

Environmental Loans E-Bulletin

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The Environmental Loans E-Bulletin is written by staff in the WI DNR Environmental Loans Section to provide up-to-date information on both the Clean Water Fund Program (CWFPP) and the Safe Drinking Water Loan Program (SDWLP). These E-Bulletins are sent periodically to alert you to upcoming deadlines, highlight program changes and provide assistance on topics that need clarification.

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On-Line ITA/PERF Process Update

The Environmental Loans Section has hired a contractor to automate the ITA and PERF submittal process. We are hoping to be able to test this system this December, but don't anticipate having the system go *live* for everyone until next year. With many new on-line systems experiencing problems, we want to be sure that the features and links are all working as we need them before we implement this for all projects. To that end, we will be testing some submittals from various firms to ensure the process is smooth and performs without glitches.

The efficiencies anticipated with the on-line ITA/PERF submittal process are many – for us and for our customers. For example, if a previous ITA/PERF for a project has already been submitted, the applicant can simply download that information, update it and resubmit it to the agency. All submittals will go into a “holding” area where staff will have the ability to review them and if appropriate, automatically upload the information into our system.

Additional features we anticipate include an automated email letting you know that we received your submittal, the ability to initiate an ITA or PERF form and save it for future editing and submitting, and being able to attach supporting documents along with your submittal.

Becky Mesdjian is the contact for this project. We will continue to keep you informed of our progress with this activity as we move forward.

WI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
ENVIRONMENTAL LOANS PROGRAM



Clean Water Fund Program Pilot Projects

The WI DNR Environmental Loans program has new tools to help municipal wastewater treatment permittees meet their water quality objectives. The DNR now has authority to use funding from the Clean Water Fund Program (CWFP) for non-traditional wastewater treatment plant projects – including funding for implementing projects identified in approved adaptive management plans.

We are continuing to refine the details of how these non-traditional projects will be funded and we hope to be able to fund some initial projects beginning with State Fiscal Year 2015. There are only a limited number of facilities far enough with their adaptive management planning to be ready for funding in SFY 2015.

The existing CWFP Intent to Apply (ITA) and Priority Evaluation and Ranking Form requirements will apply to pilot projects, so municipalities seeking pilot project funding for SFY 2015 will need to submit an ITA form by December 31, 2013. The ITA forms have been revised to allow municipalities to select a pilot project as the type of project for SFY 2015 funding and meet the 12/31/13 deadline.

As the pilot projects move forward, we will post updated information on the Environmental Loans website at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/Aid/EIF.html>.

December Disbursement Deadline

Please note that the deadline for submitting Request for Disbursements and documentation for final closeouts will be December 11, 2013. Disbursements will be made on Thurs., Dec. 26, 2013.

Upcoming Deadlines!!

December 31st

Deadline for CWFP and SDWLP Intent to Apply (ITA) forms and Priority Evaluation and Ranking Forms (PERF)

March 31st

Cut-off date for SFY '14 supplemental SDWLP applications*

June 30th:

Deadline for SFY '15 SDWLP applications
Deadline for SFY '15 CWFP Hardship applications

September 30th:

Deadline for SFY '15 CWFP Principal Forgiveness Applications (if applicable)

Environmental Loan forms are on the web at:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/Aid/documents/EIF/forms/forms.html>

*Although the SFY '14 deadline for SDWLP applications seeking Principal Forgiveness is past, applications for loan funds will continue to be accepted until March 31, 2014.

RULE REVISION UPDATE

Staff continue to make progress on rule revisions to chs. NR 162 and 166, Wis. Admin. Code governing the Clean Water Fund Program and Safe Drinking Water Loan Program, respectively. They are working with internal staff to highlight areas where we can streamline or clarify program information.

We anticipate contacting parties for inclusion in our external advisory group later in December, with the group convening in January through March. We anticipate public hearing on rule revisions in the summer of 2014, with final completion of rules to the legislature for their 2015 session.

REMEMBER TO CONTACT YOUR REGIONAL CME PRIOR TO YOUR PRE-CONSTRUCTION MEETING!

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Helpful Tips for completing your ITA/PERF

The ITA and PERF provide the core information on your project that continues with the life of your project. It is very important that the information contained in these documents be as accurate and descriptive as possible to maximize your eligibility for project costs in the future.

Define “Project Scope”: Be specific with respect to what activities you anticipate conducting and document them in the Project Scope section. Be sure to identify the problem needing to be solved! For SDWLP projects, separate out SCADA and well house projects from water main projects.

Submit supporting documentation for SDWLP PERF scoring: Failing to submit supporting documentation may result in points being removed from your score. Submit the appropriate documentation along with your PERF form to maximize eligible points.

Provide maps for your project: For SDWLP projects, submit water system maps when proposing a looping project (i.e. eliminating a dead end water main by constructing an additional water main from the dead end to another water main to complete a “loop”). Also submit the location of your project on a USGS 7.5 minute topographic map as required for SHPO reviews.

Check your status: We will post a log of ITA/PERFs received beginning 12/6/2013 on our website:
<http://dnr.wi.gov/Aid/LoanNews.html#tabx2>

Davis Bacon and Related Acts Requirements

All projects receiving federal funds must comply with the Davis Bacon and Related Acts provisions. Information on this requirement can be found in the EPA “National ARRA Handbook Appendices”, at <http://cwsrfttraining.net/recovery/Handbook/index.html>. This information details federal funding recipients’ responsibilities. **Please note** that Davis-Bacon requirements remain in effect although the ARRA funding has ended. We have also included Davis-Bacon related information in our reference guide at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/Aid/documents/EIF/Guide/DavisBacon.pdf>

PSC Rate Increase Applications

If you need a rate increase to support your new loan/bond (including debt coverage) for your SDWLP project, we encourage you to submit your Public Service Commission (PSC) rate increase application as soon as possible.

SDWLP loans for SFY 2014 must close by June 30, 2014. In order to close your SDWLP loan, you must receive your rate order from PSC authorizing a rate increase. PSC’s goal is to process a rate case application within 90 days after receipt, but the process can take up to 6 months. A municipality can lose its SDWLP funding allocation if the rate increase isn’t approved early enough to close by the June 30 deadline for loan closings.

For more information, visit PSC’s website at <http://psc.wi.gov/apps35/ratecase/water.aspx>