



About the Construction Project Assistance Program

The Drinking Water and Groundwater Trust Fund (DWGTF) Construction Project Assistance Program provides grants and low-interest loans to projects that build and enhance drinking water infrastructure to enable the State to meet present and future drinking water needs. Projects that improve water quality, increase the viability and longevity of an existing drinking water system, or create or expand a water system to meet capacity needs may apply to this program.

Who can apply?

- A state agency, board or commission or any political subdivision of the State.
- Any person or legal entity that owns a community water system or water distribution system.
- A non-transient, non-community public water system owned by a nonprofit organization.
- Other entities approved by the Drinking Water and Groundwater Advisory Commission (Advisory Commission) consistent with RSA 485-F.

Types of projects eligible for funding

A construction project is defined as any project involving the erection, building, acquisition, alteration, remodeling, improvement or extension of any component of an eligible project.

- Projects that reduce or eliminate contamination above a Maximum Contaminant Level, Secondary Maximum Contaminant Level, or other substances that the Advisory Commission determines may pose a risk to human health.
- Expansion of an existing water system, or creation of a new system, to serve an existing need or in anticipation of future need including population growth.
- Construction or rehabilitation of drinking water reservoir dams.
- Construction, expansion or rehabilitation of monitoring well systems at well fields.
- Projects that are eligible for funding under the [Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Program \(Env-Dw 1104.01\)](#):
 - Rehabilitation or replacement of distribution systems and facilities.
 - Source development and rehabilitation.
 - Installation, rehabilitation, or enhancement of storage facilities.
 - Interconnections between water systems to consolidate water supplies.
 - Meters and meter reading equipment.
 - Innovative environmental projects that increase water use efficiency or reduce energy use.
- Other projects fulfilling the requirements of [RSA 485-F:4, VII\(a\)](#) are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Funding decisions are made by the Advisory Commission. To learn more about the Advisory Commission, please read the [fact sheet](#).

Annual funding round application process

The Advisory Commission accepts applications and awards funds on an annual basis. The typical timeline is:

- **Summer:** The Advisory Commission establishes funding priorities and an application timeline and permits NHDES to announce the funding round. NHDES announces a request for proposals, posts the solicitation for applications on the DWGTF website, and hosts an informational webinar for stakeholders.
- **October:** Applications are due to NHDES in the fall.
- **November:** NHDES and a designated subcommittee of the Commission meet to review and prioritize the projects for funding based on the evaluation criteria in the rules.
- **December:** The subcommittee presents the funding recommendations and the Advisory Commission votes. NHDES sends award notification letters to applicants.

Special Project Assistance

Applications may be submitted outside of the annual round for certain qualifying projects. The Advisory Commission will determine whether projects meet the criteria to be considered on a case-by-case basis. Please discuss your project and coordinate with NHDES staff before submitting a Special Project Assistance Application.

What types of projects are competitive for funds?

The Advisory Commission has established key priorities to focus funding. Projects that meet multiple criteria are considered a higher priority for funding. Projects that meet one or more of the core criteria are ranked more favorably for grants.

Core Criteria

- Project results in the removal, reduction or mitigation of groundwater or drinking water contamination.
- Project will interconnect or consolidation of two or more smaller public water systems (PWSs).
- Project has regional significance by expanding an existing or creating a new community water system to address current or future supply needs or extend to areas impacted by contamination.
- Project promotes economic development and/or workforce housing for the State by improving water system accessibility and/or increasing capacity to areas without access to a PWS.

Other Criteria Considered

- The PWS serves customers with a low Median Household Income (MHI) defined as less than the state MHI of \$83,449 or the system has a high Affordability Index (annual water rates/MHI is greater than 1.5).
- Proposal prioritizes a loan request over grant request.
- Project has long term viability and is consistent with the applicant's established Asset Management Program.
- Project improves water efficiency.
- Project improves energy efficient or increases energy efficiency of the system.
- Project involves an innovative approach that enhances public health, cost savings or improves system reliability.

A note on project readiness and leveraged funds

Applicants that demonstrate they can successfully execute the project and have a well-developed workplan to complete the project in a timely manner will be prioritized for funding. A goal of the Advisory Commission is to sustain the longevity of the DWGTF by leveraging outside funds to the greatest extent possible. This may be investment from the applicants' own funds, private developer contribution, and/or loans or grants from other State and Federal programs. Applicants that have exhausted all applicable outside funding sources are more highly considered for funding.