



December 2014

## Governor's Awards Recognize State Teams for Achievements Improving Government

On Tuesday, December 9, the 2014 recipients of the [Governor's Continuous Improvement \(CI\) Awards](#) were unveiled. This year 33 projects across state government were nominated, reflecting a strong year for Minnesota's state agencies. Seven agency teams were ultimately chosen to receive awards.

This year, improvement projects from the Departments of Health, Transportation, Revenue, Natural Resources, Veterans Affairs, Human Rights, Education, and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency were selected for a diverse set of achievements. A recurring theme in this year's award recipients is pristine customer service.

The Department of Health received a special Agency Achievement Award recognizing multiple impressive projects nominated for the awards. These projects significantly improved procedures for both flu testing and timely birth defect identification, as well as enforcement documents that protect public health. Additionally, another project team implemented more efficient and effective monitoring and evaluation methods for the [Statewide Health Improvement Program](#).

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### Season's Greetings

The CI User Group continues in December with [a fun and festive session](#). Come share in holiday cheer with CI friends around Minnesota!



*At left, Commissioner of Administration Matt Massman presents the Department of Health with its agency achievement award. At right, state leaders in attendance applaud the winning teams. Photo credit: Scott Andre, Pollution Control Agency. More photos of the 2014 CI Award winners can be found in our [Photo Gallery](#).*

As a result of its winning project, the Department of Transportation reduced approval times by more than 62 percent when funding changes occur for construction projects in the metro region – with collaboration from the Metropolitan Council and Federal Highway Administration.

The Department of Revenue was recognized for its Plain Language Initiative, which has not only resulted in its communications to Minnesota taxpayers being more simple, clear, and easy to understand, but has also paved the way for a similar effort across all of state government.

The Department of Natural Resources and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency were presented an award for the collaborative work they've done to ensure 99 percent of environmental permits are processed within 150 days or less.

A project from the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs drastically changed the way meals and fluids are prepared and delivered to residents in the Luverne Veterans Home, resulting in higher customer satisfaction ratings, healthier patients, and less food waste.

As a result of process improvement efforts at the Minnesota Department of Human Rights, investigations of discrimination complaints are being completed at a much higher rate; the department is on pace to complete 875 investigations this year compared to 225 in 2010 and the department's backlog of cases that are over a year old has dropped from 159 to 85.

Finally, the Minnesota Department of Education was recognized for work by its [State Library Services division](#) to streamline the application forms and requirements for state and federal education programs. These improvements are enhancing the capacity to deliver quality early childhood learning experiences that connect schools and libraries, foster academic success, and close achievement gaps.

Across the board, these projects and teams are shining examples of a commitment to CI and the types of results it strives to create. Furthermore, while only seven teams could be selected for the awards, all 33 nominated teams are worthy of recognition and should be commended for the work they've done increasing effectiveness, productivity, and quality across Minnesota government. All of the nominees are highlighted in the article below.

The Governor's Continuous Improvement Awards have been awarded each year since 2010, and aim to recognize and celebrate both individual and organizational achievements that are improving state government services. The awards are hosted and coordinated by the [Minnesota Office of CI](#), in collaboration with the State of Minnesota's [CI Steering Team](#) and the Governor's Office.

Read more about the Governor's Continuous Improvement Awards on the [Office of CI website](#), and learn all about the achievements of the 2014 winners in [the full announcement](#).

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## Highlighting 2014's Award Nominees and the Improvements They Made Possible

While only seven teams were selected to receive Governor's Continuous Improvement (CI) Awards, we tip our cap to all the nominated projects for this year's awards. They are all worthy of recognition, and here at the Office of CI we look forward to sharing more about these successful projects with you in the months ahead, both in this newsletter and on [our website](#).

For now, we recognize and highlight all of the 2014 nominees, listed by agency below:

- **Department of Administration, Developmental Disabilities Council**
  - Developed a mobile app that empowers those with disabilities to shape policymaking
- **Department of Corrections**
  - Streamlined position and staff change processes
- **Department of Education**
  - Streamlined annual application renewal for child nutrition programs
  - Increased access to training opportunities
- **Department of Employment and Economic Development**
  - Improved data security and accountability through eLearning and tracking
- **Department of Health**
  - Increased the number of asbestos permits in Greater Minnesota
  - Demonstrated improved health outcomes via Health Care Homes
- **Department of Human Services**
  - Streamlined the “Parent Aware” rating process
  - Redesigned public assistance application packet, improving efficiency by 50 percent
  - Reduced processing time for disability determinations
- **Department of Natural Resources**
  - Developed and implemented an agency permitting and reporting system
  - Sped up timber sale process to address wood supply shortages
- **Department of Revenue**
  - Introduced streamlined, electronic solution for submission of Statewide Certificate of Real Estate Values
- **Department of Transportation**
  - Updated aviation weather programs to meet current needs
  - Reduced printing by 40 percent by changing printing protocols and utilizing electronic signatures and documents
  - Saved nearly half a million dollars in annual costs through new snow removal solution
  - Streamlined case handling and conflict resolution protocols in the Ombudsman’s Office
- **Department of Veterans Affairs**
  - Ensured honor, dignity, and respect at end-of-life for residents of the Minneapolis Veterans Home

### Upcoming Events

- Dec. 17**, CI User Group, [RSVP](#)
- Jan. 6**, Intro to CI (formerly Lean 101), [Register](#)
- Jan. 7**, Problem Solving, [Register](#)
- Jan. 7**, Process Improvement Measurement, [Register](#)
- Jan. 21**, Leading/Supporting CI, [Register](#)
- Feb. 10**, Intro to CI, [Register](#)
- Feb. 10**, Problem Solving, [Register](#)
- Feb. 11-12**, Kaizen Facilitation, [Register](#)
- March 9**, Intro to CI, [Register](#)
- March 10**, Problem Solving, [Register](#)
- March 10**, Process Improvement Measurement, [Register](#)
- March 24**, Leading/Supporting CI, [Register](#)
- April 7**, Intro to CI, [Register](#)
- April 7**, Problem Solving, [Register](#)
- April 15-16**, Kaizen Facilitation, [Register](#)
- May 11**, Intro to CI, [Register](#)
- May 12**, Problem Solving, [Register](#)
- May 12**, Process Improvement Measurement, [Register](#)
- May 14**, Leading/Supporting CI, [Register](#)
- June 9**, Intro to CI, [Register](#)
- June 9**, Problem Solving, [Register](#)
- June 10-11**, Kaizen Facilitation, [Register](#)

View all Lean events at [mn.gov/CI](http://mn.gov/CI)

Register for trainings on [our Eventbrite page](#).

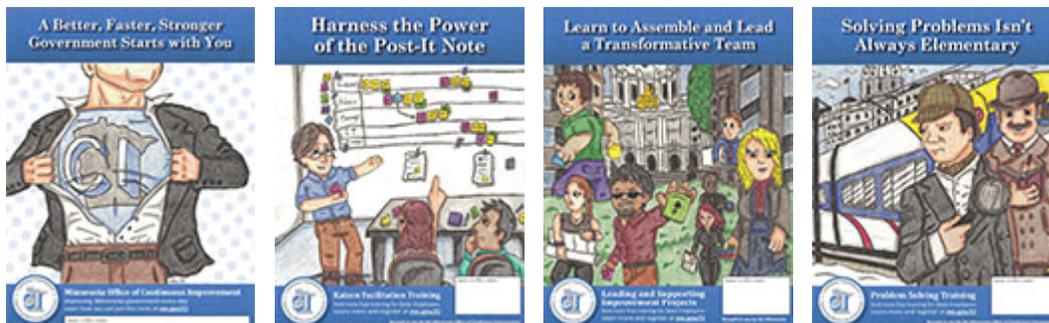
- Reduced safety incidents and built a safe place to live and work for residents and staff of the Silver Bay Veterans Home
- **Metropolitan Council**
  - Used technology to improve efficiency and response of Metro Mobility public transportation service for people with disabilities
- **Minnesota Pollution Control Agency**
  - Increased access to information by developing a web-based platform for the Minnesota Stormwater Manual
- **Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU), Century College**
  - Created online graduation application with auto-populating fields and drop-down menus, increasing accuracy and efficiency for students and staff
- **MN.IT Services**
  - Created a common, collaborative space for state geospatial resources and data

Thank you to all of the nominators and nominated teams for taking part in this year's awards program, and for continually striving to improve Minnesota government!

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## New Continuous Improvement Flyers Now Available

The Minnesota Office of Continuous Improvement (CI) is pleased to debut its first series of marketing flyers, which were deployed this month as a new way to spread the word about CI around state government. If you work on the Minnesota State Capitol Complex, you should start seeing the flyers around the offices where you work. What's more, we've made the flyers available online as well, so our customers, partners and collaborators can leverage them in their work.



*A quick look at the new series of CI flyers. Click on the images above to check them out at full size!*

You'll find flyers geared to specific trainings and CI concepts, like those pictured above, as well as templates that can be easily adapted for specific training sessions, audiences, locations and more. You can view and download the flyers on our website, both from the [CI Tools page](#) (under the "Organizational Resources" tab) and in the [Photo Gallery](#). If you have questions, comments or need help making the flyers work for you, feel free to drop us a line at [lean@state.mn.us](mailto:lean@state.mn.us).

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