EPA Water Technical Assistance (WaterTA):

Helping Communities Access Funding

May 2024

EPA WATER TA

Agenda

- Speaker introductions
- Background
- WaterTA examples
- How to access WaterTA

Housekeeping

Please stay muted throughout the webinar.

Please use the Zoom Q&A function to submit your questions. Questions will be answered at the end of the presentation.

We will be sharing relevant links via the chat throughout the presentation.

Speakers

- **Leah Cozzi**, EPA Office of Ground Water & Drinking Water, Program Analyst
- **Ben Smith**, EPA Office of Wastewater Management, Physical Scientist
- **Morgan Brown**, EPA Office of Wastewater Management, Senior Technical Assistance Specialist
- **Kara Goodwin**, EPA Office of Ground Water & Drinking Water, Senior Technical Assistance Expert

Many Communities Face Water Infrastructure Challenges

EPA Supports Infrastructure Improvements via:

Funding

Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (SRF)

Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA)

Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act Grants

Drinking Water Infrastructure Grants

Tribal Set-Aside (DWIG-TSA)

Clean Water Indian Set Aside (CWISA)

+

Technical Assistance (TA)

EPA WaterTA Programs

TA providers (funded by EPA grants)

External TA Program Partnerships

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

- **$50 billion** investment in water infrastructure – the largest ever!
- Large amount of funding will be grants/forgivable loans for **disadvantaged communities**
- Loans at **below market rates**
- **5-year** appropriation timeline

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law: Water Goals

- **Target resources** to disadvantaged and underserved communities
- **Make rapid progress** on lead service line replacement and lead-free water for all
- **Tackle** forever chemicals
- **Support** resilience (including climate resilience & cybersecurity)
- **Create** good jobs

EPA WaterTA Supports Communities to:

Identify water challenges

Plan for solutions

Increase community engagement

Improve compliance and access to safe and clean water services

Build technical, financial, managerial capacity

Develop application materials to access water infrastructure funding

EPA WaterTA Approach

- **Targeted:** focused on disadvantaged and underserved communities as well as those that may struggle to access funding to improve their water infrastructure
- **Proactive:** directly assist disadvantaged and underserved communities – we go to them!
- **Community-centered:** meet communities where they are by building trust, adjusting to their needs, and being culturally competent

EPA WATER TA

Environmental Finance Centers

Direct Technical Assistance

Preliminary Engineering Support

Cybersecurity Technical Assistance

Closing America's Wastewater Access Gap

Clean Water Rural, Small & Tribal Assistance

Community Solutions Team Pilot

Creating Resilient Water Utilities

Lead Service Line Replacement Accelerators Pilot

Get the Lead Out (GLO) Initiative

Training and Technical Assistance for Small Systems

and more!

WaterTA Services

Planning and Assessment

- Community Engagement
- Plan Development and Coordination
- Studies and Assessments
- Asset Management

Project Development

- Preliminary Engineering Reports
- Lead Service Line Inventories
- Project Design
- Environmental Reviews

Partnerships and Engagement

- Ongoing Engagement and Outreach
- Decision-maker and Board Education
- Water Systems Partnerships
- Capacity Building and Training

Funding and Financing

- Rates and Revenue Analyses
- Financial Planning
- Identify Funding Options
- Application Support

Program Management Support

- Bid Support
- Change Order Review
- Project Inspection
- Domestic Preference and Davis Bacon Assistance

WaterTA Engineering Support

- Enhance WaterTA Programs with engineering resources to help communities complete Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) application requirements
- Licensed Professional Engineers in each state will comply with state-specific requirements
- Engineering Support includes:
  - Project needs assessments
  - Preliminary engineering reports(PERs)
  - Preliminary project cost estimates

Who is eligible to receive EPA WaterTA Services?

- Local governments/communities
- Drinking water utilities/systems
- Wastewater utilities/systems
- Stormwater utilities/systems
- States, Tribes, territories
- Non-governmental organizations
- **Questions? Contact WaterTA@epa.gov**

Technical Assistance (TA) Providers

EPA works with national and regional providers that are experts in water and supporting communities.

WaterTA Connection

There are multiple pathways for communities to access WaterTA:

- Recommended by a State or EPA Region
- Directly contacted/referred by a WaterTA provider
- Referred by stakeholder/partner organization/utility
- Community submits a WaterTA Request Form

WaterTA in Action: Community Spotlights

New Jersey: Lead Service Line (LSL) Replacement

Community:

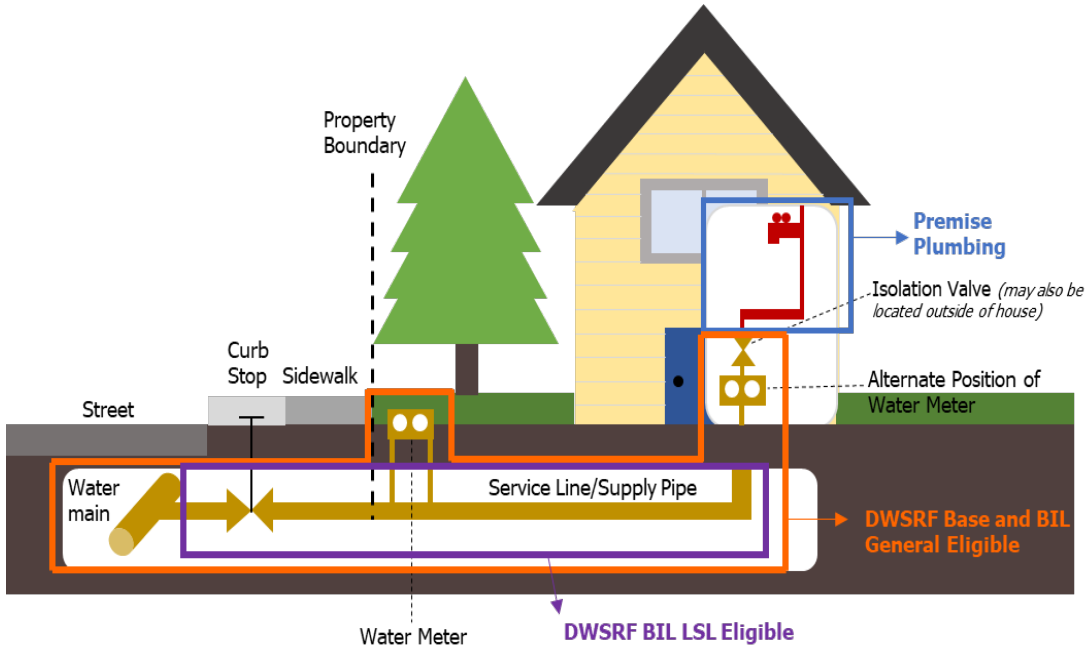
Small drinking water system (pop. 5,000)

Challenge:

Barriers to LSL identification and replacement

WaterTA support:

- Prepare outreach materials in Spanish and Bengali to increase accessibility and engage community members
- Update map with service line material information collected during meter replacements
- Develop a strategy to combine LSL identification and replacement with other infrastructure projects



Big Valley Band of Pomo Indian Tribe, Lake County, California: Wastewater Treatment Facility Improvements

Community:

Onsite Wastewater Treatment Facility (serving ~400)

Challenges:

- Structural integrity of the packaged wastewater treatment plant
- Treatment facilities lacking influent screening and waste activated sludge wasting capabilities
- Low quality effluent

WaterTA support:

- Structural evaluation of existing treatment facility
- Environmental review
- Preliminary Engineering Report development

Lynchburg, South Carolina: Water and Wastewater Challenges

Community:

Small community of 400 residents

Challenges:

- Residents distrust drinking water coming out of tap
- Sub-optimal lagoon system for wastewater

WaterTA Support:

- Community engagement to discuss water issues with community
- Completed funding applications for drinking water and clean water SRFs!!

SRF Application Submitted to Improve Water Delivery in Akron, MI

Context: Overburdened community (pop <400) with aging infrastructure (over 66-years old system). The Community seeks SRF to make necessary upgrades, but significant concern around rate increases and metering.

Infrastructure Needs & Challenges:

- In need of new backup well and additional storage
- Rusty water, low pressure & community distrust drinking
- Equity issues regarding metering and affordability

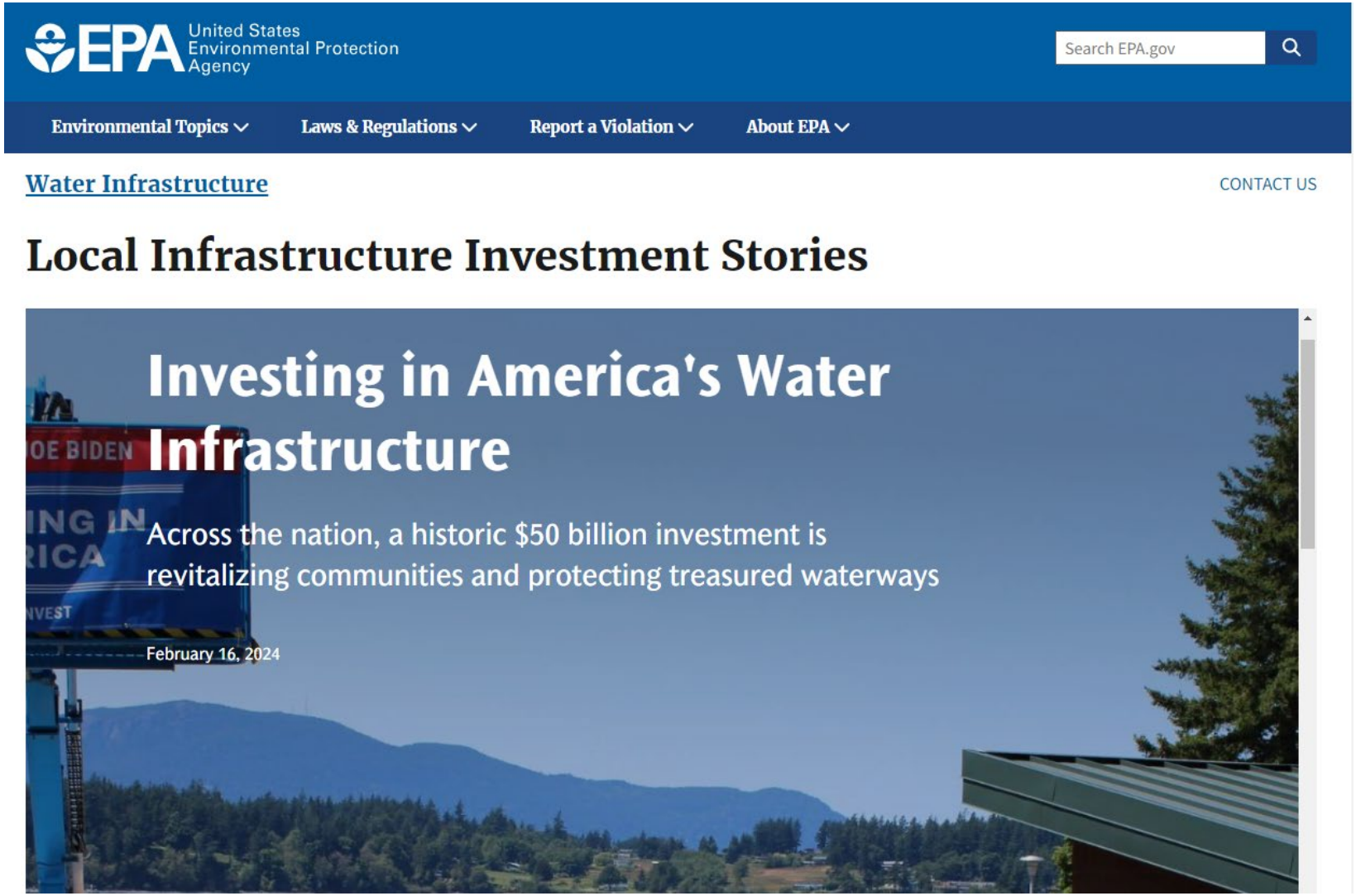
Approach:

- SUBMITTED (!) SRF Application to upgrade water system (new well, pipe replacements, and a new water tower)
- Community is classified as a DAC by the state and could qualify for some amount of loan forgiveness
- Community outreach to inform and gain support for project

Photo Attribution: *UNC | Sign marketing the community meetings in Akron*

WaterTA Services in Example Communities

Planning and Assessment	Project Development	Partnerships and Engagement	Funding and Financing	Program Management Support
Community Engagement	Preliminary Engineering Reports	Ongoing Engagement and Outreach	Rates and Revenue Analyses	Bid Support
Plan Development and Coordination	Lead Service Line Inventories	Decision-maker and Board Education	Financial Planning	Change Order Review
Studies and Assessments	Project Design	Water Systems Partnerships	Identify Funding Options	Project Inspection
Asset Management	Environmental Reviews	Capacity Building and Training	Application Support	Domestic Preference and Davis Bacon Assistance



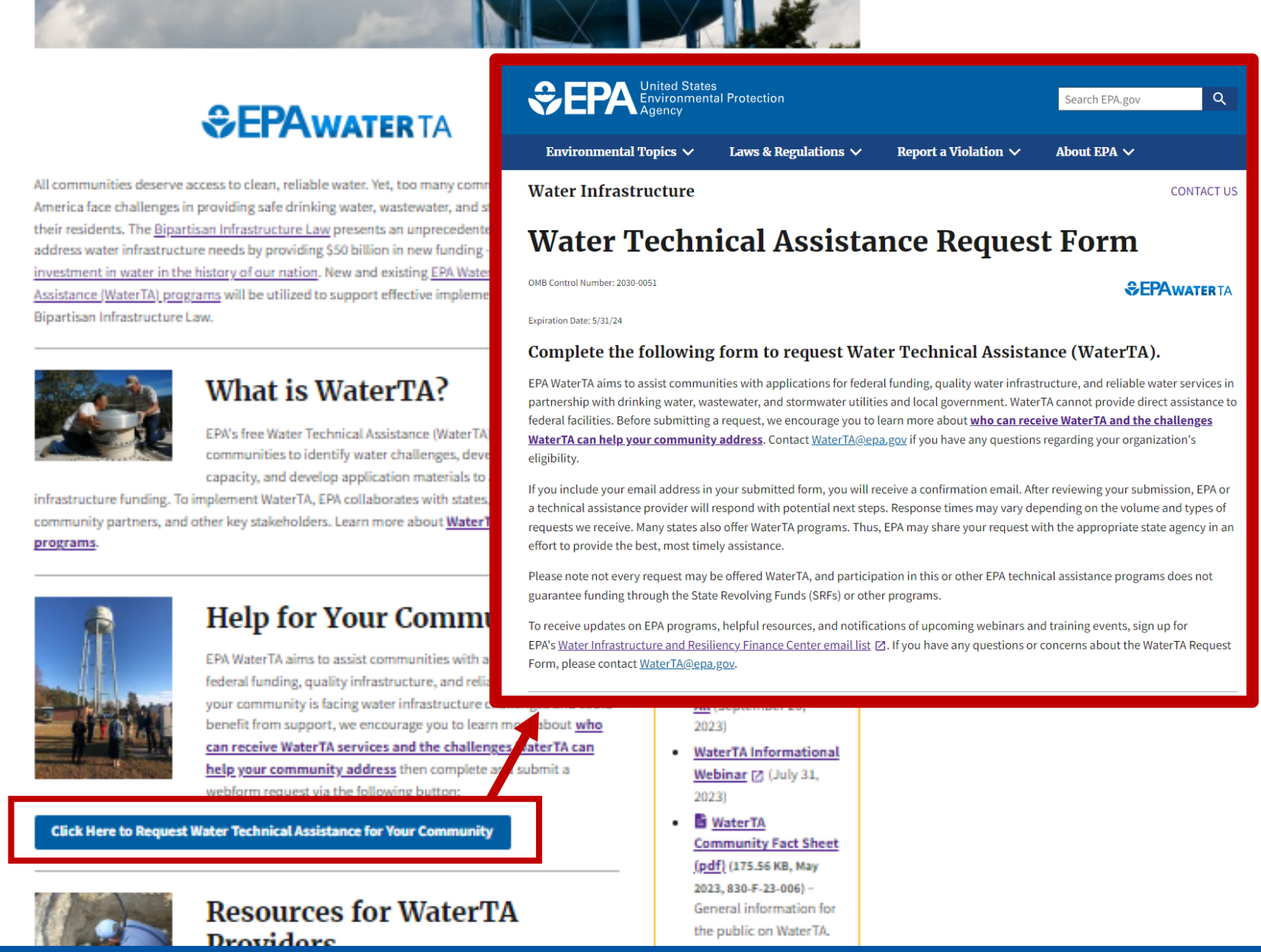
https://www.epa.gov/water-infrastructure/local-infrastructure-investment-stories

Additional Project Examples

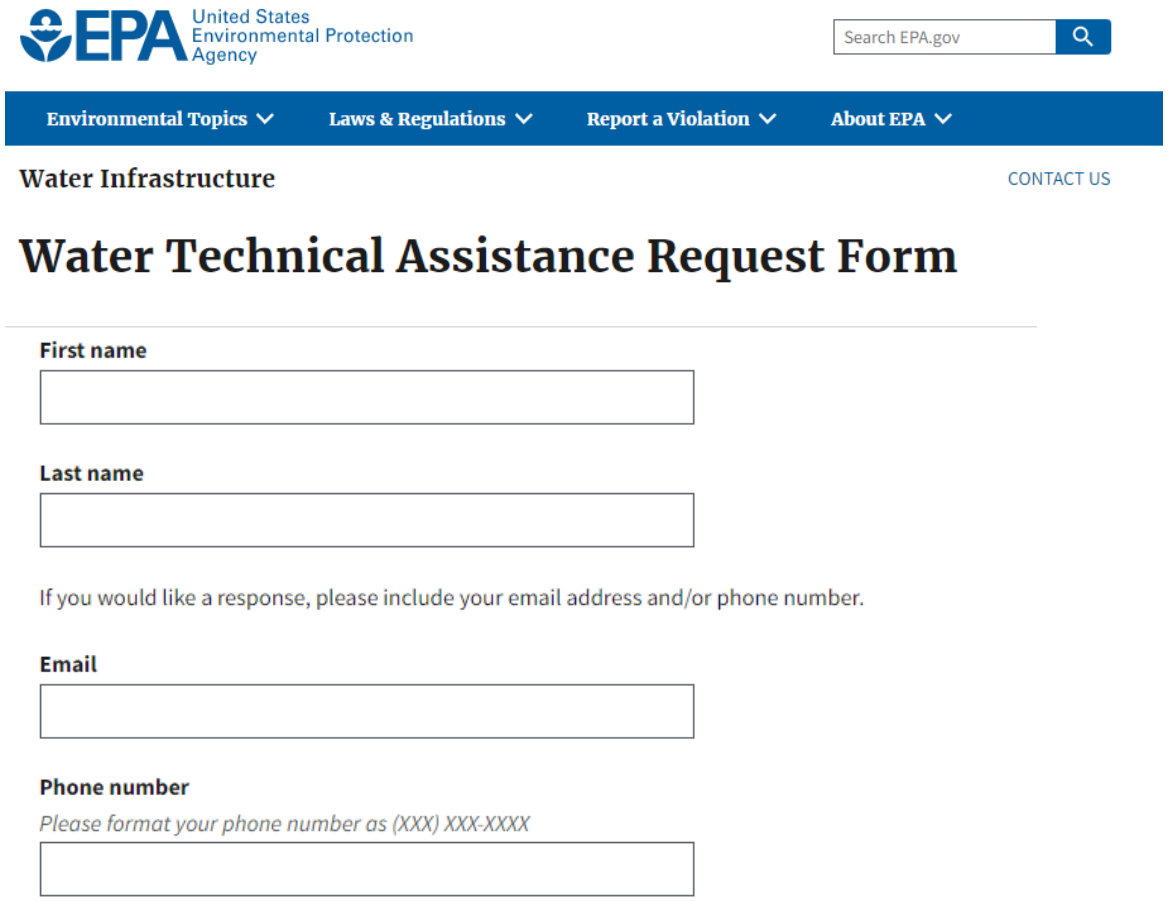
- Drinking/wastewater treatment plant and pipe upgrades or building new water infrastructure
- Connecting households or small drinking water/wastewater systems to larger systems
- Stormwater, flood control, and green infrastructure projects
- Water conservation projects
- Addressing nonpoint source pollution of waterbodies
- **Many more possibilities…**

How can I request WaterTA?

Submit a WaterTA Request Form at epa.gov/WaterTA



WaterTA Request Form Walkthrough



WaterTA Request Form Walkthrough

How are you affiliated with the community or water system of interest?

- ◯ City/town administrator or staff
- ◯ Community-based organization
- ◯ Community member/customer/resident
- ◯ Elected official
- ◯ Engineer for utility (staff/consultant)
- ◯ Tribal utility administrator or staff
- ◯ Tribal elected official
- ◯ Utility administrator/staff
- ◯ Utility board/committee member
- ◯ Other

WaterTA Request Form Walkthrough

City/Town *

City where the community or water system of interest is located.

County *

County where the community or water system of interest is located.
You may type "N/A" if not applicable.

State/Territory/Tribe *

- Select -

PWSID or NPDES permit number (if applicable/known)

Please format your permit number to include the state abbreviation (e.g., "TX0000000").

Population size served *

- Select -

WaterTA Request Form Walkthrough

Type of system or project (select the best fit) *

This information will be used to direct your request to the best fit program. If you have additional needs, you can descibe them in the text box below.

- ◯ Drinking water
- ◯ Wastewater
- ◯ Stormwater
- ◯ Source water protection
- ◯ Nonpoint source
- ◯ Decentralized wastewater (e.g., septic systems)
- ◯ Other

Briefly describe your water quality or infrastructure concerns. Please be as specific as possible and include what assistance you are hoping to receive. *

(750-character maximum limit; NO bullets or numbered lists)

WaterTA Request Form Walkthrough

Is your community currently working with a TA provider? *

- Select -

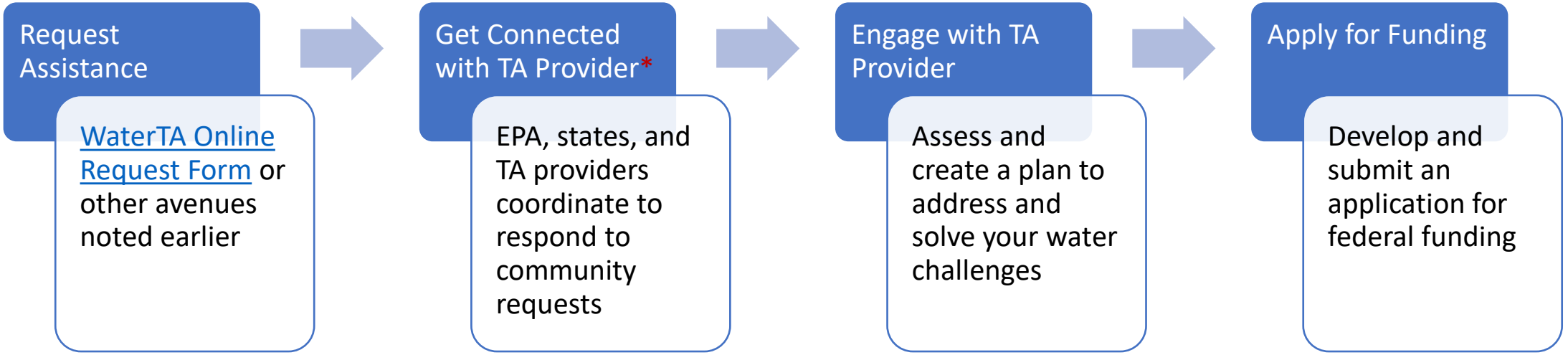
Does your community qualify as a "disadvantaged community" within your state or meet your state's affordability criteria?

As defined by your state's Drinking Water or Clean Water State Revolving Fund program.

- None -

Submit form

What Happens Next?



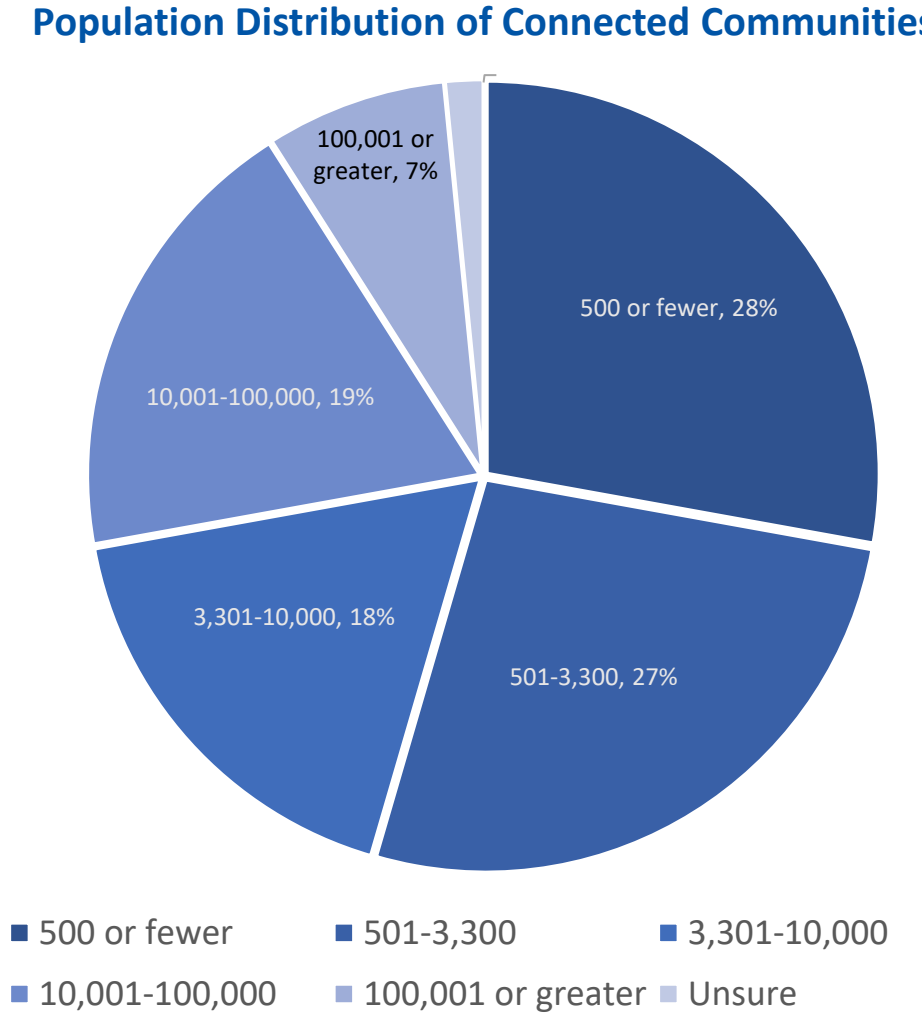
The end result: *more communities with applications for federal funding, leading to advances to quality water infrastructure projects, and more reliable water services*

*Not every request may be offered WaterTA, and participation in this or other EPA technical assistance programs does not guarantee funding through the State Revolving Funds or other programs.

Status of WaterTA Request Connections

- As of May 17th, **255** WaterTA requests have been **connected** through the webform

- Connections have been made to address a variety of needs, such as:
  - needs assessments
  - lead service line inventories,
  - facility upgrades,
  - rehabilitation,
  - **and more!**



Questions about WaterTA?

- Email your questions to WaterTA@epa.gov
- Visit www.epa.gov/waterta for more information
- Visit https://www.epa.gov/water-infrastructure/forms/water-technical-assistance-request-form to submit a WaterTA request

Additional Technical Assistance (TA) Programs

- In addition to assistance provided by EPA Office of Water, multiple TA programs are available from:
  - EPA Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights (OEJECR)
  - EPA Office of Land and Emergency Management (OLEM)
  - EPA Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations (OCIR)
  - EPA Office of Research and Development (ORD)
  - The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Indian Health Service (IHS) also offer robust TA programs.

Questions?

Please use the Zoom Q&A function to submit your questions. If you prefer to remain anonymous, please check this box before submitting your question.

Learn more or request assistance at
www.epa.gov/WaterTA

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