

# Metadata Best Practices & Internet Search Tips Factsheets



## Improving Availability of Drinking Water Program Collaboration Resources

### Background

These factsheets are a product of the Capacity Development and Operator Certification Collaborative Workgroup. The workgroup was formed after the 2018 National Capacity Development and Operator Certification Workshop and was tasked with finding ways to promote collaboration in state drinking water programs. Program collaboration resources exist, but they can be difficult to find. Improving the metadata of program collaboration documents and conducting more specialized internet searches will help states, EPA, and other stakeholders locate these resources more easily.

### Purpose

The purpose of these factsheets is to make program collaboration documents easier to find when conducting an internet search. The **Metadata Best Practices** factsheet applies to new and revised documents and provides suggestions for metadata specific to program collaboration. The **Internet Search Tips** factsheet provides tips for conducting more advanced and targeted searches on search engines. The consistent use of detailed metadata and unique and specific keywords will help states, EPA, and other stakeholders locate program collaboration resources using the search engine tips provided.

### Intended Audience

These factsheets are intended for states, EPA, and other stakeholders who want to locate and utilize program collaboration materials. The **Metadata Best Practices** factsheet can be used by web developers, IT departments, contractors, and other parties that are responsible for finalizing documents, developing websites, and/or posting materials to websites. To promote these best practices, consider providing the **Metadata Best Practices** factsheet to all staff finalizing and posting materials. The **Internet Search Tips** factsheet can be used by anyone searching for program collaboration documents. To promote using these tips, consider posting the **Internet Search Tips** factsheet in an office or giving it to new staff as part of their on-boarding materials.

Moving forward, EPA is committed to utilizing the **Metadata Best Practices** factsheet and incorporating best practices into all new documents related to program collaboration.

If you have a document related to program collaboration that you would like to share publicly, please consider using the best practices provided in these factsheets.

# Metadata Best Practices

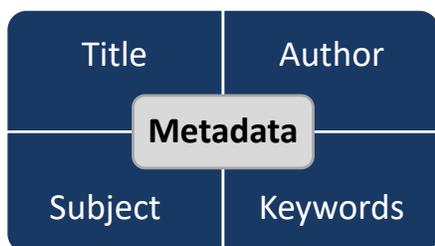


This factsheet applies to new and revised documents regarding drinking water program collaboration, particularly collaboration between capacity development and operator certification. The purpose of summarizing these metadata best practices is to make searching for relevant documents easier for state employees and other stakeholders.

## Background

The term “**metadata**” refers to general information about a document (or document properties), including, title, author, subject, and keywords.

Search engines use metadata to locate websites and documents related to search terms. Improved metadata can help search engines locate documents and websites more easily. Many documents lack effective metadata.



## Metadata Best Practices

Improving metadata is as simple as editing document properties.

- The **title** should be clear and concise.
- The **author** should be the organization that developed the file.
- The **subject** should provide a brief description about the document.
- The document should include at least six unique and specific **keywords**.

## Suggested Keywords

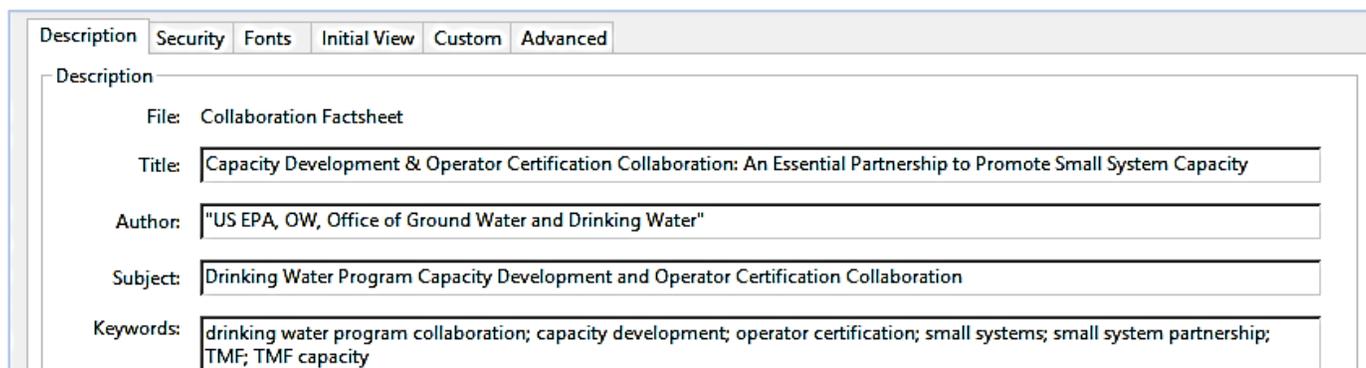
- Drinking water program collaboration
- Capacity development
- Water operator certification
- Water system assistance (i.e., partnerships, consolidation, shared services, regionalization)
- Working together
- Viability (older term for capacity development)
- Technical, managerial, and financial capacity

## Other Best Practices

- Post documents to a dedicated website or landing page similar to [EPA’s Drinking Water Program Collaboration Resources for States](#).
- Make sure PDF documents are tagged and structured properly and use alternate text where appropriate. This is usually done when the document is reviewed for 508-compliance.

## Example: EPA Collaboration Factsheets

The **screenshot below** shows proposed document properties for EPA’s Collaboration Factsheets. To edit document properties in Adobe PDF, go to “File” > “Properties” > “Description”.



# Internet Search Tips



This factsheet includes tips, based on common search engine frameworks, for conducting Internet searches to find existing drinking water program collaboration resources. Internet search engines use metadata to locate resources, so improving metadata and conducting targeted searches will together help to make program collaboration documents more accessible. The provided tips will help users conduct more specific and targeted searches. The suggested keywords match those included in the "Metadata Best Practices" factsheet.

## Tip #1: Use quotes to search for an exact phrase:

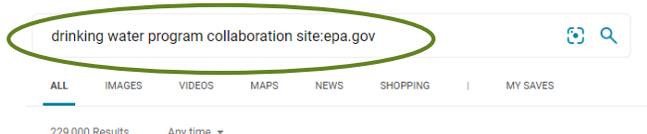
**"drinking water program collaboration"**

Internet search engines will search for materials that include the exact phrase within the quotes instead of only parts of the phrase.

## Tip #2: Use "site:" to search within specific sites:

**drinking water program collaboration site:epa.gov**

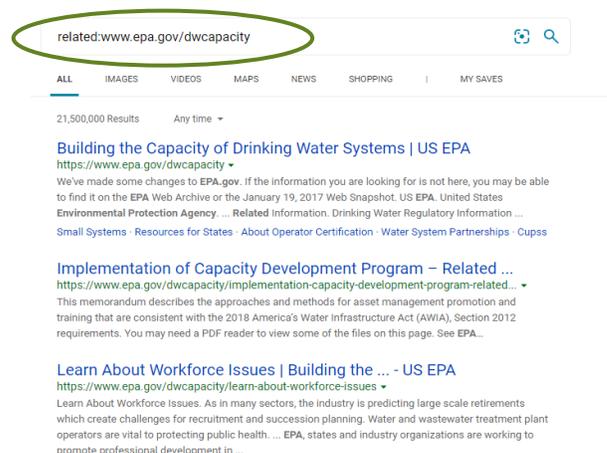
This can be used when you are looking for a document from a specific site. For example, this could be used to find program collaboration documents on EPA's site.



## Tip #3: Use "related:" to find sites that are similar to other sites:

**related:www.epa.gov/dwcapacity**

This can be used when you are looking for a website that is similar to another site. For example, EPA's Capacity Development website could lead you to related websites.



## Tip #4: Use advanced search functions to narrow results.

Search engines have different advanced search functions. Most search engines allow you to conduct a search for documents, webpages, etc. from a certain time period.

## Tip #5: Use keywords that are used in metadata for drinking water program collaboration resources:

- Drinking water program collaboration
- Capacity development or viability (older term for capacity development)
- Water operator certification
- Water system assistance (i.e., partnerships, consolidation, shared services, regionalization)
- Working together
- Technical, managerial, and financial capacity