



Recommendations for Metadata Documentation

There are several practices that an Environmental Dataset Gateway (EDG) Steward may use when preparing and reviewing metadata records to ensure the records are appropriately descriptive, consistent, and discoverable in the EDG metadata catalog. Well-documented metadata records are easy to find in EDG searches and the content of the metadata provides answers to many of the questions that users may have about the geospatial or non-geospatial resource being described in the metadata record. This document summarizes a few key metadata components that will help improve your EDG metadata contributions. For more detailed guidance, please refer to the [EPA Geospatial/Non-Geospatial Metadata Style Guide](#).

Include Dataset Acronyms/Abbreviations and Full Names:

When providing a title and describing your data or resource in your metadata record, it is helpful to include both the full name of the dataset or resource as well as the acronym or abbreviation (where applicable) in the title, abstract, and keywords sections of the record. Including both the full name and the acronym or abbreviation in your metadata will increase the likelihood that the record is revealed when a search is performed in the EDG. It also helps different types of users (e.g., those that know your dataset by the full name versus those who know it only by its acronym or abbreviation) to find your records more easily.

Standardize Your Office's Name in EDG Metadata Titles:

One of the best ways for your metadata to be consistently discovered in EDG records searches is to include your office name in the metadata title. This makes it easier for individuals to find your data or resource when searching, helps you select your records from the EDG, and promotes uniformity of EDG content. For best results, the office name should be documented succinctly—for example, "EPA REG 08". When a consistent office name is included in all record titles, contributors can find all of their office's records by performing an EDG search with the office name in quotes. The consistent naming convention is particularly useful when the name is used in REST outputs to provide links to just those records in the EDG that match the name (see [Reusing EDG Components](#) for more information about REST outputs).

Document Online Linkages/Digital Transfer Options:

Proper documentation of online linkages in the metadata record helps EDG users determine the availability of the dataset or resource described in the metadata. The EDG uses the metadata linkage elements in a specific way, and proper online linkage documentation helps ensure that links from the EDG metadata work as they are designed. The online linkages vary depending on the type of resource the metadata record is describing—either a geospatial resource (using EPA Metadata Editor v3.2.1 to edit metadata) or a non-geospatial resource (using EPA Metadata Editor v4.0 to edit metadata), and whether the resource described is available online as downloadable data or as live data and maps (web services). Furthermore, multiple data and informational linkages for the resource may be documented.

FOR A GEOSPATIAL RESOURCE (using EME v3.2.1 Online Linkage elements):

For metadata describing downloadable data: The Primary Linkage should contain the URL for the location from which the dataset or resource may be downloaded. This may be an FTP site, a local server URL, or, if your office uses EDG Data Download Locations, the EDG Data Download Location URL (see the [Procedures for Storing Data at the EDG Data Download Locations](#) document for more information).

For metadata describing live data and maps (web services): The Secondary Linkage should contain the URL for the web service that contains the geographic dataset described in the metadata record. The Primary Linkage may contain the URL for a downloadable version of the same data. However, if a downloadable version of the data is not available, a placeholder URL must be inserted in the Primary Linkage field to preserve the URL sequence. The placeholder URL may be added by pressing the *D* (default) button in EME 3.2.1.

FOR A NON-GEOSPATIAL RESOURCE (using EME v4.0 Digital Transfer Options elements):

The Online Resource Linkage should correspond to the Online Resource Function selected. For example, if the non-geospatial resource is available as a download, the Linkage element should list the URL for the download site and the Function element should indicate "download." Another example: if the non-geospatial resource has a dedicated web page, the Linkage element should contain the URL for the web page and the function element should indicate "information." Refer to EME v4.0 help for additional instructions and examples.

Embed the UUID in the Metadata:

The universally unique identifier (UUID) is a character string that uniquely identifies each metadata record in the EDG. To find a record's UUID, simply perform a search for the record in the EDG. Once the record is located, open the record's Details page. The URL in the browser address bar contains the UUID within curly brackets. In the example URL below, the UUID is 15AD2EA3-B9E7-4AF9-ADFF-4975F6C0BB11.

<https://edg.epa.gov/metadata/catalog/search/resource/details.page?uuid={15AD2EA3-B9E7-4AF9-ADFF-4975F6C0BB11}>

It is important to preserve the UUID for each metadata record. This prevents record duplication in the EDG when the metadata file is updated and republished. To ensure that the record is replaced rather than duplicated, the UUID should be embedded in the metadata file. This may be performed in the following manner:

FOR A GEOSPATIAL RESOURCE (using a text editor):

1. Find the UUID of the record in the manner listed above, by searching for the record in the EDG and navigating to the record's Details page.
2. Open the local copy of the metadata XML file in a text editor. Near the beginning of the text in the file, locate the first instance of the tag <metadata>.
3. On the line below the <metadata> tag, insert the UUID and tags to the metadata record as follows:

```
<Esri>
  <PublishedDocID>{Your new UUID Goes Here}</PublishedDocID>
</Esri>
```

Using the UUID mentioned above as an example, the metadata XML file will appear as follows:

```
<metadata>
  <Esri>
    <PublishedDocID>{15AD2EA3-B9E7-4AF9-ADFF-4975F6C0BB11}</PublishedDocID>
  </Esri>
```

4. Save the metadata XML file. It is recommended that the file is saved with the same name as the original.
5. Publish the record to the EDG using manual upload or synchronization (whichever method is appropriate for your office). The updated record will replace the existing record.

FOR A NON-GEOSPATIAL RESOURCE (using EME v4.0 Metadata Information → Identifier element):

EME v4.0 allows the user to generate a random, non-duplicating UUID that is embedded in the metadata record XML file. The embedded UUID automatically carries over to the EDG when the metadata record is published.

1. During the non-geospatial metadata editing process, in EME v4.0, review the "Identifier" element under Metadata Information on the Distribution & Metadata Information tab.
 - a. If the Identifier element already contains a UUID, no editing is needed.
 - b. If the Identifier element is blank, press the **New Identifier** button. This will generate a random, non-duplicating UUID.
2. Finish editing the metadata document and save.
3. Publish the record to the EDG using manual upload or synchronization (whichever method is appropriate for your office). The updated record will appear in the EDG, with the generated UUID as part of its URL.