# Drinking Water Infrastructure Resilience and Sustainability Grant

## Overview

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), as amended through the 2018 America's Water Infrastructure Act, authorizes the Environmental Protection Agency to establish the Drinking Water System Infrastructure Resilience and Sustainability Program, which is a grant program for small, underserved and disadvantaged public water systems.

The statutory language under SDWA section 1459A(l), as amended through AWIA, includes the following as eligible entities:

(1)     a public water system;
a water system located in an area governed by an Indian Tribe; or
a State, on behalf of an underserved community;
**and**
(2) serves a community—
(A) that is underserved; **or**
(B) that, under affordability criteria established by the State under section 1452(d)(3), is determined by the State to be a disadvantaged community; **or**
(C) with a population of less than 10,000 individuals.

This section of SDWA authorizes EPA to award grant funds to eligible projects or activities that increase resilience to natural hazards. The statutory language describes what may be an eligible projects or activities, including the following:

## Types of Activities

Eligible activities for funding include planning, design, construction, implementation, operation, or maintenance of a program or project that increases drinking water system resilience to natural hazards through –
(A) the conservation of water or the enhancement of water use efficiency;
(B) the modification or relocation of existing drinking water system infrastructure made, or that is at risk of being, significantly impaired by natural hazards, including risks to drinking water from flooding;
(C) the design or construction of desalination facilities to serve existing communities;
(D) the enhancement of water supply through the use of watershed management and source water protection;
(E) the enhancement of energy efficiency or the use and generation of renewable energy in the conveyance or treatment of drinking water; or
(F) the development and implementation of measures to increase the resilience of the eligible entity to natural hazards.

Natural Hazards include earthquake, tornado, flood, hurricane, wildfire, drought, and freezing or hydrologic change that threatens the functioning of a community water system.

## Timeline

The announcement for the grant is anticipated for release in calendar year 2022. Please check the website routinely for further information, including the announcement about the grant competition:

https://www.epa.gov/dwcapacity/water-infrastructure-improvements-nation-act-wiin-act-grant-programs

In addition to the grant development, the Agency has available resources to support drinking water resiliency. Multi-hazard resilience may address risks from wildfires, drought, hurricanes, extreme heat, flooding, earthquakes, landslides, sea level rise, winter storms, and more.  These resources can help facilitate addressing multiple hazards that address both immediate, pressing needs as well as decisions that protect long-term investments. Below are a few of those resources that can be made available to states, localities, and all communities.

## Sampling of EPA Tools Available to Enhance Drinking Water Resilience

Route to Resilience Interactive Tool
EPA's Route to Resilience Tool (RtoR) uses brief videos and an easy to navigate interface to guide users through the process of building their own unique Roadmap to Resilience report. The RtoR presents five stops along the "Route" (Assess, Plan, Train, Respond, and Recover) where utility personnel learn what it means for their utility to be resilient, and what tools and resources are available for their utility  to become resilient. RtoR 2020 contains an updated version of the Roadmap  report, which now includes America's  Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA) water sector related products. To download the Route to Resilience tool, visit:



https://www.epa.gov/waterresilience/route-resilience-2020-drinking-water-and-wastewater-utilities


Vulnerability Self-Assessment Tool
The online Vulnerability Self-Assessment Tool (VSAT) offers a streamlined assessment of risk and resilience for drinking water and wastewater utilities. It assists utilities in assessing the potential impacts from both man-made and natural disasters in accordance with AWIA requirements and provides actions to enhance security and resilience. To get started, visit:
https://vsat.epa.gov/vsat/

Climate Resilience Evaluation and Awareness Tool (CREAT) Risk Assessment Application for Water Utilities
CREAT is an online tool that assists water sector utilities in assessing climate-related risks to utility assets and operations. Throughout CREAT's five modules, users consider climate impacts and identify adaptation options to increase resilience. To get started, visit:
https://www.epa.gov/crwu/climate-resilience-evaluation-and-awareness-tool-creat-risk-assessment-application-water


For additional information about enhancing drinking water resiliency, visit:

https://www.epa.gov/waterresilience/technical-support-products-and-services-list