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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 can contact federal agencies, state agencies, or both, for information on eligibility, the application process, award cycles, and funding availability. Each program's funding availability generally depends on annual appropriations. Where applicable, program websites and Assistance Listing IDs are provided herein to assist interested applicants with accessing more information about each program. Assistance Listing IDs can be used to search for potential funding opportunities at <https://grants.gov>.

Selected U.S. EPA Programs

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) receives annual appropriations for several drinking water and wastewater infrastructure programs. Additional information can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/water-infrastructure>.

State Revolving Funds Programs

The State Revolving Funds (SRFs) programs are federal-state partnerships wherein EPA provides grants to all 50 states (and Puerto Rico) to capitalize revolving funds. States then administer these funds as loans (or as additional subsidization, such as principal forgiveness, in certain cases) to drinking 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 directly 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. Assistance Listing ID 66.468 (Drinking Water SRF); and Assistance Listing ID 66.458 (Clean Water SRF)

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. Assistance Listing ID 66.447

Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act

The Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) program provides long-term, low-cost loans for eligible drinking water and wastewater infrastructure projects, including those eligible under the SRFs. EPA awards loans directly to recipients. The minimum project cost is \$20 million for large communities and \$5 million for small communities (populations of 25,000 or less). Assistance Listing ID 66.958

Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act Programs

The **Assistance for Small and Disadvantaged Communities Grant Program**, which the Trump Administration has renamed as the **Small, Rural, and Tribal Drinking Water Grant Program**, generally provides grants to states, territories, and tribes to assist water systems with meeting the requirements of SDWA, among other eligibilities. Assistance Listing ID 66.442

The **Reducing Lead in Drinking Water Program** awards funding on a competitive basis to assist disadvantaged communities with lead reduction projects such as replacing lead service lines and removing potential sources of lead in drinking water. Assistance Listing ID 66.443

The **Voluntary School and Child Care Lead Testing and Reduction Grant Program** provides funding to states, territories, and tribes to remediate lead in drinking water at schools and childcare facilities. Assistance Listing ID 66.444

Training and Technical Assistance for Small Systems Funding

This program funds technical assistance efforts for small drinking water and wastewater systems, including training, site visits, and other support. Assistance Listing IDs 66.436 and 66.424

U.S.-Mexico Border Water Infrastructure Grant Program

This program funds drinking water and wastewater infrastructure projects in the United States and projects in Mexico that are within 62 miles of the southern border and have a U.S.-benefit. Project sponsors apply to the program through the North American Development Bank, which screens for initial eligibility and prioritizes projects using EPA's ranking methodologies.

Selected USDA Programs

Through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Rural Utilities Service's Water and Environmental Programs, rural communities may be able to obtain grants,

loans, loan guarantees, and technical assistance to construct or improve their drinking water and wastewater disposal systems. Additional information 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. Assistance Listing ID 10.760

Water & Waste Disposal Loan Guarantees

This program provides loan guarantees for projects that build or enhance clean and reliable drinking water systems, sanitary sewage disposal systems, and stormwater drainage to households and businesses in eligible rural areas. CDFA Number 10.760

Circuit Rider Program

This program provides technical assistance to rural water systems that are experiencing day-to-day operational, financial, or management issues. Public bodies with legal authority to own and operate the water facility in question are eligible to receive technical assistance.

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. Emergencies include natural disasters such as droughts or hurricanes and man-made disasters such as chemical spills. A federal disaster declaration is not required. Assistance Listing ID 10.763

Revolving Funds for Financing Water and Wastewater Projects

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. Assistance Listing ID 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. Assistance Listing ID 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 programs. CDFA Number 10.761

Selected Other Federal Programs

U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) Programs

Public Works and EAA provide competitive grants to distressed communities for various types of economic development projects, including public works projects, such as water and sewer system improvements. On an occasional basis, supplemental EAA funding may be available for similar projects in areas impacted by certain disasters. Assistance Listing IDs 11.300 (Public Works) and 11.307 (EAA)

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. Assistance Listing IDs 14.228 and 14.218

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. Assistance Listing ID 59.008

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 and conservation, including water efficiency, water marketing, and projects that save water or mitigate the risk of conflict over water. Projects must be located in the 17 Western States or United States Territories. Assistance Listing ID 15.507

Federal Regional Commissions and Authorities (FRCAs)

FRCAs are congressionally chartered, federal-state partnerships that were developed to address economic distress in targeted geographic regions. Active FRCAs receive congressional 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, the Delta Regional Authority, the Denali Commission, the Northern Border Regional Commission, the Southeast Crescent Regional Commission, and the Southwest Border Regional Commission.

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