

# Assistance for Small and Disadvantaged Communities Drinking Water Grant Program



The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), as amended by the 2016 Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act and the 2018 America's Water Infrastructure Act, authorizes the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to award grants to assist underserved, disadvantaged communities and small communities with meeting the requirements of the SDWA.

## Description

To assist small and disadvantaged communities with improving their drinking water resources, this program will include approximately \$42.8 million in funding. Grants will be awarded as non-competitive grants to states, with a 2 percent tribal allotment of \$875K. The grant program is designed to help public water systems in underserved communities meet and comply with SDWA requirements. The grant program will provide assistance to underserved communities that have no household drinking water or wastewater services or are served by a public water system that violates or exceeds any Maximum Containment Level, treatment technique, or action level.

## Eligible Entities

Grants will be awarded to states and tribes to support underserved communities that meet the small or disadvantaged statutory definition. A small or disadvantaged community is one:

- That the state determines to be a disadvantaged community under SDWA section 1452(d)(3) or may become a disadvantaged community as a result of carrying out a project or activity, or
- With a population of less than 10,000 individuals that does not have the capacity to incur debt sufficient to finance a project to comply with the SDWA.

## Eligible Projects

Projects eligible for assistance include those to return a public water system to compliance; efforts that benefit disadvantaged communities on a per household basis; programs to provide household water quality testing, including testing for unregulated contaminants; and activities necessary for a state to respond to a contaminant.

## Approach for State Grants

EPA will award funding to states and territories based on an allocation formula similar to that of the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, including a tribal allotment. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until September 2020. The grant program requires a cost share of 45% of total project costs in the form of monetary funding, services, materials, supplies, or other in-kind services. The 45% cost share is waived for all tribal recipients and the "Insular Areas," which includes the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

States will need to develop a robust list of fundable projects that meet the requirements of the grant program to receive funding. States will consult with EPA regional offices on their project and activity lists prior to final selection.

## Tribal Allotment

The tribal allotment is approximately \$875K. The EPA is currently exploring opportunities to implement this grant through regional programs.

For more information please visit <https://www.epa.gov/safewater/grants>.