

EPA Grants Available to Implement Beach Monitoring and Public Notification Programs in 2012

Summary

EPA is making almost \$10 million in grants available in 2012 to eligible coastal and Great Lakes states, territories and tribes to help them implement programs to monitor water quality at their beaches and to notify the public when water quality problems exist.

Background

Each swimming season, state and local health and environmental protection agencies monitor the quality of water at the nation's coastal and Great Lakes beaches. When bacteria levels in the water are too high, these agencies notify the public by posting beach warnings or closing the beach.

Congress passed the Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health (BEACH) Act in 2000 to improve water quality testing at the beach and to help beach managers better inform the public when there are water quality problems.

The BEACH Act amends Section 406 of the Clean Water Act to authorize EPA to award grants to eligible states, territories and tribes to develop and implement beach water quality monitoring and notification programs for coastal and Great Lakes recreational beach waters.

The grants also help these governments develop and implement programs to inform the public about the risk of exposure to disease-causing microorganisms in the water at the nation's beaches.

Funding

In 2012, EPA expects to award \$9.8 million in grants to eligible states, territories and tribes for their beach water protection programs. For this twelfth year of BEACH Act grants, EPA has set

aside funds for the Grand Portage Band of the Minnesota Chippewa and the Makah Tribe, as well as any eligible tribes who may apply to develop a beach program.

EPA expects to award grants to all eligible states and territories that apply based on an allocation formula that considers three factors:

- 1) beach season length,
- 2) total miles of shoreline, and
- 3) coastal county population.

Based on this allocation formula, the amount of each grant ranges from \$150,000 to \$516,000, if all 35 eligible states and territories apply. EPA expects all 35 eligible governments to apply. If fewer apply or qualify for the grants, then EPA will redistribute available funds to states according to the following principles:

- ◆ States that meet the eligibility requirements for implementation grants and have met the statutory conditions applicable to previously awarded section 406 grants will be awarded the full amount of funds allocated to the state under the formula described above.
- ◆ EPA may award program implementation grants to local governments in states that the Agency determines have not met the requirements for implementation grants.
- ◆ Consistent with CWA section 406(h), EPA will use grant funds to conduct a beach monitoring and notification program in the case of a state that has no program for monitoring and notification that is consistent with EPA's grant performance criteria.

What is the 2012 Allocation for Each State?

For the state or territory of:	This year's allocation is expected to be:
Alabama	\$262,000
Alaska	\$150,000
American Samoa	\$302,000
California	\$506,000
Connecticut	\$222,000
Delaware	\$210,000
Florida	\$516,000
Georgia	\$284,000
Guam	\$302,000
Hawaii	\$322,000
Illinois	\$241,000
Indiana	\$205,000
Louisiana	\$316,000
Maine	\$252,000
Maryland	\$266,000
Massachusetts	\$252,000
Michigan	\$274,000
Minnesota	\$202,000
Mississippi	\$253,000
New Hampshire	\$204,000
New Jersey	\$274,000
New York	\$341,000
North Carolina	\$300,000
Northern Marianas	\$303,000
Ohio	\$222,000
Oregon	\$227,000
Pennsylvania	\$221,000
Puerto Rico	\$327,000
Rhode Island	\$212,000
South Carolina	\$294,000
Texas	\$379,000
U.S. Virgin Islands	\$303,000
Virginia	\$273,000
Washington	\$267,000
Wisconsin	\$224,000

Who is Eligible to Apply?

To be eligible for BEACH Act grants, states and territories must have coastal and Great Lakes recreational waters next to beaches or similar points of access used by the public. In order for a tribe to be eligible, it must have coastal and

Great Lakes recreational waters next to beaches or similar points of access used by the public, and also demonstrate that it meets the “treatment in the same manner as a state” criteria contained in Clean Water Act section 518(e). EPA encourages those tribes with coastal recreation waters to contact their EPA Regional beach program coordinator (see http://water.epa.gov/type/oceb/beaches/whereyoulive_state.cfm#region) for further information on the application process.

The BEACH Act also authorizes EPA to give a grant to a local government to implement a monitoring and notification program, but only if the Agency finds that the state is not implementing a program that meets the requirements of the Act. Local governments may contact their EPA Regional Office's beach program coordinator for further information.

In July 2002, EPA published the *National Beach Guidance and Required Performance Criteria for Grants* (823-B-02-004) which explains the requirements for states, territories, tribes, and local governments to qualify for implementation grants (see http://water.epa.gov/grants_funding/beachgrants/guidance_index.cfm). To get a free printed copy of the guidance call 202-566-1729 or e-mail: center.water-resource@epa.gov.

How Can a State or Territory Apply?

Eligible states and territories may get an application from their EPA Regional beach program coordinator listed in the Federal Register Notice of Availability for the BEACH Act grants and on EPA's website at http://water.epa.gov/grants_funding/beachgrants/grants_index.cfm.

For More Information

Please contact your EPA Regional beach program coordinator, or contact EPA Headquarters at 202-566-0400.
