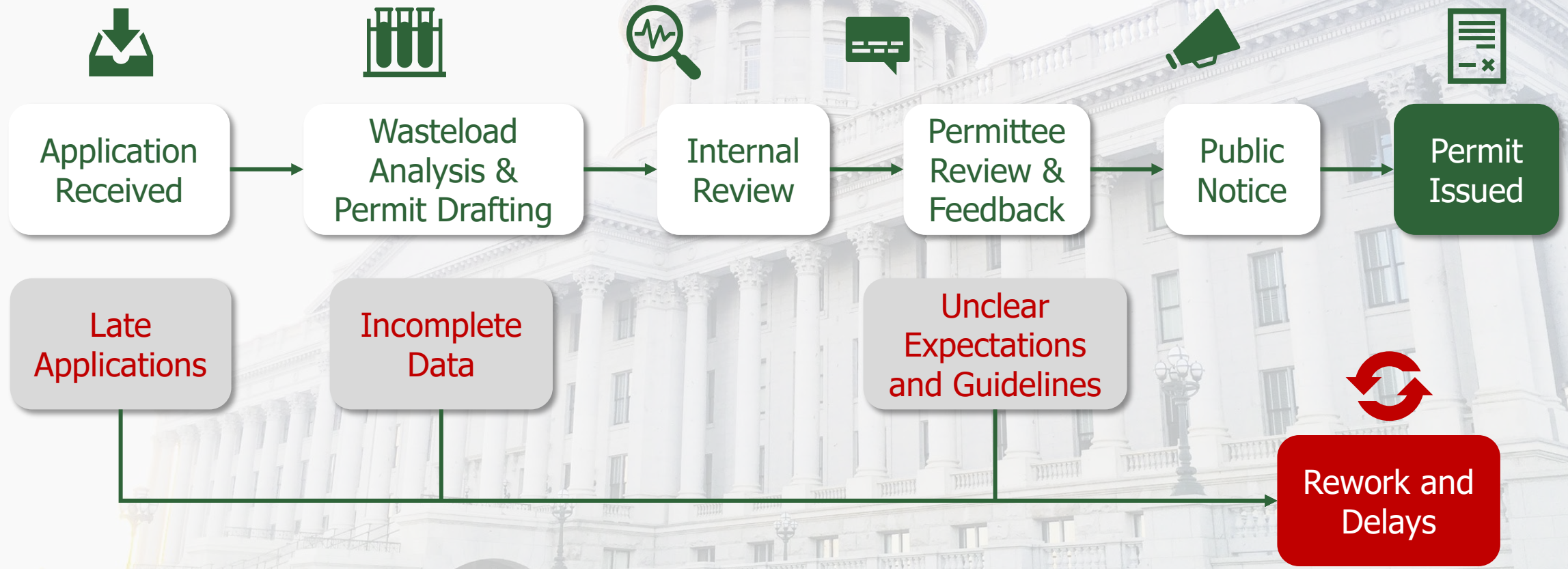
% of Applications with Repeat Wasteload Analysis



Personnel Hours per Permit



Process Evaluation



Opportunities for Process Improvement

1

Increase
Communication
Between Division
and Permittees



2

Improve Supports
for Application
Quality &
Timeliness



3

Streamline Pre-
Public Notice
Permittee Review
Period



4

Improve Internal
Data Quality and
Usage



Opportunity #1: Increase Communication Between Division and Permittees

See Report

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Implement standard discussion items with new permittees

Increase proactive communication with permittees

Increase pre-application reminders and outreach

Create centralized repository of permit information



% On-Time Applications



Personnel Hours per
Permit



Opportunity #2: Improve Supports for Application Quality & Timeliness

See Report

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Establish common definition of “complete” application

Add detail to application data requirements

Strengthen incentives and disincentives

Collect early applications for certain permittees



% On-Time Applications



% of Applications with
Repeat Wasteload
Analysis



Opportunity #3: Streamline Pre-Public Notice Permittee Review Period

See Report

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Define allowable pre-public notice revisions

Standardize and enforce pre-public notice review deadlines



% On-Time Permit
Issuance



Opportunity #4: Improve Internal Data Quality and Usage

See Report

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Reorganize internal tracking data

Implement data quality best practices

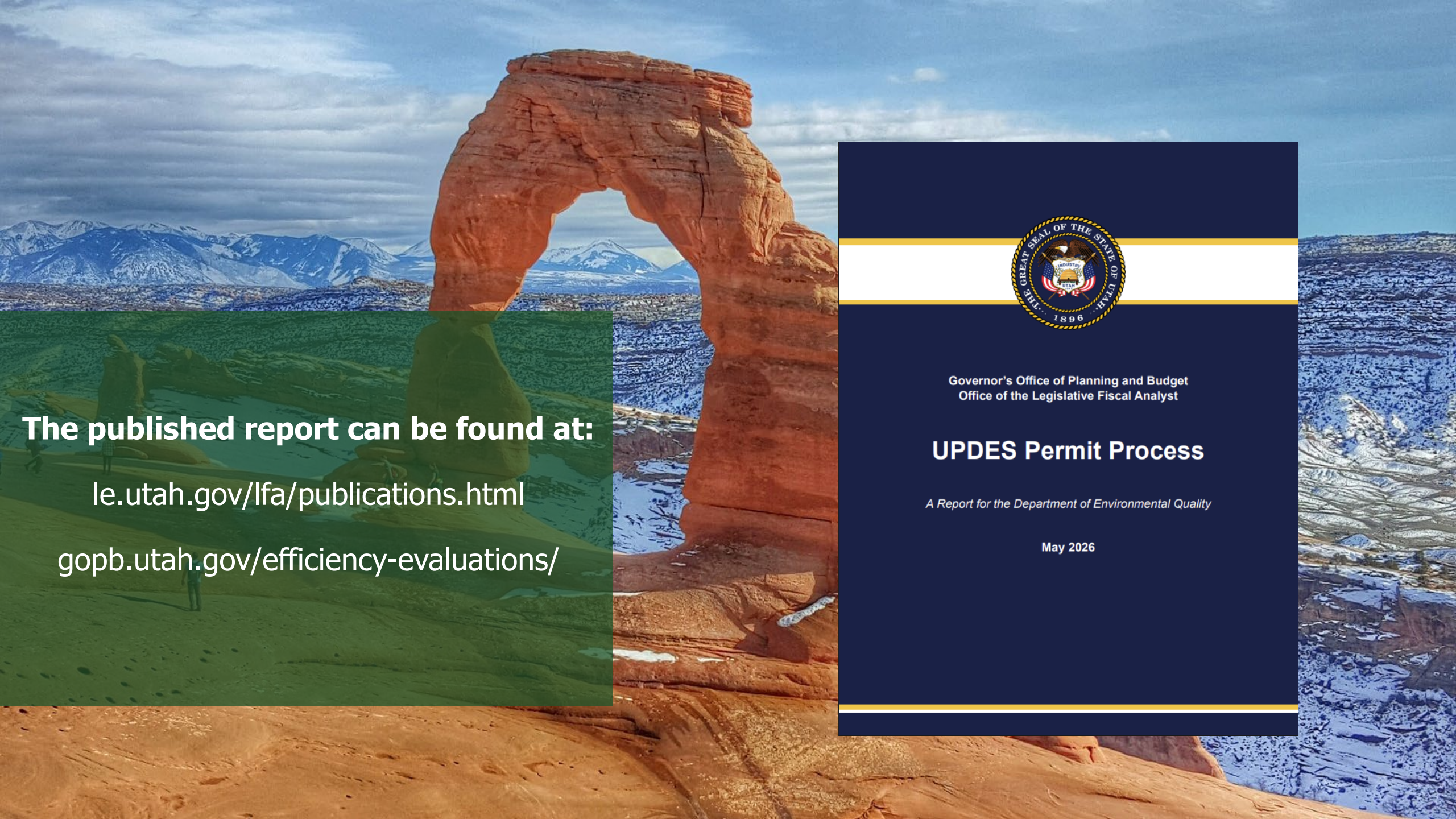
Complete entry of historical data

Create regular shared internal reports

Support Performance Analysis

Prepare for Future IT Improvements





The published report can be found at:

le.utah.gov/lfa/publications.html

gopb.utah.gov/efficiency-evaluations/



Governor's Office of Planning and Budget
Office of the Legislative Fiscal Analyst

UPDES Permit Process

A Report for the Department of Environmental Quality

May 2026

Remarks from GOPB on Implementation Support



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Remarks from the Division of Water Quality



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