

# AWQMS/WQX Web Import Configuration Best Practices

---

Over time we've learned these basic best practices regarding import configurations:

1. Write down a Data Management Standard Operating Procedure for each type of data you collect and keep it somewhere everyone can get to it....like in a network folder; **not** on a laptop hard drive or flash drive.
2. Once you have an import configuration that is working for a given type of data, you should only have to change the configuration if you get new data in a different format than before (if they change labs, for example).
3. Corollary to #2: Don't ever change an import configuration that has been successfully used to import and migrate data files. Instead, take a copy and "tweak" it for your new data format.
4. Name each import configuration something meaningful and provide more detail in the description field.
5. Keep track of which import configuration was used to successfully to import and migrate which data file in case they every need to re-import the file.
6. Get rid of "practice" or "trial and error" import configurations that have not been used to successfully import and migrate data. This is clutter and will be confusing later when you try to remember what you imported with which import configuration when.
7. Make sure your import configurations are shared with other AWQMS users at your organization so they can use them and copy them.
8. Make sure a Gold Systems person or an EPA person is not the "owner" of your import configurations; even if you've been getting a lot of assistance from your EPA Region or Gold Systems. Otherwise, it will be difficult to figure out later what import configuration was used to import which data files.
9. Another root-cause problem is that tribes generally wait an entire year between imports into the system; which means they could easily forget what they did and how they did it. Also, turnover could occur in such a long time span. Some of the best practices above would help alleviate the symptoms of this problem. Additionally, import your data into AWQMS as soon as you get it; preferably on a regular basis; such as quarterly. This would go a long way toward ensuring that users don't forget how to import their data into AWQMS.