

WIIN 2104 Small, Rural, and Tribal Drinking Water Assistance Grant Program

The Small, Rural, and Tribal (SmaRT) Drinking Water Assistance Grant Program was established under Section 1459A of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), as amended by the 2016 Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act and the 2018 America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA). This grant program assists small, rural, and Tribal communities in improving their drinking water infrastructure to comply with SDWA requirements – these communities must also meet the definitions of “underserved” and “disadvantaged” as defined by statute. The program provides financial assistance for drinking water infrastructure projects, household water quality testing, and technical assistance to reduce exposure to contaminants including some per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), to remove sources of lead, and to address other local drinking water challenges.

Available Funding

This non-competitive grant program awards funding to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), based on several funding allocation factors including income, the number of underserved communities, and the number of small water systems; 10% of the funding is allotted to Tribes, which is administered through a separate program.¹ Historical allotments for the SmaRT grant program funding allotments are available on [EPA's website](#). Since FY 2024, eligibilities were expanded to include projects that benefit private wells.²

What is considered an ‘underserved’ community?

Per SDWA 1459A(a), a community is considered underserved when it meets at least one of the following criteria:

- Does not have household drinking water or wastewater services.
- It is served by a public water system (PWS) that violates or exceeds any Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL), treatment technique, or action level.

What is considered a ‘small and disadvantaged’ community?

Per SDWA 1459A(c)(2), a community is considered small and disadvantaged when it meets at least one of the following criteria:

- The respective state's affordability criteria determine whether the community is disadvantaged or may become disadvantaged as a result of carrying out a project to achieve compliance with the SDWA.
- The community has a population of less than 10,000 individuals and does not have sufficient capacity to incur debt to finance a project or activity.

¹ For more information on the Small, Rural, and Tribal Drinking Water Assistance Grant Program Tribal allotments, visit <https://www.epa.gov/tribaldrinkingwater/small-rural-and-tribal-smart-drinking-water-assistance-tribal-grant-program>

² In 2025, Congress expanded the SmaRT grant program to include private well owners in its eligibility, using funds appropriated through the FY 2024 appropriation, P.L. 118-42 (Mar. 8, 2024), for SmaRT grants. This use is in addition to existing eligibilities under the SmaRT grant program. Congress directed EPA to encourage that grant beneficiaries making less than the average household income in their State or Territory are prioritized.

Eligible Applicants

- All 50 States
- District of Columbia
- Puerto Rico
- Guam
- U.S. Virgin Islands
- American Samoa
- CNMI
- Tribes within the U.S.¹

Examples of Eligible Projects

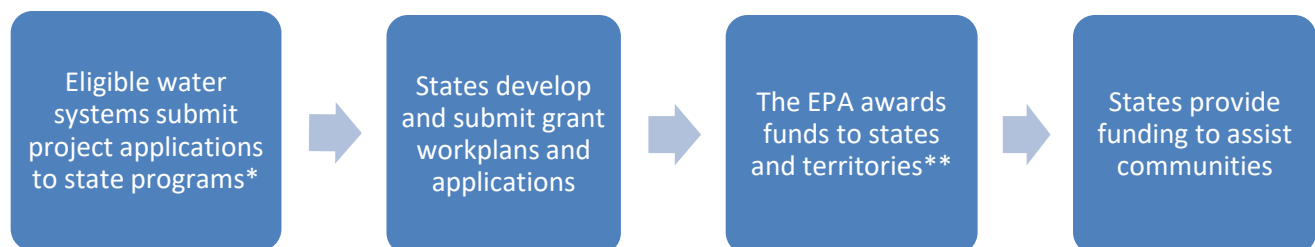
- Treatment facility construction or upgrades
- Water main installation and service line replacement
- New water source development
- Storage facility construction or rehabilitation
- Creation of new systems to address existing public health problems caused by unsafe drinking water
- System consolidation to resolve SDWA noncompliance
- Household water quality testing programs (including unregulated contaminants)
- Technical, managerial and financial capacity building
- Emergency contamination response efforts
- Private well repair, replacement, and abandonment³

Build America, Buy America Requirement

The Build America, Buy America (BABA) Act is a domestic preference program requiring that “none of the funds made available for a Federal financial assistance program for infrastructure, including each deficient program, may be obligated for a project unless all of the **iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials** used in the project are produced in the United States.”³ The SmART grant program is subject to Build America, Buy America (BABA) requirements. For more information on BABA, please see: <https://www.epa.gov/baba>.

How to Apply

Communities may apply for grant funding through their respective state program. State, territory, and EPA Region contact information can be found here: <https://www.epa.gov/dwcapacity/small-rural-and-tribal-drinking-water-assistance-grant-program-contacts>. Tribal contact information can be found here: <https://www.epa.gov/tribaldrinkingwater/regional-tribal-drinking-water-coordinators>.



* Draft allocation amount information is provided by the EPA during application development for planning purposes.

** It is anticipated that project/budget periods will be no more than three years.

³ Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) (P.L. 117-58, Nov. 15, 2021)

Program Contacts

For general questions about the Small, Rural, and Tribal Drinking Water Assistance Grant Program, contact WIINDrinkingWaterGrants@epa.gov

More information about the Small, Rural, and Tribal Drinking Water Assistance Grant Program
For states and territories, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/dwcapacity/small-rural-and-tribal-drinking-water-assistance-grant-program>

For Tribes, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/dwcapacity/small-rural-and-tribal-drinking-water-assistance-grant-program>