



**OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL**  
U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

November 20, 2025

**MEMORANDUM**

**SUBJECT:** Notification:  
Audit of the EPA's Approval of Earmark Grant Recipient Payment Requests  
Project No. OA-FY26-0023

**FROM:** Katherine Trimble, Assistant Inspector General  
Office of Audit *Katherine Trimble*

**TO:** Jessica Kramer, Assistant Administrator  
Office of Water

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Inspector General plans to begin an audit of the EPA's approval of earmark grant recipient payment requests. This audit is the result of our continued oversight of the EPA's Community Grants, or earmarks, program. The project number is OA-FY26-0023.

Our objective is to determine whether the EPA's approval of payment requests from earmark grant recipients is sufficient to verify compliance with federal requirements and applicable terms and conditions. We plan to conduct work within the Office of Water, EPA regional offices, and various local communities who received earmark grant funds. We will use applicable generally accepted government auditing standards to conduct our audit. The anticipated benefits of this audit include ensuring that earmark grant funds awarded for water quality infrastructure projects are appropriately monitored and comply with federal requirements.

We will contact your office to arrange a mutually agreeable time to discuss our objective. At that time, we can discuss any concerns and answer any questions about the audit process, reporting procedures, methods used to gather and analyze data, and what we should expect of each other during the audit. Throughout the audit, we will provide updates on a regular basis.

We respectfully note that the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, authorizes the OIG to have timely access to personnel and all materials necessary to complete our objectives. Additionally, Administrator Lee Zeldin, in a February 7, 2025 email to EPA employees, said that "the OIG requires information and assistance from EPA managers and staff on a regular basis" and outlined his expectation that EPA employees "report waste, fraud, and abuse to the OIG." He explained that this "responsibility to report appropriate activity to the OIG is one of the most important and successful means the OIG has for identifying and stopping wrongdoing" and that review and oversight enable the Agency to be more effective in achieving its mission. If an Agency employee or contractor refuses to provide requested

materials to the OIG or otherwise fails to cooperate with the OIG, we will request that you immediately resolve the situation. Consistent with the Inspector General Act, we may report unresolved access matters to the administrator and to Congress.

We will post this memorandum on our public website at [www.epa.gov/oig](http://www.epa.gov/oig). Anyone with knowledge of potential fraud, waste, abuse, misconduct, or mismanagement related to this audit should contact the OIG Hotline at (888) 546-8740 or via an electronic form on the "OIG Hotline" [web page](#).

cc: David Fotouhi, Deputy Administrator

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