

E-Bulletin Newsletter



To provide affordable financial assistance to communities within Wisconsin for water infrastructure projects that protect and improve public health and water quality for current and future generations.



Inside this Issue

LSL Priority List & Available Funding	1
Duke University SRF Survey	1
Switchboard Update	2
DBE Reminders	2
New, Approved Rate Orders Due 3/15	2
Engineering Report Compliance	3
Submit Facilities Plans Early	3
SDW Executed Construction Contracts	4
WI Projects Get Honorable Mention	4

Lead Service Line Project Priority List & Available Funding

The Project Priority List for the Private Lead Service Line (LSL) Replacement Program was published on December 21, 2020. A total of 66 priority evaluation and ranking forms (PERFs) were received through the first week of January, though seven were received after the deadline, and of those, three were submitted by municipalities that are not yet eligible to participate in the program as their reporting to the Public Service Commission is not yet complete. PERFs may still be submitted, but they will not be scored, and instead will fall to the bottom of the priority list, in order of receipt.

[Applications](#) for the Private LSL Replacement Program, for funding during the 2021 construction season, may be submitted until June 30, 2021, but we would urge any interested municipalities to submit their application no later than the end of February in order for funds to be awarded prior to the start of the construction season. As of the first week of January, thirty-six applications have been submitted.

We have received numerous questions since the priority list was published asking if particular municipalities were high enough on the list to receive funding. The answer to this question is 'yes'. **There is sufficient money available in the program this year for all eligible applicants to receive funding.** The amount of any municipality's award will be based on information included in their application. Awards will be made for one construction season at a time and will be closed out at the end of the calendar year with any unutilized funds going back into the pot for the next round of funding.

Please direct any questions you may have regarding the Private LSL Replacement Program to DNRLSLfunding@wisconsin.gov.

Additional information is available on the [Private LSL Replacement](#) webpage.

Upcoming Deadlines

January/February 2021

SFY 22 CWFP & SDWLP Project Priority Lists (PPLs) published.

January 31, 2021

Last recommended date to open bids for SFY 21 SDWLP projects.

February 24, 2021

SFY 20 CWFP final loan closing date (for PF projects).

March/April 2021

SFY 22 CWFP project priority score objections deadline (within 30 days after PPL is published).

March 15, 2021

PSC approved rate order due to DNR project manager (prior to execution of FAA).

March 31, 2021

Executed construction contracts due for SFY 21 SDWLP projects.

Duke University SRF Survey

The [Nicholas Institute for Environmental Policy Solutions](#) is a research center at Duke University that focuses on applied environmental policy research. One of their current research themes is seeking to better understand the role and use of State Revolving Funds (SRFs) in our nation's water service systems. You can take the municipal SRF survey by following this link: <https://tinyurl.com/MunicipalSRFSurvey>

DNR, Environmental Loans Section—CF/2, 101 S. Webster Street, PO Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921
dnr.wi.gov/aid/eif.html | CWFP phone: 608-267-7475 | SDWLP phone: 608-266-5889 | [staff directory webpage](#)



Program implementation details are outlined in chs. [NR 162](#) and [NR 166](#), Wis. Adm. Code. [Legal notice](#): This document is intended solely as guidance and does not contain any mandatory requirements except where requirements found in statute or administrative rule are referenced. Any regulatory decisions made by the Department of Natural Resources in any matter addressed by this guidance will be made by applying the governing statutes and administrative rules to the relevant facts. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provides equal opportunity in its employment, programs, services, and functions under an Affirmative Action Plan. If you have any questions, please write to Equal Opportunity Office, Department of Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240. This publication is available in alternative format upon request, call 608-267-9481 for more information.

Switchboard Update

The [DNR Switchboard](#) is an application built to allow external customers to gain access to DNR electronic environmental reporting systems. From DNR Switchboard, users can see all the online systems and facilities they have access to in one place.

In mid-December, DNR released an updated version of the DNR Switchboard web application. The primary focus of this change is to clean up and streamline the customer

experience. We updated the customer interface to better align with the new DNR website, consolidating some application screens to make the application simpler and less confusing, and providing more information to the customer about their assigned facilities and roles on the main screen. We have not changed the core functionality of the system and interactions with program reporting systems will remain the same.

DBE Reminders

Use WisDOT List of Certified DBEs

We strongly encourage municipalities and prime contractors to use the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's unified certification program (UCP) [list](#) of disadvantaged business enterprise when making good faith efforts to award a fair share of contracts, subcontractors, and procurements to DBEs. If a municipality does not comply with DBE requirements, the DNR will exercise its authority provided under 40 CFR 33.105. Details regarding compliance remedies are included in ss. NR 162.09(4) and NR 166.12(4), Wis. Adm. Code.

Soliciting Bids

In order to demonstrate a good faith effort, the recipient municipality and contractors can add a simple statement to their advertisements for prime contractors and sub-

contractors such as "We encourage DBEs, including MBEs and WBEs, to submit bid proposals" with a link to the project manual that includes the full text and federal requirements. The municipality and contractors must submit to the DNR an affidavit of publication along with the advertisement.

Resources

- [DBE Requirements](#)
- [DBE Fact Sheet](#)
- [Contract Packet for DBE Compliance](#)

New, Approved Water Rate Orders Due March 15th

New water rates must be in effect prior to the Safe Drinking Water Loan Program project's loan closing. State Fiscal Year 2021 SDWLP loans must close by June 30, 2021.

In order to close your SDWLP loan, you must provide your Wisconsin Public Service Commission approved water rate order, authorizing the municipal utility to charge the increased rates, to your DNR project manager by **March 15, 2021**. The project manager needs the approved rate order to prepare the Financial Assistance Agreement.

Required rate increases must be in effect before the project's FAA can be executed, per s. NR 166.11(7) Wis. Adm. Code.

A municipality can lose its SDWLP funding allocation if the rate increase is not approved by PSC early enough to close by the June 30th deadline.

[Learn more](#) about coordinating the SDWLP requirements with the PSC rate case process.

Resources

- [FAQs: Conventional Rate Case Process](#)
- [Overview of the Rate Case Process](#)

Direct questions about the rate increase process to PSC at 608-266-3766 or PSCWaterAppMail@wisconsin.gov.



Engineering Report Compliance

We recommend that the Engineering Report be submitted at least 90 days before the SDWLP application deadline to ensure time for it to be reviewed and approved.

See the [Public Water System Plan Review](#) site to find the submittal requirements for the Engineering Report and Plans and Specifications from the DNR Bureau of Drinking Water & Groundwater.

Engineering report requirements for the Safe Drinking Water Loan Program are the same as those included in chs. [NR 108](#) and [NR 811](#), Wis. Adm. Code. A municipality may submit a financial assistance application prior to

receiving department approval of an engineering report for the project, **IF**:

1. neither chs. NR 108 nor NR 811, Wis. Adm. Code, requires an engineering report for a specific project; **OR**
2. either chs. NR 108 or NR 811, Wis. Adm. Code, allows submittal & review of the engineering report & the plans and specifications simultaneously, **and** the department receives the engineering report & the plans and specifications with or prior to submittal of the financial assistance application by the June 30 deadline.

Submit Facilities Plans Early for SFY 22 CWFP Projects

If you decide to apply for funding for your eligible project listed on the [Clean Water Fund Program State Fiscal Year 2022 Project Priority List \(PPL\)](#), you must have facility plan approval for the application to be complete. Note: We plan to publish this PPL in mid-January to early February.

Submit the facilities plan to the DNR Bureau of Water Quality for approval, under ch. NR 110, Wis. Adm. Code.

Requirements

Requirements for submitting a facilities plan are explained in DNR's [Wastewater Facility Planning Studies](#). Any project seeking CWFP funds must be submitted to the department for plan review and approval, regardless of a "reviewable" or "maintenance" project classification. For example, **an abbreviated form of a facilities plan, or "Engineering Report", is required even for sanitary sewer replacement or rehabilitation projects, if seeking CWFP funding.** The Engineering Report covers certain federal requirements such as the cost effectiveness analysis and the environmental analysis. View the "Collection System Projects" section of the Wastewater Facility Planning Studies webpage for a list of what elements should be included in the report.

Assistance

For assistance with facilities plans, contact the DNR [wastewater systems plan review staff](#). They can give you technical comments that might expedite plan approval.

Submit facilities plan 6 months before application deadline

To ensure you receive the facilities plan approval letter by the application deadline, we encourage you to submit the facilities plan early on to allow ample time for review.

Preferably, you would submit your facilities plan to the department for approval *at least six months before* the CWFP application submittal deadline. You are encouraged to reach out to plan review staff if this will not be feasible.

For SFY 2022 Principal Forgiveness (PF):

- Submit facilities plan for DNR review by 03/31/2021 to the extent possible.
- Submit CWFP PF Application by the 09/30/2021 deadline.

Concurrent submittals

If the facilities plan is submitted concurrent with the [plans & specifications](#), provide sufficient lead time, *preferably 6 months*, before the CWFP application submittal deadline for completion of the facilities plan review.



SDWLP Executed Construction Contracts Due March 31st

To receive its State Fiscal Year 2021 Safe Drinking Water Loan Program Financial Assistance Agreement on time, a municipality must provide all executed [construction contracts](#) to its DNR project manager by March 31, 2021.

In addition, for the SDWLP there is a statutory deadline that requires loans be closed by June 30th (note that June 23, 2021 is the fourth Wednesday of the month – the last day in June that we can close an SFY 2021 SDWLP loan). Thus, your DNR project manager has a very limited time period in which they can develop your SDWLP FAA/loan. Keep in mind that, depending on workloads, project complexity, completeness of submittals, and compliance with requirements, it can take 2 to 4 weeks for your DNR project manager to complete their

review of your bidding documents. They also need time to review your first disbursement request and process all other [required documentation](#).

Help keep your project on schedule

DNR recommends that all required documentation be submitted before its due date to allow DNR project managers sufficient time to fully review it. Likewise, many documents need to be submitted and reviewed before the final budget and FAA can be drafted by DNR and then reviewed by the municipality. Don't put your financing at risk – promptly submit required documents as they become available. View the [SDWLP timeline](#).

Wisconsin Projects Get Honorable Mention

On December 14, 2020, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recognized 33 clean water and 25 drinking water infrastructure projects for excellence and innovation within the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) programs in communities across the country. These exemplary projects demonstrate leadership in innovative financing, partnership, and problem solving while improving water quality and public health protection. Participating state programs each nominated one project in either or both programs. Wisconsin is recognized with honorable mention in both programs. To see the full list of recognized projects and learn more about the award programs, visit www.epa.gov/dwsrf/aquarius and www.epa.gov/cwsrf/pisces.

PISCES

PISCES Honorable Mention Project: Wisconsin Assistance Recipient: Consolidated Koshkonong Sanitary District Commission
Project: Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

The Consolidated Koshkonong Sanitary District began construction on the main pump station and treatment lagoons in April 2019, to address equipment, lagoon, and process deficiencies, meet current and future permit requirements, and provide the staff with increased flexibility in dealing with daily operational conditions. In addition, existing facility upgrades were required to bring the lagoons in compliance with allowable leakage rate and groundwater separation requirements; and address new ammonia and phosphorus limits established in the District's WPDES Permit.



AQUARIUS

AQUARIUS Honorable Mention Project: Wisconsin Assistance Recipient: Village of Bloomington
Project: Water Main Replacement

Bloomington replaced water mains and relays on a few residential streets and a couple of intersections showing leadership in aging infrastructure, innovative financing, water loss control, and efficient water use. The Village anticipates reducing its water loss by 90-95% (approximately 11 million gallons per year). This will reduce water pumpage for the village from 62,000 gallons per day to approximately 32,000 gallons per day.

