



Improving the chemical additive review process

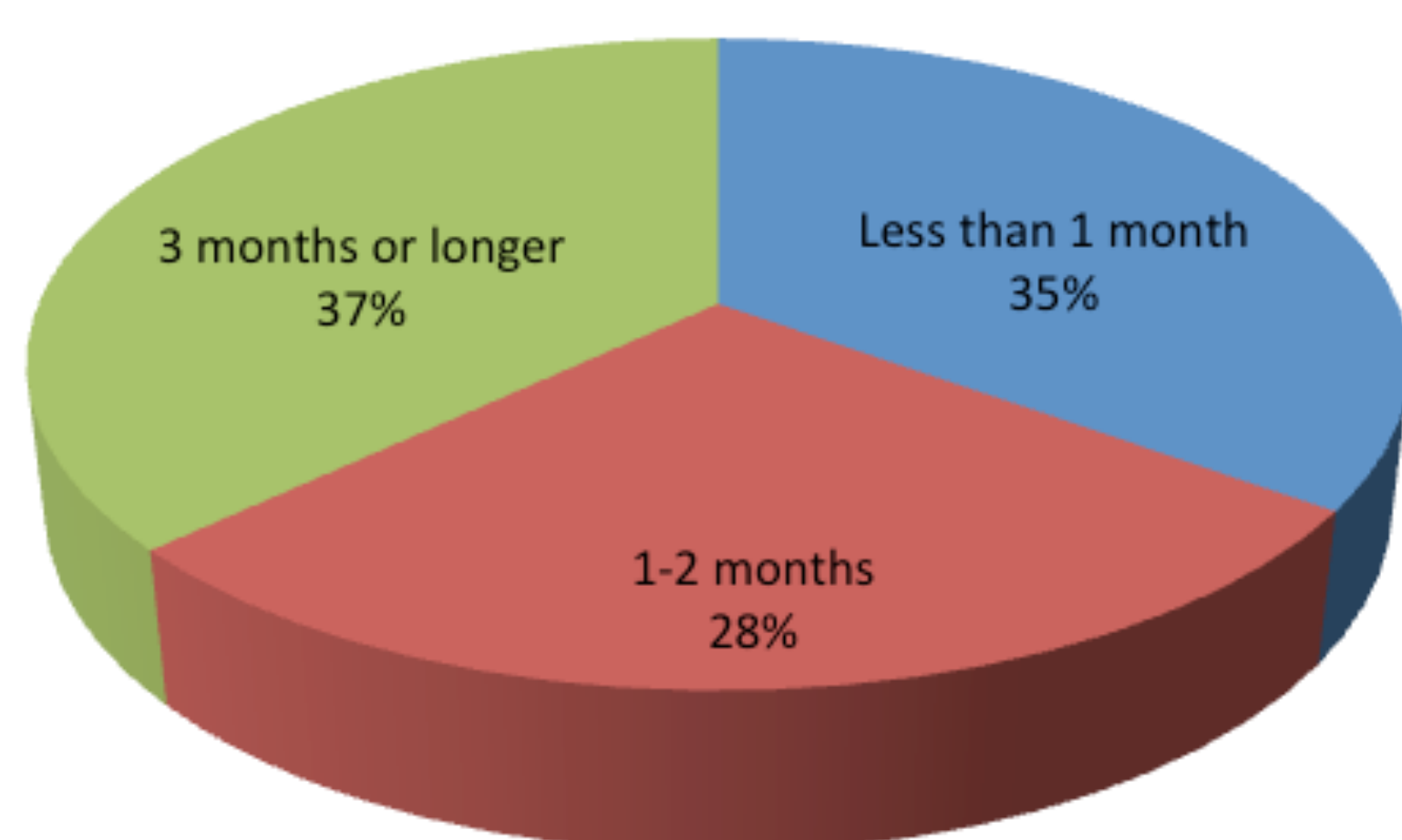
Why it's important

Some facilities permitted by the MPCA use chemical additives such as flocculants, chlorine, sodium bisulfite, and sulfuric acid to treat wastewater and stormwater. But some of these additives contain nutrients and other pollutants that may be a problem when discharged into the environment.

By conducting reviews of permittees' chemical additive use, we help ensure that Minnesota's water resources are protected.

A recent poll of 1,500 permittees highlights the need to improve our additive review process.

Amount of time permittees said reviews take



What we did

To address these problems, we established the following goals:

1. Increase awareness and familiarity with the chemical additive review process from 24% to 75% by October 1, 2015.
2. Review and respond to 90% of chemical additive requests within 5 days of receiving a completed request form, by October 1, 2015.

To reach our goals, we will complete the following tasks:

- ▶ Publish 3 articles on the process in OnPoint News newsletter.
- ▶ Present the process at external events, including the Wastewater Operations Conference in March 2015.
- ▶ Develop guidance documents and YouTube videos for web.
- ▶ Develop a standardized electronic chemical additive request form.
- ▶ Develop and publish a list of pre-approved chemical additives.
- ▶ Repeat user survey in October 2015 to track our progress.

What's the issue?

NPDES/SDS permits require MPCA approval prior to use of any chemical additives in discharges received by surface waters or groundwater. Through process mapping and a customer survey, we found the process is hindered by several factors:

- ▶ No standard review process is in place.
- ▶ Review timelines vary from days to months.
- ▶ Permittees are not providing correct and complete information the first time.
- ▶ Reviews and approvals are tracked inconsistently.

In addition, many of our permittees are not well versed in the chemical additive review process and the requirements in their permits. Their partial understanding of the process and what is required of them further delays reviews.

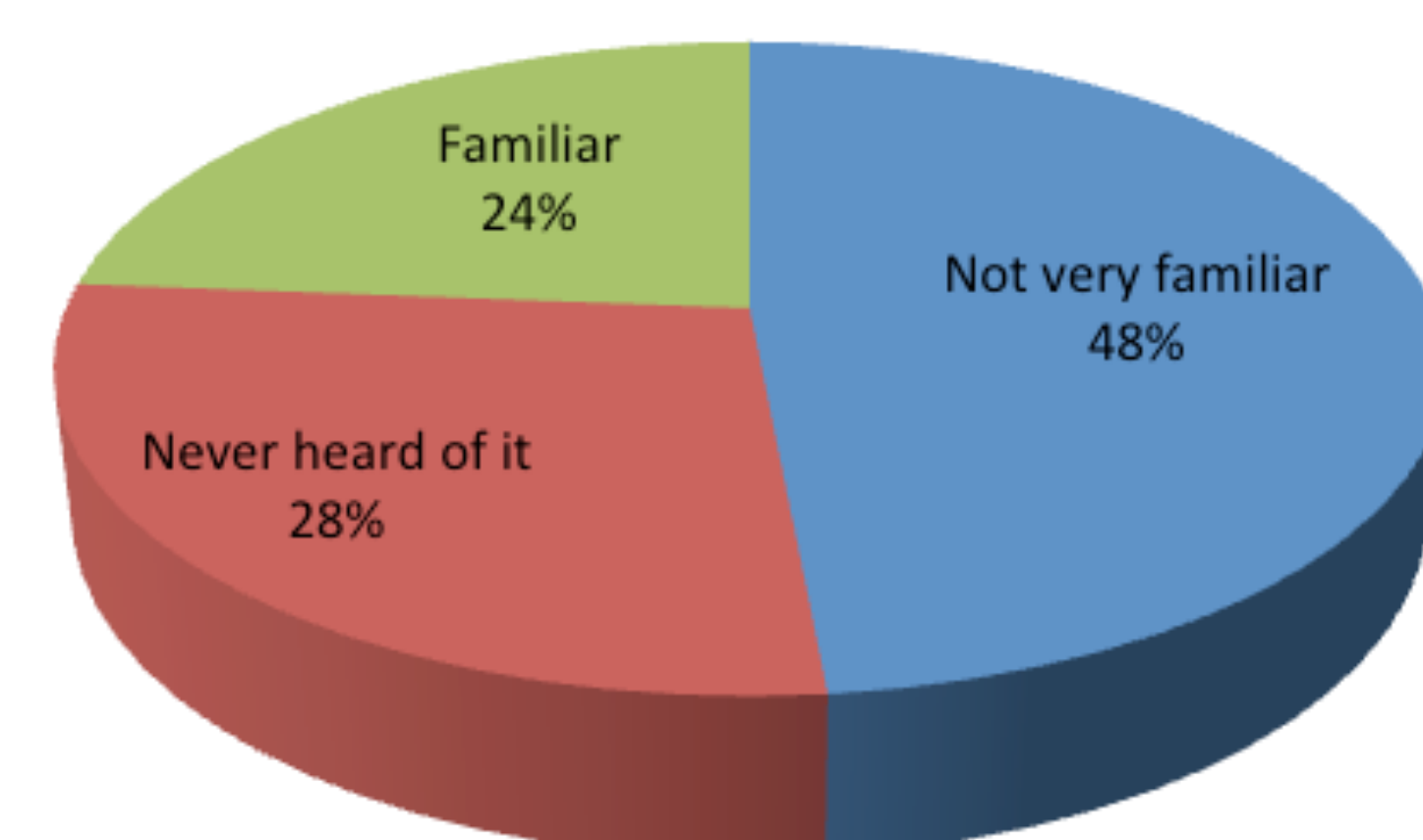
Results

By standardizing the review process and providing permittees needed information, our efforts will:

- ▶ Make it easier for permittees to provide complete and correct information.
- ▶ Make it easier for agency staff to review additives within a standard timeframe.

Most permittees indicate they are "not very familiar" with the review process, and 78% feel that more education would be useful.

Chemical additive review process and requirements awareness



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