

The ERF Connection

The Electronic Regulatory Filing Newsletter



The National Energy Board faces many opportunities and challenges as a regulator. We are committed to meeting the evolving needs of the public to engage in NEB matters. To achieve this corporate goal we know that we must be flexible and innovative and make the best use of technology.

On April 1, 2001, the NEB will be in a position to turn the electronic page. This date marks the beginning of a new, phased in, electronic regulatory environment at the NEB which will create an environment for efficiency and participation in the regulatory filing processes. We are pleased that a number of regulated companies are already preparing to file their applications electronically.

As the Ontario Energy Board (OEB), NEB and industry participants finish building the technical components of ERF, organizations need to prepare for change. Several activities are currently underway to address this need. For example, the NEB in association with the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) has organized two Townhall Meetings in March.

We are eager to provide you with additional details on how to use ERF and key ERF activities in the next *Connection*. But, most of all, we look forward to opening the doors to ERF in April.

Gaétan Caron
Chief Operating Officer, National Energy Board

Message from the NEB Project Manger

April 1st is approaching rapidly and the National Energy Board's ERF team is at full stretch making sure that we are ready for our commitment to e-filing on that date. As a result, this issue of *The ERF Connection* will be very brief. The next issue will provide more details on how to interact with us from April 1st onwards as well as the latest news from the OEB.

For the next six to eight weeks, the NEB team will be focusing on the following:

- Getting the ERF system ready. It is based on our prototype repository (available since April) using Livelink by Opentext. This will allow us to offer e-filing on time as we continue plans to adopt the Core Document Repository (CDR) solution, currently being finalized by the Ontario Energy Board (OEB).
- Developing on-line forms for Letters of Comment/Concern and Written Intervention.
- Informing industry and the public on how to file electronically (..if they wish) and future ERF developments, including training.
- Redesigning the NEB's Internet site to accommodate ERF and key documentation. We are also working on an R&D Net for ERF. It will be an area for "ERFlings" (see page 4 for definition) to share information and discuss industry implementation strategies.

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Note: This edition has an NEB focus, stay tuned for OEB news.

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ERF Connection

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- Putting support in place to help first-time applicants and intervenors, including FAQs (frequently asked questions) and bug reporting.
- Preparing historical data for loading into the system. While SGML conversion is an ongoing effort, we will ensure access to existing data. A key priority will be

to add some landmark documents such as key Frontier Hearings.

The project team and Board staff are excited, maybe even a little nervous, as we work towards finally seeing concrete proof that ERF is becoming reality. The count down is on!

NEB Key Messages for April 1st

1. **Regulatory responsibilities will not change** e.g. who notifies/provides service.
2. The public and industry will be able to access and search key regulatory documents online.
Note: the Board will create PDF and HTML file formats from SGML.
3. The use of ERF will not be mandatory for any section of our regulated industries.
 - Applicants interested in using ERF will agree with the NEB on what they will be ready to file electronically from April 1st onwards.
 - Other regulatory participants may choose to file electronically but will not be required to do so.
4. Those organizations choosing to use ERF:
 - Will use one of the on-line forms or author documents in SGML.
 - Will only have to file one (1) paper copy with the Board as the legal record.
 - Must continue to serve paper copies to those unwilling/unable to accept copies electronically. Note: applicants are responsible for identifying who requires hard copies.
5. NEB will supply on-line help and some support for ERF authoring.

Now You Can, With Excel⇄ERF

For some time now, "ERFlings" have been asking for an improved method to convert spreadsheet data to an ERF format. With the Excel⇄ERF utility, now you can. The first release of the utility is currently being tested by the ERF Project Office and will be available for download at the end of March 2001.

Excel⇄ERF is a custom ERF utility that operates as an add-on to Microsoft Excel v95/97. It allows an Excel user to export a spreadsheet range to a valid ERF table in an SGML file. This file can then be imported into whatever SGML authoring tool the user chooses.



Unlike most authoring tools, Excel⇄ERF retains most spreadsheet table formatting (e.g. lines, column widths, spanning of cells, etc) and text formatting (e.g. bold, italic, subscripted and super-scripted, etc.). The user can also choose to include table headers.

The ERF authoring environments, WPAE and XMAE, have been upgraded to include an "Import File..." button within the Create Table function. This allows users to import their spreadsheet data directly from Excel using Excel⇄ERF.

For more information about this tool, please contact Phil Robitaille via email at RobitaPh@oeb.gov.on.ca

The Need for e-security

The way the world does business is changing, and corporate security must change accordingly. For instance, e-mail now carries not only memos and notes, but also contracts and sensitive financial information. The Web is being used not only for publishing corporate brochures but also for software distribution and e-commerce. The Internet is a very public network, leading to understandable concerns about the privacy, security and confidentiality of Internet transactions.

ERF is responding to these concerns by implementing a globally recognized combination of technologies, processes and policies known as a Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) to provide the necessary confidence in the security, privacy and trustworthiness of electronic transactions. While PKI is a key priority for the NEB and the federal government, it will not be implemented on April 1, 2001.

PKI is a relatively new innovation that only cryptographers have appreciated until now. PKI is a combination of software, encryption technologies, and services that enable enterprises to protect the security of their communications and business transactions. Although technology is an important part of PKI, a successful PKI implementation depends more on appropriate PKI policies and procedures, an understanding of business processes and relationships, prevailing management practices and the overall security context.

A PKI provides the four principal security functions required for electronic transactions:

1. **Data Confidentiality** — to keep information private;
2. **Data Integrity** — to prove that the information has not been manipulated;
3. **Authentication** — to prove the identity of an individual or application; and
4. **Non-repudiation** — to ensure that information cannot be credibly disowned.

What is Public Key Infrastructure?

A typical PKI integrates digital certificates, public-key cryptography and certificate authorities into a total Public Key Infrastructure architecture.

1. Digital Certificates

Digital certificates are electronic files that act like a kind of on-line passport. They are issued by a trusted third party, known as a certificate authority, which verifies the identity of the certificate's owner. They are tamper-proof and cannot be forged. Digital certificates do two things 1) they authenticate that their holders (e.g. people, web sites) are truly who or what they claim to be, and 2) they protect data exchanged online from theft or tampering i.e. similar to your bank card which ensures secure financial transactions.

2. Public Key Cryptography

Public key cryptography is a system that uses a matching pair of encryption and decryption keys, each of which performs a one-way transformation of data that can only be reversed by its matching key. The public key is made available to everybody, while the private key is kept secret and is accessible only by the user.

3. Certificate Authorities

Certificate authorities are the digital world's equivalent of passport offices. They issue digital certificates and validate the holder's identity and authority. Certificate authorities embed an individual's or an organization's public key along with other identifying information into each digital certificate and then cryptographically sign it as a tamper-proof seal, verifying the integrity of the data within it and validating its use.



Townhall Meeting

The National Energy Board, in collaboration with the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP), has organized two Townhall Meetings in Calgary to inform and prepare companies that exchanges regulatory information with the Board about the Electronic Regulatory Filing project (ERF). ERF becomes a reality on April 1, 2001 therefore, it is important for organizations to understand how this will impact their company.

The first meeting on Wednesday, March 7, 2001 will provide a high level overview of ERF and is targeted at senior management. Some specific topics that will be discussed are impacts of ERF on organizations; the timeline for implementation of future phases; and key expectations for April 1st.

The second meeting on Thursday, March 22, 2001 will detail how to use ERF and will provide an opportunity for detailed discussion and questions. This session is targeted at regulatory, legal, and technical staff. This interactive session will address the following questions:

- What is ERF?
- What is SGML?
- How will e-filing change the regulatory process?
- What can I e-file?
- How do I e-file?
- What information can I find in the document repository?
- How do I search & browse the document repository?
- What will my company need to do? When?
- How can I learn more?

Should you wish to attend please email emeyer@neb.gc.ca or jackson@capp.ca for details.



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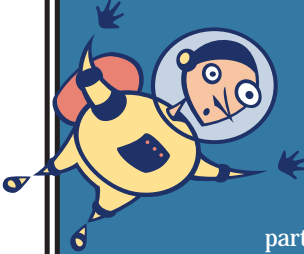
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ERFling of the Month



You've heard of rock band groupies. Well ERF also has devotees too – ERFlings are regulatory and industry participants that actively contribute to the ongoing development of ERF.

To become an ERFling contact erf@neb.gc.ca And yes, EARTHlings are welcome!

Winter 2001 ERFlings

Linda Angus and Ian Cameron of TransCanada for their great work on custom macros and valuable feedback on ERF tools and training.