

State reopens application period for drinking water infrastructure loans

Local News

Posted by: David Haviland

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OLYMPIA – Additional federal funding and new loan requirements for drinking water system improvements have led the state Department of Health to reopen the application process for 2010 Drinking Water State Revolving Fund loans.

The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund is a state-run, federally funded program that provides low-interest construction loans to help water systems address public health problems and compliance issues. The program has about \$58 million available to lend this year, up by 45 percent from the last loan cycle.

The additional money comes with some strings:

- About \$7 million must be dedicated to “green” infrastructure projects that have significant water use efficiency or energy efficiency benefits or projects that use other innovative ways to protect the environment.
- About \$10.5 million will be used for subsidies. This means some of the principal for low-interest loans won’t have to be repaid in disadvantaged and economically distressed communities. The subsidies also will be used for water system restructuring projects that involve a change of ownership.
- All borrowers must comply with federal prevailing wage requirements.

Washington’s loan program will accept new applications from February 1 through March 1.

Applications that were received last fall are still considered valid and will be scored and ranked. Water systems that want to emphasize green aspects of their projects, which could enhance their chances of receiving a loan, are welcome to reapply.

“Everyone needs safe and reliable drinking water,” said Denise Clifford, director of the agency’s Office of Drinking Water. “We’re pleased to have more dollars to put to work in communities around the state. We’ll be able to do more to help water systems fix problems and ensure drinking water is safe at the tap.”

[Revised program guidelines and new application forms](http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw/our_main_pages/dwsrf.htm) are available at the Office of Drinking Water’s Web site (http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw/our_main_pages/dwsrf.htm).