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IN FOCUS

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Connecting Constituents with Federal Programs for Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Projects

Congress has established programs to assist constituents—including individuals, organizations, and local governments—with drinking water and wastewater infrastructure projects. This In Focus includes a list of selected federal grant, loan, and other programs that support such projects. The following programs vary in scope and funding level and are not a comprehensive list of all potentially relevant programs for a given project.

Most federal grant funds go to state and local governments, which in turn may issue sub-awards to other entities. Interested applicants are encouraged to contact federal agencies, state agencies, or both, for information on eligibility, the application process, award cycles, and funding availability. Each program's funding availability depends on annual appropriations. Where applicable, program websites and Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) numbers are provided herein to assist interested applicants with accessing more information about each program. CFDA numbers can be used to search for and identify potential funding opportunities at https://grants.gov.

U.S. EPA Programs

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) receives annual appropriations for several drinking water and wastewater infrastructure programs.

State Revolving Funds Programs

The State Revolving Funds (SRFs) programs are the principal federal funding programs for municipal water and wastewater infrastructure. The SRFs are federal-state partnerships wherein EPA provides grants to the states (and Puerto Rico) to capitalize revolving funds. States then administer these funds as loans (or additional subsidization, such as principal forgiveness, in certain cases) to community water and wastewater systems and to other entities for infrastructure projects and related activities necessary to comply with the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) or the Clean Water Act (CWA). From EPA's SRF appropriations, the agency provides funding to the U.S. territories, the District of Columbia, and federally recognized tribes for eligible water infrastructure projects, because these entities do not administer SRF programs. https://www.epa.gov/dwsrf and https://www.epa.gov/cwsrf

Sewer Overflow and Stormwater Reuse Municipal Grants Program

This program provides grant funding to states for projects that help communities address combined sewer overflows, sanitary sewer overflows, or stormwater infrastructure, among other activities. CFDA Number 66.447; https://www.epa.gov/cwsrf/sewer-overflow-and-stormwater-reuse-municipal-grants-program

Water Infrastructure Financing and Innovation Act

The Water Infrastructure Financing and Innovation Act (WIFIA) provides long-term, low-cost loans for eligible water and wastewater infrastructure projects, including those eligible under the SRFs. EPA awards loans directly to recipients. The minimum project size is $20 million for large communities and $5 million for small communities (populations of 25,000 or less). CFDA Number 66.958; https://www.epa.gov/wifia

Safe Drinking Water Act Programs

The **Assistance for Small and Disadvantaged Communities** program provides grants to public water systems in underserved, small, and disadvantaged communities for projects that help communities meet the requirements of the SWDA. Beginning in 2020, EPA dedicated a portion of this funding for projects serving American Indian and Alaska Native populations. For prior years, EPA has allotted the funds among the states to provide to eligible entities. A recent enactment provided five fiscal years of funding for this grant program specifically for projects to address emerging contaminants. https://www.epa.gov/dwcapacity/wiin-grant-small-underserved-and-disadvantaged-communities-grant-program-0

The **Reducing Lead in Drinking Water Program** makes grants available to assist disadvantaged communities with replacing lead service lines and removing potential sources of lead in drinking water. CFDA Number 66.443; https://www.epa.gov/dwcapacity/wiin-grant-reduction-lead-exposure-drinking-water

The **Lead Testing in School and Child Care Drinking Water Grant Program** provides funding to assist schools and childcare programs with testing for lead in drinking water. Tribal consortia are included among eligible applicants. CFDA Number 66.444; https://www.epa.gov/dwcapacity/wiin-grant-voluntary-school-and-child-care-lead-testing-and-reduction-grant-program

Training and Technical Assistance for Small Systems Funding

This program funds technical assistance efforts for small public drinking water and wastewater systems, including training, site visits, and other support. CFDA Numbers 66.436 and 66.424; https://www.epa.gov/dwcapacity/training-and-technical-assistance-small-systems-funding

U.S.-Mexico Border Water Infrastructure Grant Program

This program funds drinking water and wastewater infrastructure projects in both the United States and Mexico that are within 100 kilometers (62 miles) of the southern border. Project sponsors can apply to the program through the North American Development Bank, which screens for initial eligibility and prioritizes projects using EPA's ranking methodologies. CFDA Number 66.202; https://www.epa.gov/small-and-rural-wastewater-systems/us-mexico-border-water-infrastructure-grant-program

USDA Programs

Through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Utilities Service's Water and Environmental Programs, rural communities may be able to obtain technical assistance, grants, and loans to construct or improve their drinking water and wastewater disposal systems. More information about each of the USDA programs listed below can be found at https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/water-environmental-programs.

Water & Waste Disposal Loan & Grant Program

This program provides loans and grants to eligible rural communities to acquire, construct, or improve their water and waste disposal systems. Funds can also be used to help rural communities improve stormwater collection and disposal. CFDA Number 10.760.

Water & Waste Disposal Grants to Alleviate Health Risks for Tribal Lands and Colonias

This program provides grants to federally recognized Tribes and *colonias* (unincorporated, economically distressed communities along the southern border in AZ, CA, NM, or TX), and other rural, low-income communities facing significant health risks to improve access to safe and reliable drinking water and waste disposal facilities and services. CDFA Number 10.770.

Emergency Community Water Assistance Grants

This program provides grants to eligible rural communities to prepare for, or recover from, emergencies that threaten the availability of safe, reliable drinking water. CFDA Number 10.763.

Revolving Funds for Financing Water and Wastewater Projects (Revolving Fund Program)

This program provides grants to qualified nonprofits for establishing revolving loan funds, which are to be used for issuing loans to eligible entities to extend and improve water and waste disposal systems in rural areas. CFDA Number 10.864.

Rural Decentralized Water Systems Grant Program

This program provides grants to qualified nonprofits and tribes to establish a revolving loan fund to provide loans to eligible rural households to construct, refurbish, or service their individually owned household water well and septic systems. CFDA Number 10.862.

Water & Waste Disposal Technical Assistance & Training Grants

This program provides grants to qualified nonprofits for providing technical assistance and training on identifying and evaluating solutions to water and waste problems for eligible rural communities. Nonprofits can also use the grants to help eligible rural communities prepare applications for USDA water and waste disposal loan and grant programs. CDFA Number 10.761.

Selected Other Federal Programs

U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, Public Works Program and Economic Adjustment Assistance Program

These two programs provide grants to distressed communities for various types of economic development projects, including public works projects, such as water and sewer system improvements. CFDA Numbers 11.300, 11.307; https://eda.gov/funding/programs

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Community Development Block Grants

This program provides flexible federal funding to states and localities to support economic development, community development, and infrastructure, including drinking water and wastewater projects. CFDA Numbers 14.228, 14.218; https://www.hud.gov/states

U.S. Small Business Administration, Office of Disaster Assistance

This program provides low-interest, long-term loans following a federally certified disaster. Loans are available to private for-profit and private nonprofit drinking water and wastewater utilities. CFDA Number 59.008; https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/disaster-assistance

U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, WaterSMART Grants

WaterSMART grants provide cost-shared financial assistance on a competitive basis for water management improvements, including water efficiency, water marketing, and projects that save water or mitigate the risk of conflict over water. CFDA Number 15.507; https://www.usbr.gov/watersmart/weeg/

Regional Commissions

Regional commissions comprised of member state governors and a federally appointed co-chair receive federal appropriations for regional economic development, which may be used for drinking water and wastewater projects, among other purposes. Active commissions include the Appalachian Regional Commission, https://www.arc.gov; the Delta Regional Authority, https://www.dra.gov; the Denali Commission, https://www.denali.gov; the Northern Border Regional Commission, https://nbrc.gov; and the Southeast Crescent Regional Commission, https://scrc.gov.

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