



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF WATER

DECISION MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Availability-Based Project Waiver of American Iron and Steel Requirements for a Double Check Valve for the City Stuart, FL Water Treatment Plant Reverse Osmosis Treatment Facility Project
Waiver Number 04-DW-0011

FROM: Jennifer L. McLain, Director
Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water

Decision: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is hereby granting an availability-based project-specific waiver pursuant to the American Iron and Steel (AIS) requirements to the City of Stuart, Florida, for the purchase of a double check valve for the Water Treatment Plant Reverse Osmosis Treatment Facility Project. This waiver permits the use of a 4-inch reduced pressure zone (RPZ) double check valve because no known domestic manufacturers produce a product that meets the project's technical specifications. This project-specific waiver applies only to the use of the specified product for the referenced project funded by the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF). Any other project funded by the DWSRF, Clean Water State Revolving Fund, or the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act that wishes to use the same product must request a separate waiver based on the specific project circumstances.

Rationale: The AIS provision requires DWSRF assistance recipients to use specific domestic iron and steel products if the project is funded through an SRF assistance agreement unless EPA determines that it is necessary to waive this requirement. EPA has the authority to issue waivers in accordance with section 1452(a)(4)(C)(ii) of the Safe Drinking Water Act. The provision states in part: “[the requirements] shall be waived in any case or category of cases in which the Administrator [of the Environmental Protection Agency] ... finds that... iron and steel products are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities and of a satisfactory quality.”

Background of Waiver Request: The City of Stuart is constructing a new reverse osmosis treatment facility to utilize the Florida Aquifer System as an alternative drinking water source. The City’s current surficial aquifer water supply wells withdrawal rates are limited due to per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination and the potential for wetland impacts and saltwater intrusion. Due to ongoing threats to the existing water supply and potential for more stringent future drinking water regulation, the City needs to diversify its water supply options by investing in an alternative water source. The RPZ double check valve is required by the City’s standards for potable water service to the new reverse osmosis treatment building.

The City contacted domestic manufacturers to find AIS-compliant double check valves and provided information to EPA demonstrating that no domestic manufacturers of double check valves meet the project's technical specifications.

Assessment of Waiver Request: EPA conducted market research on the supply and availability of double check valves and concluded that there are no domestic manufacturers of these products that meet the project's technical specifications. Per statutory requirement, the waiver request was posted on EPA's AIS website for the mandatory 15-day public comment period. EPA received no public comments.

Finding: EPA is granting an availability-based waiver from the AIS requirements to the City of Stuart, Florida, for the Water Treatment Plant Reverse Osmosis Treatment Facility Project with respect to the RPZ double check valve. This waiver permits the purchase of the 4-inch RPZ double check valve using DWSRF funds as documented in the State of Florida's waiver request submittal on behalf of the assistance recipient, dated December 6, 2022.

Legal Authority: Legal authority for the AIS requirements for DWSRF projects, including waiver authority, is included in the Safe Drinking Water Act section 1452(a)(4).

If you have questions concerning the contents of this memorandum, please contact Zachary Hunt, Physical Scientist, Drinking Water Infrastructure Development Division, at hunt.zachary@epa.gov or (202) 564-8949.