



## OFFICE OF GROUND WATER AND DRINKING WATER

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

### **MEMORANDUM**

**SUBJECT:** Availability-Based Project Waiver of American Iron and Steel Requirements for Insertion Valves for St. Bernard Parish High Service Water Pump Project  
Waiver Number 06-DWA-0014

**FROM:** Jennifer L. McLain, Director

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 of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) to St. Bernard Parish, LA (Applicant), for the purchase of 24-inch insertion valves for use in its High Service Water Pump Project. This waiver permits the use of 24-inch insertion valves because no known manufacturers produce a domestic product that meets the technical specifications of the project. 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. The EPA has the authority to issue waivers in accordance with Section 1452(a)(4)(C)(ii) of the SDWA. 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 project consists of a installing a new high service water distribution pump with associated piping and valves to replace the existing and outdated backup pump. This project will increase the number of distribution pumps for the St. Bernard Parish Water Treatment Plant from two to three, increasing the redundancy and reliability for the entire water system. Because the entire water treatment plant must stay active during all

phases of construction, the 24-inch insertion valves are designed to be installed on an active pipe to avoid an interruption of flow. The project requires that the insertion valves be installed in two locations to maintain potable water flow during installation of the water distribution pump and accessories. The insertion valves will remain after the project is complete and will allow for future system operation.

The Applicant conducted research to find a domestic manufacturer of AIS-compliant 24-inch insertion valves and provided information to EPA demonstrating that no domestic manufacturers of 24-inch insertion valves meet the project's technical specifications.

Assessment of Waiver Request: The EPA conducted market research on the supply and availability of insertion valves and reached out to fourteen (14) known insertion valve manufacturers, suppliers, and distributors. No (zero) manufacturers indicated that they could provide a domestic option.

Per statutory requirement, the waiver request was posted on the EPA's AIS website for the mandatory 15-day public comment period. The EPA received three public comments: one from a manufacturer indicating that they do not manufacture a domestic valve in the required size, and two comments from manufacturers indicating that they do not manufacture insertion valves.

Finding: The EPA is granting an availability-based waiver from the AIS requirements to St. Bernard Parish, for the High Service Water Pump Project with respect to 24-inch insertion valves. This waiver permits the purchase of 24-inch insertion valves using DWSRF funds, as documented in the State of Louisiana's waiver request submittal on behalf of the assistance recipient, dated March 21, 2025.

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 Alexis Johnson, Physical Scientist at [johnson.alexis.j@epa.gov](mailto:johnson.alexis.j@epa.gov), Drinking Water Infrastructure Development Division.