



# Source Water Protection Grant Guidelines

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Grants are available for projects that protect public drinking water sources (Group A). Projects can benefit either drinking water quality or quantity, or both.



## Applicant Eligibility

- Nonprofit Group A water system.
- Local governments.
- Conservation districts.
- Nonprofit organizations.
- Educational institutions.
- Tribes.

## Eligible Projects

Projects must be reasonably expected to provide long-term benefit to drinking water quality or quantity. Eligible activities can lead to reducing the risk of contamination of a system's drinking water source(s), or they can evaluate or build resiliency for a public water supply. They must contribute to better protecting one or more public water supply sources.

Below are some examples of projects that may be eligible for funding.

## Planning and Studies

Policy, research, or legislative projects that identify appropriate protection measures, which, when implemented, would result in reduced risk to drinking water sources, such as:

- ◆ Improved protection area delineation, wellhead protection plans, and watershed control plans.
- ◆ Research to identify contaminant sources.
- ◆ Water quality monitoring.
- ◆ Hydrologic studies (not related to water rights or other water quantity regulatory requirements).
- ◆ Developing local source water protection ordinances or the critical aquifer recharge area component of critical areas ordinances.
- ◆ Developing restoration or conservation plans intended to improve source water quality.
- ◆ Identifying source catchment areas for future easement or land acquisition.
- ◆ Studying conversion from a surface water source to a protected groundwater source.
- ◆ Evaluating options to address known contaminants that exceed the trigger level or federally established lifetime health advisory level.

- ◆ Investigating declining source quantity due hydrologic change.
- ◆ Examining agricultural practices and conduction education/outreach on best management practices (BMP).

## Implementation

Activities that reduce risks within the source water contribution area, reduce contaminant concentration in the source water, or improve a system's capacity to manage its water supply, such as:

- ◆ Education and information sharing (brochures, workshops, and media campaigns).
- ◆ BMP for reducing pollutants that directly affect a drinking water source.
- ◆ Properly decommissioning high-risk abandoned or unused (private or irrigation) wells that are close to a drinking water source.
- ◆ Reforestation or replanting projects in sensitive or riparian areas.
- ◆ Installing signs at wellhead protection area or watershed boundaries.
- ◆ Decommissioning onsite septic systems and connecting homes to existing sewer lines to address a water quality issue or sanitary control area violation.
- ◆ Restoration and/or conservation of source water protection areas' ecological functions.
- ◆ Structures to divert contaminated storm water runoff affecting a source water protection area.
- ◆ Installing fencing to protect sensitive riparian source water protection areas.
- ◆ Implementing pollution prevention or waste reduction projects identified in an approved source water protection plan.
- ◆ Developing conservation easements to protect sensitive source water protection areas.
- ◆ Establishing management plans for easements or lands purchased within source water protection areas.
- ◆ Setting up an ecosystem services project (carbon sequestration, habitat, open space, etc.) in a watershed to fund preservation areas.
- ◆ Negotiations and technical documents for land purchases within source water protection areas.
- ◆ Establishing a water measurement program.

## Security

Security measures to reduce the risk of contamination to the source water protection area or intake/well, such as:

- ◆ Fencing around sanitary control areas or intakes (purchase of materials).
- ◆ Gates for access points (purchase of materials).
- ◆ Installing security systems such as alarms, signs, cameras, locks, and lights.

All such measures must protect highly sensitive source water areas, not just facilities or equipment.

## Ineligible Projects

- ◆ Projects and project costs that are eligible for Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF).

- ◆ System operation and maintenance activities (water testing; repairs to water lines, tanks, wells, chemical feed pumps, or pumps; replacement of valves, pumps, or meters; dredging; or intake repairs).
- ◆ Routine or required follow-up monitoring.
- ◆ Funding for personnel or equipment associated with system operations or maintenance, treatment, land purchase, or system infrastructure upgrades or improvements (including water meters).
- ◆ Fencing around storage tanks or reservoirs.
- ◆ Security measures designed to reduce theft at or vandalism of non-source water facilities.
- ◆ Routine regulatory requirements for other programs.
- ◆ Project requiring long-term maintenance beyond the life of the grant.
- ◆ Projects where funding is passed through an ineligible entity (federal, state, or for-profit water system, etc.).
- ◆ Consolidation of existing water systems or creation of new water systems.
- ◆ Environmental or cultural review activities, even if associated with an eligible project.

## General Requirements for All Projects

- ◆ The water supplier and/or local government(s) must demonstrate a commitment to developing, implementing, supporting and sustaining a local source water protection program after receiving funds.
- ◆ Although local match is not required, it is encouraged; projects with match may be preferentially awarded funding. Match can be in the form of in-kind contributions (activities or services the applicant provides), direct funding, other grants (except DWSRF), or a combination of these.
- ◆ Projects must be initiated within 60 days of contract execution. If a project cannot be initiated within 60 days, it is ineligible for funding. If an awarded project is delayed from starting within 60 days, it will be considered to have been vacated, and allocated funds will be returned to the funding pool.
- ◆ Projects must be completed within the timeline included in the scope of work.
- ◆ Until funded projects are complete, grant recipients must submit quarterly reports that include:
  - Activities completed during the quarter.
  - Costs attributed to performing each work item.
  - Contribution (match) the recipient makes to the award.
- ◆ A final report must be submitted that describes the results of the work performed under the grant and includes copies of documents and photos, as applicable to the project.
- ◆ Other deliverables may be required depending on project type.

## How to Develop Your Proposal

Prior to submitting a grant proposal to the Source Water Protection Program, work closely with your assigned Department of Health regional engineer or planner to propose a scope of work that includes the following.

- ◆ A description of the work to be performed and its relationship to source water protection in enough detail so that we can clearly understand and evaluate the proposed activities.
- ◆ The entity responsible for completing the work.

- ◆ The cost and cost basis of performing the work.
- ◆ The primary outcomes or deliverables that will be achieved by conducting the work.
- ◆ A detailed budget that includes an estimated start and completion date for the work to be performed.

## Evaluation and Award Process

We accept grant proposals year-round until available funding is expended. Water quantity projects may be restricted to 50 percent of total annual funding, based on annual funding available. This will be reevaluated every year in order to accurately reflect current needs.

When applications exceed available funding, we will use predefined evaluation criteria to score and rank projects, which will then be funded using descending scoring down until all funding is allocated. All projects will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- ◆ Does the project have a clear source water protection focus?
- ◆ Do the proposed tasks address source water protection quality or quantity?
- ◆ Is there regional benefit?
- ◆ Does the budget reflect value of the project?

The Source Water Protection Program will work with grant recipients to establish milestones and deliverables appropriate for the scope of work within a formal contract.

## Contact Information

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