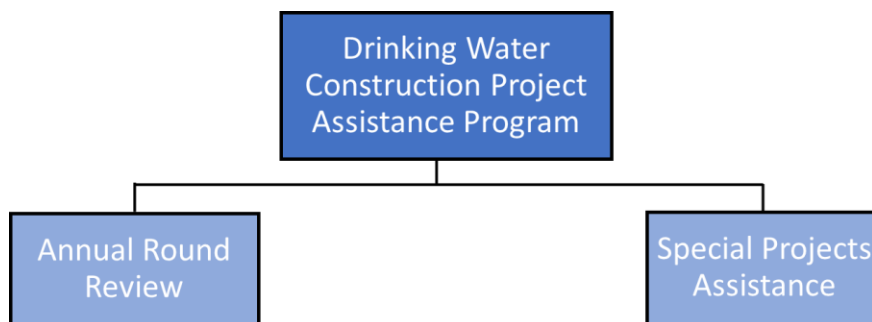




Construction Project Assistance Program Special Project Applications

The Drinking Water and Groundwater Trust Fund (DWGTF) provides grants and loans to projects that build and enhance drinking water infrastructure to enable the State to meet present and future drinking water needs.

Applications are accepted on an annual basis, but time-sensitive projects 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 to ensure your project meets the criteria.



Applications are due annually in the Fall.



Time-sensitive projects may be submitted any time if they meet the criteria.

Definition of Time Sensitive: Important aspects of the project make it unfeasible to wait until the next Annual Round for review. Examples of time-critical issues are public health impacts, the project is already under active construction and delays would significantly impact cost, construction is tied to another project's schedule where completion is critical for efficiency and/or cost savings, co-funding is secured and reliant upon DWGTF contribution.

Criteria to be Considered for a Special Project

- ✓ **Addresses Drinking Water Contamination:** Project results in the removal, reduction, or mitigation of groundwater or drinking water contamination defined as an exceedance of a regulated drinking water Maximum Contaminant Level and/or water quality standards.
- ✓ **Financial hardship:** The public water system serves a community under financial hardship and cannot complete the project without financial assistance. Financial hardship is defined as a community with a Median Household Income less than the State MHI (\$83,449) or an Affordability Index greater than 1.5 (annual water rates/MHI).
- ✓ **Economic growth:** Special consideration may be given to projects that create or expand drinking water systems to supply areas without access to public water to support economic growth or workforce housing of the state.

How to Apply as a Special Project

Please coordinate with New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) staff before you apply to the Special Project Assistance Program. Staff can provide guidance on whether the project meets the criteria or should be deferred to the next annual round. Applications must be submitted online using the online form and attaching the Supplemental Form:

- 1) [Construction Project Assistance Funding Application.](#)
- 2) [Special Project Assistance Supplemental Form.](#)

The Application Review Process

NHDES will review the applications for completeness and determine whether the project is time-sensitive and cannot wait until the next Annual Round to apply. If considered time sensitive, then NHDES will screen the project using the criteria listed above. NHDES will coordinate with the applicant on additional information if needed and submit a summary letter and the application to the Drinking Water and Groundwater Advisory Commission. If the Advisory Commission agrees the project is time-sensitive, then they will review the funding request and the merits of the project using the [Construction Project Criteria](#) and vote on a funding decision. A denial as a Special Project does not preclude the applicant from reapplying in the Annual Round.

The time from submission and NHDES review, to Advisory Commission vote is 6-8 weeks! The Advisory Commission typically meets on the second Monday of each month. Please plan accordingly to allow sufficient time for your application to undergo the review process.

What Types of Projects are Competitive for Funds?

The Advisory Commission has established priorities to focus funding. Projects that satisfy multiple funding priorities are ranked more favorably for funding.

- Project results in the removal, reduction or mitigation of groundwater or drinking water contamination.
- Project will interconnect or result in consolidation of two or more smaller public water systems (PWS).
- 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.
- 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 requests more loan over grant.
- Applicant has provided the greatest amount of external matching funds available and exhausted all other applicable funding options.

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 given a higher priority for funding.

Questions?

Please contact the Drinking Water and Groundwater Trust Fund Administrator, Cheryl Bondi, at cheryl.a.bondi@des.nh.gov or [\(603\) 271-8321](tel:6032718321).