



Increasing Our Ability to Read and Understand

Numbers: The Water Boards Data Literacy Strategy

Like with language literacy, there must be a deliberate effort made to address data literacy. Data literacy is the ability to derive meaningful information out of data. To address this, the Office of Information Management and Analysis (OIMA) developed a Data Literacy Strategy aimed at collectively increasing staff's data literacy. The Strategy, geared largely towards responding to a staff survey distributed during the fall of 2019, includes live-instruction and self-paced courses, increased engagement through seminars and newsletters, (e.g. the Water Data Digest) and improved documentation of resources.

You may review the document on OIMA's website. And, if you missed completing the first Data Strategy survey, never fear, you can be a number in the next one, as we intend to adapt the strategy based on periodic re-surveying of the Water Board staff population.

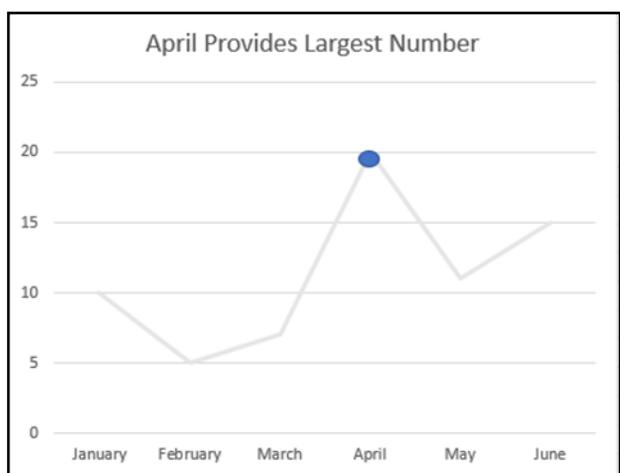
Did you know...

Instead of bombarding your audience with 20 different graphs to let them figure out what is important, before presenting the data, you should use exploratory graph making to find that nugget of information you want to share. Then, once you know what you want to communicate, make a graph that clearly highlights your take-away message. If the audience is spending time and mental energy trying to understand non-chronologic axis labels, for example, you are losing their few moments of attention to get to "the point." Don't make your audience guess what you are trying to say:

- Use clear titles,
- Intuitive axis labels, and
- Color sparingly

to drive home your message.

See <http://www.storytellingwithdata.com/> for tips, blogs, and other visualization resources.



Seminar Series Kick-off

One of the main goals of the Data Literacy Strategy is fostering community and knowledge sharing by hosting and participating in data events. The Seminar Series, a regularly scheduled "brown bag" webinar, is the primary implementation of this goal. The topics will be anything data and we aim for the styles to vary from more formal presentation to interactive workshop.

While generally the seminars will be offered on the last Thursday of the month at noon, it is being kicked off in March, in celebration of Water Data Month, with a presentation each week - Thursdays at noon.

The webinars will be offered through Zoom and advertised through the Water Data Digest. There will also be a calendar of upcoming events and a library of recorded events available on the forthcoming website.

There is also a feedback form to gather input on upcoming presentations and feedback on specific presentations and the series.

The *Water Data Digest* will be a monthly communication tool to advertise the speakers presenting in the Seminar Series as well as provide other data-related information and tips. Issues will be distributed via the [Data Innovation and Utilization Workgroup](#) listserve, added to the [Water Data Community MS Teams channel](#) (for Water Board staff), and posted on the [Water Board website](#).