## **APPENDICES**

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# **Appendix A. 2025 Needs Assessment**

## Links:

Final Report

**Executive Summary** 

<u>Data</u>

## **Appendix B. FEP Annual Development Process**

## **BACKGROUND**

The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) implements the Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience Drinking Water Program (SAFER Program) Program, which is a set of tools, funding resources, and regulatory authorities coordinated to assist California communities as they work to develop local capacity to ensure reliable access to safe drinking water. The State Water Board administers the SAFER Program primarily through its Division of Drinking Water (DDW), Division of Financial Assistance (DFA), and Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs (OPEETA). The SAFER Program's goal is to provide safe and affordable drinking water in every California community, for every Californian.

Each annual FEP is developed as shown in Figure B- 1. Funding eligibilities established in the annual FEP for the SADW Fund are intended to be complementary to the DWSRF Intended Use Plan (IUP) and are broken out by system category (i.e., public water systems (PWSs) and domestic wells and state small water systems (DW/SSWSs) for each solution type (i.e., interim supplies and emergency repairs, technical assistance (TA), administrator, planning, construction, and operation and maintenance (O&M)).

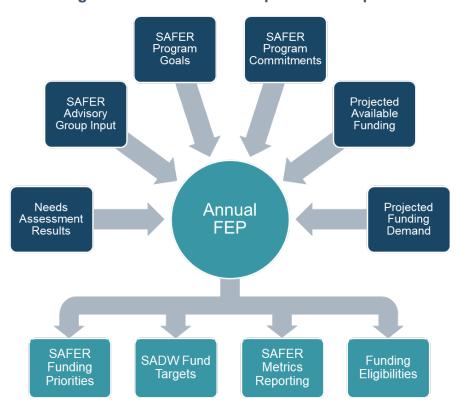


Figure B- 1. Annual FEP Inputs and Outputs

# **PUBLIC PROCESS**

Each annual FEP undergoes a public process from drafting to towards adoption by the State Water Board. Figure B- 2 presents a summary of key milestones within the process each year.

Development of Draft FEP and Internal Review

Early part of each year Water Board Staff

Public Comment Period (30 days)

June/July General public/ stakeholders

SAFER Advisory Group Meeting

July SAFER Advisory Group

Board Workshop

July General public/ stakeholders

State Water Board's Consideration of Adoption

August General public/ stakeholders

Figure B- 2. Annual FEP Public Process

Appendix C. Metrics and	Methodology	(in development)	

Appendix D. SAFER Program Committed Expenditures for FY 2024-25 (in development)		

## **Appendix E. Other SAFER Program Updates**

## INTRODUCTION

This appendix provides programmatic updates for the following:

- Expedited Drinking Water Grant (EDWG) Program
- Direct Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Program
- Pilot Projects
- Community Engagement

## **EXPEDITED DRINKING WATER GRANT PROGRAM**

The State Water Resources Control Board's (State Water Board's) Division of Financial Assistance (DFA) has administered four rounds of funding since the State Water Board's adoption of the Guidelines for the Expedited Drinking Water Grant Program on March 8, 2023. Figure E-1 shows the status of the seventy-one projects that were evaluated for the program.

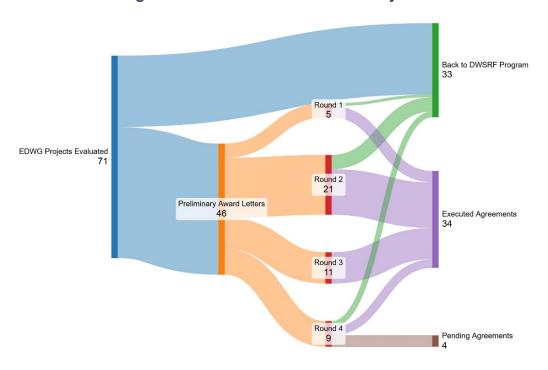


Figure E-1. Status of the EDWG Projects

The EDWG program has produced thirty-four executed agreements for approximately \$164 million in SADW and other grant funds. Table E- 1 provides a funding breakdown for each round of the EDWG program.

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EDWG Round	Projects Invited	Projects Funded <sup>1</sup>	Percent Funded	Total Grant Amount
1	5	4	80%	\$28,224,948
2	21	16	76%	\$81,764,948
3	11	11	100%	\$32,775,633
<b>4</b> <sup>2</sup>	9	3	33%	\$21,481,143

34

74%

\$164,246,672

Table E- 1. EDWG Program Funding per Round

#### **TIMELINES**

Total

The EDWG program was developed to provide an expedited process by which applicants with qualifying high priority projects can receive state grant funding through a reduction of information submittal requirements and processing times. To evaluate the efficiency of the EDWG program, data was compared with Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) program construction projects that submitted a complete funding application after March 8, 2023 and received an executed funding agreement.

The data analysis shows that the submittal of a complete EDWG funding application (median of 34 days) is significantly faster than the submittal of a complete DWSRF funding application (median of 675 days). Additionally, the data analysis shows that the timeframe for executing an initial funding agreement was also significantly faster for the EDWG program (median of 211 days) in comparison to the DWSRF program (median of 915 days).

#### PROJECT PROGRESS

The EDWG program is structured such that the submittal of certain funding application documents, such as the financial and environmental package, are not required prior to the execution of the initial funding agreement and can be submitted prior to the solicitation of bids. DFA must receive all remaining application documents, conduct the remaining application package reviews, and provide bid solicitation approval before the project can advertise bids.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Per Section 6.3 of the EDWG Funding Program Guidelines, unique legal issues or other challenges related to the project or funding may lead to the withdrawal of preliminary funding awards. As a result of such issues, projects have been removed from rounds but may be reconsidered for funding in a future round, or through the DWSRF program.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Projects in Round 4 of the EDWG program are currently being processed and four additional projects are anticipated to be funded.

For the 34 executed funding agreements, six projects have received bid solicitation approval and one is pending. Three of these projects have submitted a Final Budget Approval (FBA) package and were issued a FBA letter to start construction, with an additional two projects that have FBA letters pending for issuance. The remaining 27 projects are workings towards submitting the necessary documents to receive bid solicitation approval from DFA.

In comparison to the DWSRF projects that submitted a complete application after March 8, 2023, and received an executed funding agreement, the EDWG projects are going out to bid at a comparable rate to the hundred percent (100%) grant/principal forgiveness (PF) funded projects in the DWSRF Program. Additional time and data are necessary to determine if the EDWG program results in projects being completed faster than the DWSRF Program, and this will be further evaluated in a future FEP.

#### PROGRAM UPDATES

The EDWG program guidelines are in the process of being updated to align with the SAFER Program's funding priorities, DWSRF Intended Use Plan (IUP), and DWSRF Policy. The guidelines and application documents will also be updated to rectify issues that were identified within the first four rounds of the program and to allow additional flexibility for projects to advertise bids.

## **DIRECT OPERATION & MAINTENANCE PROGRAM**

In August 2024, the State Water Board adopted guidelines for the Direct Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Funding Program<sup>3</sup>, establishing a framework to support small, disadvantaged communities (DACs) facing unaffordable water rates. The Program categorizes projects into two groups:

**Group 1** includes systems where water rates exceed 2.5% of the community's Median Household Income (MHI) and exhibit a high affordability burden as identified in the annual Drinking Water Needs Assessment.

**Group 2** includes projects that are considered on a case-by-case basis, such as schools, Tribes, or systems with unique financial challenges (e.g., existing debt, lack of revenue).

Following adoption of the guidelines, outreach to eligible Group 1 systems proved challenging. Targeted solicitation efforts were met with limited interest, mostly because

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> See <u>FY 2024-25 FEP</u>, Section V.D and Appendix K. https://waterboards.ca.gov/water\_issues/programs/grants\_loans/docs/2024/draft-final-fy2024-25-fep-clean-version.pdf

the benefit accrues directly to residents rather than the water system itself. In total, 14 projects were not pursued due to ineligibility, five projects had over 50% second home percentage, six projects were non-DACs, and three projects had water rates below the 2.5% MHI threshold.

As a result of these challenges, and the establishment of refined SAFER Program Goals in the FY 2024-25 FEP, DFA is no longer actively promoting Group 1 Direct O&M projects. The O&M Program has continued to evolve, with a focus on addressing high-affordability burdens and supporting systems on a case-by-case basis as requests are made. Table E- 2 below lists the current O&M projects that have either been approved or executed along with the project criteria used to support the project.

Project Name	Category	Criteria Fulfilled
Spindrift Marina	Group 1	High Water Rates, High Affordability, DAC
Weott Community Services District	Group 1	High Water Rates, High Affordability, SDAC
Benton Paiute	Group 2	Tribe, Ineligible Fed Funding, Failing POUs, SDAC
Fresno El Porvenir	Group 1	High Water Rates (Debt), SDAC, Failing
Rio Bravo-Greeley	Group 2	Lack of Funds for Treatment Facility

Table E- 2. FY 2024-25 Direct O&M Approved Projects

In addition, O&M funding is being leveraged to facilitate voluntary consolidations and provide interim support for water systems under administrator appointment.

## **ADMINISTRATORS**

In September 2019, the State Water Board adopted an Administrator Policy Handbook to provide direction regarding the appointment of administrators by the State Water Board of designated water systems, as authorized by Health and Safety Code section 116686. A revised version of the Administrator Policy Handbook was adopted in January 2025<sup>4</sup>. The revision updated the prior version, adopted in September 2023, to incorporate provisions of Assembly Bill 805 which provides authority for the State Water Board to appoint administrators to designated sewer systems.

Administrators may be individual persons, businesses, nonprofit organizations, local agencies including counties or nearby larger utilities, and other entities. Administrators may be assigned broad duties such as acting as general manager for the designated water system, or specific duties, such as managing an infrastructure improvement

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking\_water/certlic/drinkingwater/docs/2025/administ rator-policy-handbook.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Administrator Policy Handbook

project on behalf of a designated water system. Non-administrator funding can be awarded to an administrator on behalf of a designated water system (e.g., O&M or bottled water).

The appointment of an administrator is an authority that the State Water Board may consider when necessary to ensure an adequate supply of affordable, safe drinking water to certain water systems. Water systems in need of an administrator are identified based on the Needs Assessment, the prioritization process outlined in Section IV, and the direct local knowledge and expertise of DDW District Office staff. The State Water Board recognizes the significance and potentially disruptive effect of ordering a designated water system to accept an administrator and therefore intends to use its authority carefully and will incorporate significant community engagement as outlined in the Administrator Policy Handbook.

Appointed administrators must be an eligible entity qualified to be an administrator through DDW's Administrator Request for Qualifications process<sup>5</sup>. Administrators appointed to provide services to designated water systems can be funded via the SADW Fund either through a singular system-specific funding agreement or through a master agreement that will assist multiple designated water systems. For administrators funded through a master agreement, system-specific administrator work plans are executed to outline the scope, budget, and schedule for administrator work in a given community (similar to the TA work plan process).

Administrator funding provided by the State Water Board is intended for the administrator's salary to conduct or oversee managerial, administrative, technical, operational, and legal services, as appropriate for the system, i.e., to take on the role of a general manager. The funding provided under the administrator agreement is not used for direct O&M activities or to fund capital projects. A water system managed by an administrator may still receive separate funding from the State Water Board for direct O&M support or capital projects, typically in the form of the administrator applying for funding on behalf of the system. The State Water Board may also provide separate funding for O&M support or capital projects, to an administrator, including an administrator's subsidiary company or designee as approved by the State Water Board, consistent with the Administrator Policy Handbook. Limited funding may also be provided to an administrator, consistent with the Administrator Policy Handbook, to address emergency repairs or maintenance activities for those systems that have inadequate reserves.

Since 2020 the State Water Board has appointed eight administrators to 15 designated water systems. There is currently one additional designated water system that is going through the process of having an administrator appointed. One administrator

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> <u>Administrator Request For Qualifications Guidelines</u> https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking\_water/certlic/drinkingwater/docs/rfq\_admin-(002).pdf

assignment has been completed and there are 14 assignments that are ongoing. Table E- 3 lists the designated water systems along with the appointed administrator with the status.

**Table E- 3. Administrator Approved Projects** 

Designated Water System	Administrator	Status
North Edwards Water District	California Rural Water Association	Completed
West Water Company	County of Sonoma	Active
Six Acres Water Company	Demery and Associates	Transferred <sup>6</sup>
Norcal Water Works	Provost & Pritchard	Active
Sierra Vista Association	Provost & Pritchard	Active
Old River Mutual Water Company	Provost & Pritchard	Active
South Kern Mutual Water Company	Provost & Pritchard	Active
Las Deltas Mutual Water System	Provost & Pritchard	Active
Keeler Community Service District	Provost & Pritchard	Active
Daggett CSD	Provost & Pritchard	Pending
Cazadero Water Company	Russian River Utility	Active
Valley Ford Association	Russian River Utility	Active
Six Acres Water Company	SRT Consultants	Active
Teviston Community Services District	Stantec Consulting Services, Inc.	Active
Lake Morena View	Stantec Consulting Services, Inc.	Active
Allensworth CSD	Stantec Consulting Services, Inc.	Active
East Orosi CSD	Tulare County Resource Management Agency	Active

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> On May 31, 2024, Demery and Associates notified the Board for Six Acres Water Company of their withdrawal as an administrator, effective August 30, 2024. Effective October 22, 2024, the State Water Board appointed SRT Consultants as full-scope administrator for the Six Acres Water Company.

The State Water Board is currently assessing the effectiveness of the administrator program along with the cost associated an administrator, as well as the realistic timeline for when an administrator's support would no longer be needed in a community.

## **PILOT PROJECTS**

Section IX.C of the FY 2020-21 FEP identified two pilot projects to be funded by the SADW Fund – the Innovative POU/POE Technology Pilot (POU/POE Pilot, led by DDW) and the Direct O&M Support Pilot (no longer being pursued)<sup>7</sup>. Updates to the POU/POE Pilot are provided below.

#### INNOVATIVE POU/POE TECHNOLOGY PILOT

The purpose of the POU/POE Pilot is to prepare an authoritative report on the current state and use of POU/POE technologies as drinking water solutions, and to provide suggestions for future research and development. Some of the limitations to be considered include needs related to regulation of POU/POE in PWSs, POU/POE as a drinking water solution for private domestic wells, performance certification and testing, installation challenges, and ensuring reliable O&M of the devices once installed.

The State Water Board developed the 2023 Drinking Water Point-of-Use Point-of-Entry Report (POU/POE Report)<sup>8</sup> in coordination with stakeholders (community groups, industry groups, and other stakeholders identified in the FY 2020-21 FEP). The POU/POE Report includes numerous recommendations to improve implementation of POU/POE as a drinking water solution. The POU/POE Report includes six recommended research efforts, comprising a POU/POE Pilot, to fill specific knowledge gaps for funding consideration. Three of the six projects have been funded initially via a TA master agreement with Stantec, and include:

- (1) Educational Strategy and Materials
- (2) Performance Certification
- (3) POU/POE Operator Education Cohort and Workforce Development The three initial projects will be completed in March 2026. Scopes of work for the remaining three projects will be developed by the end of 2025, with work anticipated to begin in 2026. The remaining three projects include:
- (4) Solutions for Bacteriological Contamination in Domestic Wells
- (5) Integration of Smart Technology in POU/POE Solutions
- (6) Key considerations in determining POU/POE Solutions

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> More information on the Direct O&M Program is included in a prior section of this Appendix.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> 2023 Drinking Water Point-of-Use Point-of-Entry Report
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/safer/docs/2023/2023-POU-POE-report.pdf

Projects 4 through 6 are estimated to cost between \$1.5 and \$2 million, which is included in the SADW Fund targets for FY 2025-26.

Lastly, the State Water Board will collaborate to write a white paper that reports the findings of the overall POU/POE Pilot. The white paper and other supporting communication materials will be added to the State Water Board's website to facilitate knowledge sharing across various stakeholder groups.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Proactive engagement with water systems and communities is a core aspect of the SAFER Program. State Water Board staff will increase engagement with water systems, tribal governments, community residents, domestic well owners, schools, local community-based organizations, or other funding recipients at all stages of the SAFER Program.

#### SAFER ADVISORY GROUP

<u>Purpose</u>: The SAFER Advisory Group is a consultative body that advises the State Water Board on the FEP, SADW Policy, implementation of the Fund, and other related analyses and components of the SAFER Program.

Structure: The Advisory Group is composed of 20 appointed members that represent public water systems, technical assistance providers, local agencies, non-governmental organizations, the public, California Native American Tribes, and residents served by Community water systems in DACs, state smalls, and domestic wells. The Advisory Group meets up to four times a year to discuss and provide feedback on the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund Expenditure Plan and other related policies and analyses. The meetings provide a chance for public participation and public comments. Feedback and recommendations from both Advisory Group members and the public are maintained with State Water Board members through meeting notes. Advisory Group meeting materials are available on the State Water Board website in English and Spanish, and the meetings are held with live interpretation services.

Application for membership: The Advisory Group application period typically opens every year in the summer. The State Water Board's Executive Director or designee reviews applications and appoints members in the fall/winter. Advisory Group members are provided with an orientation to the SAFER Program, which includes an overview of their role as an Advisory Group member, background on the SAFER Program, and an overview of upcoming discussion topics. Newly appointed members started their two-year terms in January 2025. Details for applying to join the SAFER Advisory Group for the 2026-2028 term will be posted on the SAFER website in July 2025 and applications will be reviewed in Fall 2025.

#### PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Building public awareness and education of the SAFER Program is a priority for the State Water Board. State Water Board staff will continue implementing and revising a communication and outreach plan that outlines key actions and deliverables for educating, informing, and engaging various audiences on the SAFER Program. The following goals and potential strategies are included in the communication and outreach plan:

- (1) Increase awareness of the SAFER Program and SB 200 regulatory tools, funding, and approaches.
- (2) Build broad support for regulatory and enforcement efforts (e.g., consolidations, administrators, etc.) and garner acceptance of State and Regional Water Boards regulatory approach among affected communities through education about drinking water quality issues.
- (3) Increase opportunities for transparency, awareness, and engagement with the public throughout SAFER Program development and implementation.
- (4) Employ a proactive approach to obtaining applications and requests for funding by engaging directly with communities, water systems, and tribes.
- (5) Promote success stories through various media forums.

#### PARTNERING TO EXPAND OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

In 2022, the SAFER Program launched an outreach and engagement strategy intended to increase early community engagement with SAFER; keep local drinking water projects on track; identify potential risks, issues, or delays; build local capacity; and create a path towards equitable and resilient water governance. Partnering with and funding community experts to conduct local outreach and engagement activities may catalyze collaborative solutions in hard-to-reach communities. The strategy involves several types of Outreach and Engagement Partners:

- Funding Partner enters into a funding agreement with the State Water Board and funds Community Partners for outreach and engagement activities. The Funding Partner is a liaison between the State Water Board and Community Partners and helps address barriers to accessing funding for outreach. The State Water Board has identified Stantec as the first Funding Partner and they have a recently executed work plan to provide assistance to hard-to-reach communities. State Water Board staff and Stantec have identified specific communities for this focused engagement effort and will begin the process of onboarding Community Partners in spring 2025.
  - Community Partners receive funding from Funding Partners for outreach and engagement activities in selected communities with drinking water challenges.
     Community Partners foster inclusive cultures and are experts in grassroots organizing, community education, outreach and engagement, and community capacity building.

Technical Assistance Providers have separate funding agreements with the State
Water Board to provide administrative, technical, operational, legal, managerial,
and/or community engagement support to failing water systems. Technical
Assistance Providers oversee the subcontracting and management of various types
of assistance for communities and assist water systems that may not have the
technical capacity to address drinking water challenges on their own.

#### TRIBAL OUTREACH

The State Water Board understands that California tribes face unique challenges to providing safe and affordable drinking water to their communities. Although federally regulated tribal water systems are regulated by U.S. EPA and not by the State Water Board, there are federal funding gaps that the SAFER Program could support. The SAFER Program engages with California tribal nations to collaboratively develop triballed drinking water solutions.

The State Water board, in coordination with the U.S. EPA, DWR, IHS, and other partners, have established regular and ongoing coordination meetings to share data, identify tribal water system funding gaps, and prioritize outreach efforts for tribal water systems. State Water Board staff in the OPP proactively reach out to tribal water systems and track progress on tribal drinking water solutions.

# COMMUNITY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING

The SAFER Program's workforce development efforts are focused on job and workforce creation to support the long-term sustainability, which includes O&M and TMF capacity, of small DAC drinking water systems. The State Water Board is exploring opportunities to leverage existing efforts within the State Water Board, CalEPA, and other CCI programs to incorporate water sector workforce needs. Involvement of community leaders and residents is supported through the State Water Board's new and established TA programs.

In FY 2019-20, State Water Board staff began working with the California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) and University Enterprises, Inc. to develop a workforce development program, but these efforts were delayed due to the COVID-19 emergency. In 2022, State Water Board staff reinitiated discussions with the CWDB and began looking for synergies and intersections between workforce development programs being offered by the CWDB and those offered by the drinking water sector, with particular focus on drinking water operator training and retention.

In 2023, State Water Board staff began interviewing representatives from stakeholder groups involved in workforce development within the San Joaquin Valley to better understand what is needed at the local level to advance workforce development, what is already being done, and where challenges and opportunities may exist to leverage

efforts and build partnerships. In a future phase, a small stakeholder working group will be convened to further identify and advance local workforce development initiatives through partnerships and collaboration. This effort will serve as a pilot project that can be replicated elsewhere in the state.

As this program evolves, State Water Board staff will continue to consider opportunities to implement racial equity measures, consistent with the State Water Board's Racial Equity Resolution and associated Racial Equity Action Plan.

#### **EXISTING EFFORTS**

The State Water Board currently funds third-party capacity building, through the SADW Fund, to develop and conduct training workshops covering all aspects of operating and maintaining a PWS, including the legal responsibilities of PWS board members. The State Water Board will continue to expand these programs, working with members of impacted communities to provide support for local training and apprenticeship programs.

DFA staff also manages the State Water Board's Drinking Water Operator Certification Program (DWOCP). The DWOCP is responsible for the testing and certification of water treatment and water distribution operators throughout the state of California.

In February 2021, DWOCP transitioned to computer-based testing to allow greater testing accessibility and opportunities at more than 30 vendor hosted sites throughout California. DFA staff expanded their program improvement efforts, in collaboration with stakeholders, to address the issues and concerns related to operator certification and workforce challenges. In July 2022, DFA staff, in coordination with the State Water Board's Division of Information Technology, initiated an online application submittal portal project. Under a phased approach, the online application submittal portal became operational in September 2023 with the launch of Phase I.

Since the launch of Phase I, continued development of the portal has remained a priority for DFA staff and subsequent phases were launched in October 2024, December 2024, and February 2025. Operators now have the ability to access their profile through the portal and view their certifications, certification expiration dates, track application statuses, submit applications for all grades of drinking water distribution operator examination and drinking water treatment operator examination electronically, and review and resolve application deficiencies. The development of the ability to submit applications to renew drinking water distribution operator certifications and drinking water treatment operator certifications electronically has been initiated and is expected to launch in 2026.

# **Appendix F. Median Household Income Determination Methodology**

In general, the median household income (MHI) determination for a community water system (CWS) will be based on the entire permitted service area of the CWS. The MHI and Economic Status Determination Methodology can be found online at: <a href="https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking\_water/certlic/drinkingwater/documents/needs/2024/2024MHI-caclulation.pdf">https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking\_water/certlic/drinkingwater/documents/needs/2024/2024MHI-caclulation.pdf</a>

Public water system (PWS) MHI data can be found on the SAFER Dashboard website at:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking\_water/certlic/drinkingwater/saferdashboard.html.

Domestic Well and/or State Small System MHI data can be found at the following Risk Assessment website:

https://gispublic.waterboards.ca.gov/portal/apps/experiencebuilder/experience/?id=ece2b3ca1f66401d9ae4bfce2e6a0403&page=Homepage.

If the MHI cannot be determined due to unavailable American Community Survey (ACS) data or the available data is not considered representative based on consultation with DDW or Regional Board staff, an income survey may be conducted. An impartial third party must conduct an income survey in accordance with the current Multiagency Income Survey Guidelines.

A non-transient non-community (NTNC) owned by a K-12 public school district is deemed to serve a severely disadvantaged community because the primary users are minor students. Minors generally have incomes below 60 percent (60%) of the statewide MHI. All other eligible NTNCs and the MHI of the small community they serve will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis based upon the intended customer base.

For a consolidation including the extension of water service by a PWS to a small community not currently being served by a PWS, for purposes of providing reduced interest rates and PF, the MHI of the PWS extending service/the Receiving Water System or the community receiving service/Subsumed Water System may be considered, consistent with statutory requirements. Grant eligibility for state small water systems or individual residences may be determined based on the best fit block group, an income survey, individual household certifications, or a combination thereof.

#### **Appendix E. SAFER Program Updates**

If a project will benefit a system that has industrial/commercial connections that account for greater than ten percent of the total water consumption, then grant/PF funding may be reduced for costs attributable to industrial/commercial use. In addition, project components that are solely for industrial/commercial use (e.g., water meters at an industrial/commercial facility) generally are not grant/PF eligible. On a case-by-case basis, the Deputy Director of DFA may approve grant/PF for industrial/commercial connections for consolidation projects for good cause. Individual project components such as water meters or private laterals that benefit individual facilities such as the following are not considered industrial/commercial connections and, therefore, may be eligible for grant/PF: a public K-12 school, a not-for-profit K-12 private school, a not-for-profit daycare facility, a not-for-profit labor camp, a not-for-profit elder care facility, a not-for-profit health care facility, or a not-for-profit facility serving a tribe.

## **Appendix G. Funding Process and Improvement**

DFA implements the State Water Board's financial assistance programs, which include loan and grant funding for drinking water projects through the SAFER Program, as well as other types of projects such as construction of municipal sewage and water recycling facilities, remediation for underground storage tank releases, watershed protection projects, and nonpoint source pollution control projects.

The funding process, from the submittal of a complete application to the end of a project, has five phases, shown in figure below. Descriptions below focus on how the funding process would go for a capital planning or construction project.

### **Funding Process Overview**



#### **Prepare Application**

- In this phase, the potential recipient prepares and submits a complete application through FAAST. More information on applying for SAFER Program funding is included in Section IX.C. of this FEP.
- This phase can take a few months to many months depending on several factors such as the availability and completeness of key documents. In cases of consolidation, preparation of these documents can take longer as more than one entity is involved.

#### **Review Application**

- In this phase, DFA staff review the application's various packages (i.e., General, Environmental, Technical, Financial, and Legal) and prepares the Master File.
   (A master file is a compilation of application documents, reviews, and clearances for a project).
- This phase can also take a few months to many months, again based on many factors. Each project is unique, but some reasons review might take longer is if the project is controversial, on federal land, or if the applicant is undergoing litigation.
- The applicant is notified at the end of this phase.

#### **Prepare Financing Agreement**

 This phase includes scope negotiation between DFA and the potential recipient, financing agreement preparation, and agreement routing for approvals and execution.

 This phase typically takes several months up to a year, depending on the nature and complexity of a project.

## **Post-Execution Project Management**

- Once the financing agreement is executed, project work begins. This phase includes ongoing project management by DFA staff, final budget approval (FBA), amendments, and disbursements.
- Depending on the project, this phase can last from months to years.

## **Project Closeout**

• This phase includes the final invoice, final project inspection, and project closeout and can take weeks to months.

# **Priority Funding Process Improvements for FY 2024-25**

Table G.1. FY 2024-25 Process Improvements in Process

Improvement	Fiscal Year Identified	Description	Status
Bridge Loan Funding to Initial Agreement	2021-22	Investigate when and how to include bridge loan financing in the initial construction financing agreements to reduce project delays while the FBA is processed.	In Development
Comprehensive State Revolving Fund (SRF) Policy Review for Streamlining Opportunities	2021-22	Holistic review of the Drinking Water SRF (DWSRF) and Clean Water SRF (CWSRF) Policies to identify opportunities to streamline both funding programs.	In Development
Guidelines for Consolidation Projects Update	2021-22	Update the Guidelines for Consolidation Projects (Appendix A of the DWSRF Policy).	In Development
Increased Encumbrance Amount	2021-22	Procedures to reduce cost increase amendments due to inaccurate engineer's cost estimate. Request costs projections based on realistic project schedules and if necessary, provide guidance to PMs to increase the construction line item about the engineer's cost estimate.	Piloting
Streamline Planning Application Review	2021-22	Investigate use of the Urgent Drinking Water application and review for DWSRF planning projects. Incorporate the Alt-F procedures once approved.	In Development
Streamline the Final Budget Approval (FBA) Process	2021-22	Develop FBA procedures to streamline approval of cost increase requests because bids exceed initial cost estimate. Identify specific workflow improvements to reduce time and resources associated with duplicative tasks. Develop new FBA documents, procedures, update the Wiki/SharePoint, add due diligence procedures, and develop training.	In Development

Improvement	Fiscal Year Identified	Description	Status
Collaboration with Division of Drinking Water (DDW) on Enforcement	2022-23	Collaborate with DDW on potential enforcement actions and/or directives associated with funding and/or TA requests to ensure that projects are not stalled and that the water system is responsible for meeting the requirements of the compliance actions.	In Development
Comprehensive CWSRF/DWSRF Procedure Manual	2022-23	Establish and implement a SharePoint uniform procedural manual. Ensure that the manual is in a centralized/accessible place and kept up to date with current policies and procedures.	In Development
Develop Pledge Pool Addition Criteria and Document Review/Procurement	2022-23	Develop a process and guidelines for selection of Pledge Pool projects for consideration. Document the selection process and securing the proper documentation for due diligence reviews prior to bond sales.	In Development
Establish a DFA Training Academy	2022–23	Identify individual training classes. Coordinate with Water Board's Training Academy to develop training curriculum for project managers and analysts.	In Development
Establish SharePoint as Digital Workspace	2022-23	Develop vision and framework for SharePoint digital workspace amongst sections. Establish master file in LGTS and master file Adobe rules.	In Development
LGTS Training for Project Managers and Analysts	2022-23	Develop training or review and update project records page in the procedure documents in the shared location.	In Development
Policy and Procedure Streamline – Indirect Cost (IDC)	2022-23	Develop an IDC eligibility framework for the loans/grants funding programs, including SRFs, GO Bonds, and SADW. Expected to reduce conflicts when co-funding.	In Development

Improvement	Fiscal Year Identified	Description	Status
Produce GLRF/215 from LGTS	2022-23	Identify all data elements in LGTS related to the GLRF and Form 215. Coordinate with the LGTS contractor to make the necessary changes and incorporate them into the database to be able to develop the forms. The LGTS contractor will add the functionality of developing the forms in LGTS.	On hold
Provide Guidance for Alternatives Analysis	2022-23	Develop guidance for applicants and TA providers addressing the alternatives analysis that is required. Include relevant requirements from the Policy, IUP, SERP, and/or other applicable documentation.	In Development
Reduce Redundant Data Input Requirements by Linking Fields in Various Forms and Software Programs	2022-23	Evaluate how project-level data is collected, analyzed, and utilized. Determine how LGTS can be used as a data source to generate forms and other documents.	Overarching Goal
Update Project Manager (PM) Expectations	2022-23	Update Project Manager Expectations with existing and new KPIs for communication with internal and external stakeholders.	Under Review for Approval
Establish Cross- Organizational Teams	DFA Action Plan	Promote understanding of respective roles/responsibilities. Jointly explore how to better assist communities we serve by visiting those communities. Identify common challenges, potential solutions, and evaluate effectiveness of process improvements/KPIs.	In Development
Establish Mentors Or "Buddies" For New Staff	DFA Action Plan	Ensure each new staff person is assigned an experienced peer to serve as a mentor or "buddy" during their first year with DFA.	Piloting

## **Completed Process Improvements since FY 2019-20**

The following table describes improvements made since FY 2019-20 relative to the funding process phases described above to streamline internal processes and coordination.

**Table G.2. Completed Process Improvements since FY 2019-20** 

Improvement	Description
Administrator	Use of an administrator master agreement for qualified entities that can serve multiple counties or statewide
Adobe Sign to Execute Agreements	Implement Adobe Sign for the digital signing of agreements/amendments by recipients and DFA.
Application Status Tool Update	Review existing application status report in LGTS and make modifications to include the additional information outlined in the State Auditors report. Coordinate with the LGTS contractor to make the necessary changes in LGTS and with DIT to make modification to the public facing tool.
Combine Multiple Projects for Same Entity into a Single Agreement	Where possible, multiple grant projects for the same entity are being combined into a single agreement to minimize processing and paperwork related to having multiple agreements.
Continued DDW/DFA/OPP Coordination	DFA and DDW regularly coordinate on projects during the development of the funding agreement, in review of project deliverables, and in ensuring projects are properly constructed to meet permit requirements. DDW, DFA, and OPP are increasing this coordination through regular DDW District-specific quarterly meetings to evaluate progress on addressing needs of small DAC water systems. These discussions include evaluation of needed enforcement and compliance efforts; progress on completing State Water Board funded projects; identification of unmet needs, such as TA or interim replacement water; status of community outreach and engagement; and evaluation of opportunities for and progress in consolidation and administrator appointment efforts. DDW and DFA have also started meeting monthly on various consolidation projects. OPP will also help facilitate discussions with tribes, as appropriate.

Improvement	Description
Credit Review Memo for Cost Increases for 100% Grant Projects	A credit review is part of a financial capacity review that is performed to establish a borrower's credit to help ensure that repayable financing will be repaid. As a best practice, credit reviews have been conducted for all projects during the eligibility review and again should the project require a cost increase. Where repayable
	financing is not contemplated, a streamlined financial capacity review will be undertaken that assesses the sustainability of the system.
Develop Income Survey and Second Home Survey Procedures	Approved as Appendix B to the Policy for Developing the Fund Expenditure Plan for the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund, these procedures for staff and applicants to demonstrate eligibility and reduce the number of applications stalled
	while an eligibility determination is determined.
Develop Standard Operating Environmental Procedures	Develop Standard Operating Procedures standardizing the DFA environmental review processes. The purpose is to develop standard processes to assist staff with consistent review of projects for compliance with CEQA and federal environmental cross-cutters.
Develop Streamlined Financial Review Procedures for Small Community/100% Non-	Financial Review Framework for 100% non-repayable projects. Recommendations will be incorporated in the revisions of the SRF policies per the schedules for those respective policies. Advise the team working on the Expedited Drinking Water
repayable Financing Projects	Funding Program on appropriate streamlined financial review procedures. Consider alternatives for privates, consolidation.
Develop TA Drinking Water Master Agreement Template	Develop a master agreement template to be used for new drinking water TA agreements.
Develop TA Internal Procedures	Develop a master agreement template to be used for new drinking water TA agreements.
Document Communication with Applicants/Recipients	Establish application communication policy.
Drinking Water Application Package Update	Align application with current procedures and Intended Use Plan. Revise application templates and guidance accordingly. Survey stakeholders for comments.
Drinking Water TA Provider RFQ Process	The Division solicited statements of qualifications from entities that are interested in being added to the qualified drinking water TA provider pool.

Improvement	Description
DWSRF IUP	The FY 2020-21 DWSRF IUP was revised to ease funding restrictions on planning
	projects and larger dollar amount projects. These modifications are retained in the proposed FY 2021-22 DWSRF IUP.
Earlier Engagement with ERU	Coordinate to incorporate participation of Environmental Section staff into appropriate
Staff Procedures	project planning meetings to assure adequate development of the environmental package. Expectations for Environmental Review staff participation in project
	meetings will be incorporated into appropriate procedures described on the Wiki.
Earlier Management Review of	DFA management has been added earlier on in the funding agreement review
Project Scope and Budget	process during scope and budget development to catch potential issues and redirect early, which should minimize re-work.
Electronic Disbursement	In June of 2021, Disbursement Staff conducted a training for PM's to formalize the
Procedures and Training for PMs	electronic disbursement process.
Electronic Invoice Submittal	Using electronic invoice submittals for recipients through FAAST in addition to
	mailing hard copies has allowed DFA staff easier access to invoices for review purposes during telework.
Electronic Processing of	In April 2021, DFA implemented use of Adobe Sign for encumbrance documents (i.e.,
Encumbrance Documents	Grant and Loan Request Form and Standard Form 215) which replaces the need for wet signatures by the DFA Deputy Director or Assistant Deputy Director.
Electronic Signature Process for	Amend TA funding agreements to include language that allows for electronic
TA Work Plans	signatures to execute amendments to the agreement such as work plans.
Emergency Grant Agreement	Streamlined grant agreement template and process to expeditiously award
Template/Process	emergency drinking water funding and other relatively straightforward, short duration projects.
Environmental California	Projects meeting certain requirements can proceed with a CEQA-only review which
Environmental Quality Act	reduces the need to conduct certain studies and get concurrence from federal
(CEQA)-only Review	agencies on certain environmental aspects of a project.
Escalated PO and Invoice Review and Approval w/ DAS	Develop/memorialize escalation PO and invoice criteria, approval, and submittal processes to Accounting by SPOC.
(Develop and Post Procedures)	processes to Accounting by SFOC.

Improvement	Description
Establish a Compliance & Surveillance Unit dedicated email inbox and monitoring procedures	The objective is to establish a dedicated email inbox and monitoring procedures to receive and distribute specific email communication in/from a central location, monitored by the staff of the Compliance and Surveillance Unit. This will help ensure critical compliance reporting information and requests are received and distributed timely.
Establish Expedited Funding Program	Draft program guidelines to establish expedited drinking water funding for small communities.
Evaluate Projects in Queue	By evaluating which projects have complete applications and are in the queue for review and funding agreement preparation, DFA can better match appropriate funding sources before timing becomes critical with fiscal year-end deadlines.
Expedited Disbursement Review and Approval Process PO (Develop and Post Procedures)	Develop a process with KPIs to support Item 2 of the Disbursement Section of the DFA Action Plan.
FI\$CaL	Evaluate best timing for entering a new applicant into FI\$Cal to minimize time to route a new financing agreement.
Gen/Tech Checklist Redesign - Drinking Water	Revise the general/technical drinking water checklists to reduce duplicative efforts and merge checklists as appropriate. Revisions will be done in conjunction with application package revisions (separate effort).
Identify and Establish Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Milestones in the Application, Agreement, and FBA Processes	Identify existing and proposed new KPIs, receive input, train staff, post final KPIs in central location, analyze effectiveness of KPIs and adjust as needed.
Improved Tracking of Final Disbursement Dates	Timely amendment requests can reduce project delays associated with date extensions. Determine if new checks are necessary to ensure timely amendment requests. 2021-2022 (FEP)

Improvement	Description
Interim Water Supplies and Emergencies	<ol> <li>Enter into regional agreements where possible rather than water system-specific agreements.</li> <li>Utilize a checklist to be completed by the funding recipient, as appropriate, to self-certify specific details of a funding agreement. (i.e., contact information, budget summary, deliverable submittal dates, etc.) in place of holding a teleconference.</li> <li>Write scopes to be more broad describing main tasks but allowing for details to be approved by DFA staff as the project develops.</li> <li>Use of advance approval authority for simple projects to allow direct invoicing for services like bottled or hauled water.</li> </ol>
Internal Decision Tracking	The Division created business rules to track program, policy and process decisions to improve consistency among the
Legal Consultation Request Form	Streamline legal consultations on loans.
Master File Documents Button in LGTS	Coordinate with the LGTS contractor to add a new button for master file documents to be uploaded.
Perform Concurrent Reviews to Resolve Issues as Early as Possible	The Master File will be provided to the assigned OCC attorney at the same time the Master File is routed to the Contracts Unit for drafting. The attorney may be able to identify and resolve issues before receiving the Funding Agreement for review. Incorporate into procedures.
Perform Legal Eligibility Reviews Concurrent with Contract Drafting (Prior to Routing)	The Master File will be provided to the assigned OCC attorney at the same time the Master File is routed to the Contracts Unit for drafting.
Pre-application	The pre-application process allows DFA staff to engage with interested parties early to better assist with the application, connect interested parties with TA providers if needed, and determine which funding source within the larger SAFER Program is most appropriate.
Pre-determine Funding Sources for Projects	Streamline the application review of certain projects by identifying the funding source and associated requirements early. Improvement piloted and expanded under another name "Batch Encumbrance and timing of OCC eligibility review.

Improvement	Description
Process Improvements Work Group	In FY 2020-21 DFA formed an internal Process Improvement Work Group to identify program inefficiencies, evaluate potential improvements, and revise internal procedures accordingly. The focus is to reduce the amount of time needed to approve projects, execute funding agreements, and process reimbursement requests. Process improvements implemented because of this work group will be described in future Fund Expenditure Plans. Note that DDW is also working on evaluating their regulatory process and identifying areas for improvement. DDW and DFA will consider where respective processes intersect and interplay and how they can be improved. In the future, as this is discussed with the SAFER Advisory Group, there may be opportunity to invite additional stakeholder input on process improvements.
Project Closeout (hardcopies) for CWSRF and DWSRF planning and construction	Develop procedures to closeout hardcopy master files for planning and construction of CWSRF and DWSRF projects.
Project Schedule and Standardize Scopes for Construction Agreements	Standardize scope of work language and provide Project Schedules template to improve consistency across DFA units/sections.
Reestablish Periodic Coordination Meeting with US EPA	Meet with U.S. EPA to discuss and review SRF expectations for both the loan program and for projects and communities that will be funded with principal forgiveness. Feedback and information gathered from these discussions will help inform revisions to the SRF policies. Includes TMF expectations of USEPA for SRF.
Review current delegation authorities and revise as appropriate	Evaluate current division delegation authorities and expand or amend as deemed appropriate.
Review Effectiveness of Documents Requested in the Application	Review the purpose of the SRF application requirements and the effectiveness of the attachments to meet their intended purpose. Develop recommendations to improve the application to ensure DFA fulfills its regulatory requirements while streamlining the requirements for applicants. Merged into the Application Update improvement.

Improvement	Description
Revised DWSRF IUP to include Infrastructure Appropriation	The Board adopted a resolution in July 2021 incorporating Budget Act of 2021 (SB 170) "Infrastructure Appropriation" into the DWSRF IUP. The additional funding allows DFA to make additional grant/pf available to eligible applicants with qualified project. This remove the need for a loan component in most DWSRF projects which is expected to reduce application processing times.
Revised MHI Determination Guidelines	Revised MHI Determination Guidelines were added to the Policy as Appendix A in December 2020. The revised guidelines will reduce the number of income surveys that need to be conducted to determine a system's eligibility for funding, which has historically caused delays.
SAFER Clearinghouse	The State Water Board has initiated the development of a new database platform, known as the SAFER Clearinghouse, which will collect, manage, and analyze data from a variety of internal and external data sources to effectively implement the SAFER Program and track progress toward bringing a safe and affordable drinking water supply to communities. Once completed, over the course of the next several years, the SAFER Clearinghouse will be used by the State Water Board to oversee and manage the identification and prioritization of high priority water systems and domestic wells; the provision of TA; assigned Administrators; provision of interim water supplies; status of violations and compliance with issued enforcement orders; as well as tracking the funding of planning and construction projects to address drinking water issues. It will also be used to demonstrate progress toward achieving the human right to water, and provide information to the State Water Board, the public, and stakeholders on SAFER Program implementation.
Staff Training	DDW, DFA, and OPP have made efforts to onboard and train new staff through a combination of cross training across Divisions as well as internal training. In DFA, for example, monthly webinars are being conducted for both technical and administrative staff to provide training on the different phases of the funding process.
Standardize Special Conditions	Standardize common special technical conditions to improve consistency across the Division.
Streamline Application for Specific Projects	Identify in the 2021-2022 (FEP). Create a fast-track application/review for the DWSRF program to meet the most urgent needs. Opportunities to streamline specific projects were identified and are listed as improvements.

Improvement	Description
TA for non-DACs	The Division amended TA master agreements to allow for TA resources to assist
	small, non-DAC applicants with good cause to complete planning activities.
Technical Assistance (TA)	1) Delegation of authority for funding approvals of TA routine and non-controversial
	projects to the Supervising Engineer level.
	2) Revised work plan template and budget to be used by TA providers.
	3) Increased coordination with TA providers on work plan priorities.
	4) Developed guidance for TA providers on best practices for planning projects.
	5) Provided training to TA providers on application process, revised work plan and
	budget templates
Uniform Cover Page for Invoice	Use of a uniform cover page for invoice submittals helps the recipient organize
Submittals	invoices and submit necessary supporting documentation. This also helps DFA and
	accounting staff in their reviews and minimizes back and forth with the recipient for
Undete Delegated Authority for	missing information.
Update Delegated Authority for Approving TA Projects	Develop an updated delegation memo with the recommended changes. Potential team members would include the TA unit seniors, TA supervisor, and one OCC
Approving 1A Projects	attorney for review and approval of the delegation memo. Include under Review
	current delegation authorities and revise as appropriate.
Update Quarterly Progress	Ensure consistent and timely review of project quarterly progress reports and follow
Report Review Process	up compliance steps.
Update TA Workplans to Ensure	Coordinate to revise TA workplan to ensure milestones are included to meet the DFA
Critical Deliverables are	environmental package requirements.
Identified	
Updated Package Checklists	The main package checklists have been updated recently to ensure that all relevant
	information and documentation is being requested up front to minimize back and forth
	between DFA staff and the applicant during the review process.
Use of a Digital Master File	A master file is a compilation of application documents, reviews and clearances for a
	project and is used for project review and routing for approvals prior to funding
	agreement execution. As a result of the telework situation, DFA has replaced the
	physical master file with a digital master file which has increased the ability to
Lies of a Final Increasion	conduct reviews electronically.
Use of a Final Inspection Checklist	This has helped ensure all necessary requirements are verified upon project
CHECKIISI	completion.

Improvement	Description
Use of Expedited Amendments	Using an expedited amendment process for time extensions or FBAs that do not include a cost increase can save time.
Use of Phased Approach for Complex Projects	For some complicated projects, a phased approach is being implemented. For example, construction of all elements related to addressing an emergency need would be part of the first phase, with the remaining items as phase two. This helps get critical parts of a project done faster.
Use of TA for Non-DAC	The Division amended TA master agreements to allow for TA to assist non-DACs with good cause.
Use of TA for Planning Projects	TA is being used more often to conduct planning for projects, which eliminates the need for small DAC systems to go through a separate, potentially lengthy process to apply for planning grants.
Virtual Inspection Procedures	During the COVID-19 emergency, virtual inspection procedures were established to ensure that project site inspections, including the final inspection, could be conducted appropriately and adequately in a virtual setting
Vision Statement/Description of Future State, Articulate Organizational Cultural Values	Develop vision statements for small communities and SRF loan programs, respectively. Teams will be led by a DFA manager. Feedback will be solicited from DFA staff and key internal and external partners. Develop list of key organizational values that are critical to the successful implementation of our drinking water and clean water funding programs. Feedback will be solicited from DFA staff.
Waive Updated Financials	Clarify when the current year's financial documents can be waived or conditioned in the financing agreement to continue the application review. This may reduce the number of applications that stall due to an incomplete application. Merged into the Alt-F improvement in Table 2.
Work Plan Development and Approval	Create a template letter that will outline expectations of TA providers for work plan submittals. Develop an internal memo concurrently that would establish DFA expectations of the approval and issuance of submitted work plans. Potential team members could include two TA staff, one TA senior, and the TA supervisor for review and approval of the template letter and internal memo.

Improvement	Description
Advanced Payment Guidelines	Develop comprehensive advance payment guidelines and procedures that can be generally applied to eligible programs.
Application Status Tool Update (Phase II)	Review existing application status report in LGTS and make modifications to include the additional information outlined in the State Auditors report.  Coordinate with the LGTS contractor to make the necessary changes in LGTS and
OL W. ( I.B.: I:	with DIT to make modification to the public facing tool.
Clean Water and Drinking Water Policies	Expand recent steps made to reduce the number of application documents required for 100% PF/grant planning projects by implementing similar improvements for 100% PF/grant construction projects, with a focus on building TMF prior to and during their project by providing TA and other assistance.
CWSRF Planning Project Streamlining	Similar to the DWSRF efforts. Streamline the process, standardize language, and ease transition from planning to construction.
Grant Eligibility Determination and Criteria Established by IUP	Simplify the grant eligibility criteria in the IUP and ensure that review checklists are not tied to a specific year's IUP. For example, currently the DWSRF general checklist template gets updated annually because it includes a copy of the IUP's Appendix E: Construction Project Grant and PF Limitations for an Eligible PWS. Consider replacing FY-specific information by requiring that the PM instead insert or attach relevant information from the IUP being applied (i.e., attach a highlighted copy of the table). OCC requested some type of documentation for determination of grant eligibility (DWSRF).
Historic Context for Wastewater and Drinking Water Facilities	Develop a statewide historic context for drinking water and wastewater treatment facilities that will aid internal staff and funding applicants in the evaluation of these facilities for the National Register of Historic Places and California Register of Historical Resources.

Improvement	Description
Modify Travel Expense	Propose SRF Policy amendment language to require recipients, when submitting
Submittal Requirements & Limit	reimbursement for travel related expenses, to submit cost within the parameters of
Review Process	the Agreement and Policy, no longer submitting backup documentation unless the
	requested, and retaining such backup documentation within their own records for
	audit purposes.
Update TA Procedure Manual	Update the TA Funding Program Procedure Manual that is available on the Technical
	Assistance Funding Program webpage to reflect program changes.
1) Streamline Claims Process	1) Improve the workflow between the 17th floor disbursement units and PM, both
	regarding receiving and recording of RRs, timeliness of PM reviews, changing the
2) Escalated Claim Approval	dispute/cut process, and minimizing the need for unnecessary RRs (\$0.00).
and Processing	
0) 5	2) Develop/memorialize escalation claim criteria, approval, and submittal processes
3) Develop	to Accounting by SPOC.
Invoice/Reimbursement	2) 04
Request (RR) Status	3) Standardize communication with recipients to inform them of when a
Communication Procedure for	claim/RR/invoice has been approved, providing detail of any adjustments, and to
Recipients  Due Diligence Financial Review	included project specific references in the email.  1) Expand recent steps made to reduce the number of application documents
Due Diligerice Financial Review	required for 100% PF/grant planning projects by implementing similar improvements
	for 100% PF/grant construction projects, with a focus on building TMF.
	101 100 70 1 1 7grant construction projectes, with a local on ballating 11vii .
	2) Discontinue the need to continually ask for updated financial documents.
	3) For 100% PF/grant projects, do not require that the financial review be revised
	simply because it references the previous year's IUP; add a checkbox on the route
	slip that accomplishes the task of recording that the project supports eligibility under
	whichever IUP is being applied.

Improvement	Description
Project Manager Training and Performance Measures	Develop comprehensive training to review responsibilities, best practices, and recent process improvements. Set clear performance measures and track effectiveness.
SAFER Integration	Develop criteria for transferring small Drinking Water State Revolving Fund projects or Urgent Drinking Water Needs projects to the SAFER Program. Approve project scope and funding via a SAFER Technical Memo.

Appendix H. <i>link)</i>	FY 2024-25	Funding	Solution	List for F	ailing Sys	tems (	see
						37 I D	2 0 0

Appendix I. link)	FY 2025-26	Funding So	olution List	for At-Risk	Systems (	see
					38 I D	2 4 0

Appendix J. Technical Assistance (in development)					

The following methodology is utilized by the State Water Board's Division of Financial Assistance for calculating the cost per connection for drinking water and wastewater construction projects.

The State Water Board requires a cost per connection calculation to determine the funding eligibility for a construction project prior to the execution of an initial agreement, a cost increase amendment, and a final budget approval (FBA) amendment (if there is a cost increase).

The definitions for terms referenced in this document, in addition to the maximum grant/principal forgiveness (PF) funding limits that a community can receive, are set forth under the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) Intended Use Plans (IUPs), as applicable.

#### CALCULATION

The equation below (Equation 1) is used to calculate the cost per connection.

#### **Equation 1. Cost Per Connection**

Construction Project Cost + Prior State Water Board Funded Project Costs

Number of Residential Connections Benefiting from Project

#### CONSTRUCTION PROJECT COST

The construction project cost includes the construction funding requested from the State Water Board. Project costs may include, but are not limited to, construction, prepurchased material/equipment, real property/easement acquisition, change order contingency, force account (a public entity or agency using their own in-house workforce and equipment for construction, rather than hiring a contractor, which must be pre-approved by the State Water Board), connection fees, capacity purchase fees, permits, planning, design, construction management, and administrative costs. Additional eligible and ineligible construction costs can be found in the CWSRF and DWSRF Policies.

Construction and prior funds received from agencies other than the State Water Board are not considered in the calculation.

#### PRIOR STATE WATER BOARD FUNDED PROJECT COSTS

Prior State Water Board funded project costs include the funding that the benefiting community(ies) has received within the last five years. The five-year period is based on the funding agreement/workplan initial execution date and does not consider the date

that an agreement/workplan was amended to incorporate additional costs or to extend dates. Once the initial execution date exceeds five years, the associated agreement/workplan funds, including any cost increases via amendment(s), are not considered in the calculation.

Included in the calculation is any State Water Board grant/PF funding provided for planning, technical assistance (TA), urgent drinking water grant, Administrator, direct operation and maintenance support, and construction funding. The following funding is excluded from this calculation: groundwater grant program funding, consolidation incentive, loan funds, or funding under any supplemental IUP for the current or previous fiscal year(s).

#### BENEFITTING RESIDENTIAL CONNECTIONS

In general, the connections considered in the cost per connection calculation are permanent residential connections that are benefiting from the project. Permanent residential connections are those that intend to have occupants within a residence/household for more than six (6) months out of the year. Industrial, commercial, irrigation, agricultural, and transient non-community (such as campsites and recreational vehicle parks) are not grant/PF eligible and are not considered in the calculation.

Additional connection considerations include the following:

- For non-transient non-community (NTNC) water systems that serve a small disadvantaged community (DAC) or small severely disadvantaged community (SDAC), such as public K-12 schools, not-for-profit K-12 private schools, not-forprofit daycare facilities, not-for-profit labor camps, not-for-profit elder care facilities, and not-for-profit health care facilities, equivalent service connections can be determined by calculating the total number of staff, students, workers, residents, and/or patients, and dividing by 3.3, as determined in the Title 22 Drinking Water Regulations.
- For multi-family residential properties that are served by a single connection, such as apartment complexes or duplexes, and mobile home parks (MHPs) served by a master meter connection, the single connection can be treated as multiple service connections for the cost per connection calculation and are based on the number of households or housing units within the building, complex, or MHP. For example, if there is one connection serving an apartment complex consisting of five (5) residential units, then five (5) connections can be considered for the cost per connection calculation.
- For multi-use connections, such as a single connection serving a commercial business and residential units, the single connection can be treated as multiple service connections for the cost per connection calculation and is based on the number of residential units served by the connection.

- For state small water systems, the number of residential service connections that are receiving water for human consumption will be considered for the cost per connection calculation.
- For residential domestic wells, the number of residential service connections that are utilizing the domestic well(s) will be considered for the cost per connection calculation.
- For secondary homes (classified as vacation or seasonal homes), homes that are connected to the community's existing system will be considered for the cost per connection calculation regardless of whether the homes have occupants for six (6) months per year.
- Vacant lots that have an existing connection to the community's system or have an approved building permit may be considered for the cost per connection calculation.
- Accessory dwelling units (ADUs), such as a small residential unit that is located on a property that has a separate main residential home, units that have a submeter may be considered for the cost per connection calculation.

For consolidation or extension of service projects, the connections of the community(ies) benefiting from the project will be considered. If improvements to the receiving system are required for the consolidation or extension of service project, the receiving system connections benefiting from the project components can also be considered in the calculation. Two (2) common examples of a receiving system benefiting from a consolidation or extension of service project include:

- If a new pipeline is required within the receiving water system to connect to another community (or multiple communities), any permanent residential connections within the receiving system directly benefiting from the new pipeline, such as those connected to the pipeline and receiving water service, can be considered.
- If water system infrastructure (water source, treatment, storage, pump station, etc.) is required within the receiving system to connect to another community (or multiple communities), the permanent residential connections within the receiving system that are utilizing the infrastructure for water service can be considered.

If improvements are solely benefiting the receiving system and not the community(ies) that are being consolidated or receiving extended services, the connections associated with the receiving water system will be the only connections included in the calculation for those improvements.

#### PROJECTS INVOLVING MULTIPLE COMMUNITIES

Consolidation or extension of service projects often have a primary community that is involved due to their regulatory compliance status or the priority of the community; however, additional communities and/or private households are often added due to their proximity or as part of a large-scale regionalization project. For a project that is adding communities and/or private households to the primary consolidation/extension of

service project, the total project cost per connection must remain within the limits set forth in the CWSRF or DWSRF IUP. Furthermore, if the completion of the primary consolidation/extension of service project is not dependent on the additional communities and/or private households, and significant infrastructure is needed to add the communities and/or private households, the project costs associated with adding the additional communities and/or private households must also adhere to the cost per connection limits specified in the IUP. Any costs exceeding the limit for a specific community and/or private household added to the primary consolidation/extension of service project may not be grant/PF eligible. Depending on the overall project cost and cost per connection, the Deputy Director has the discretion to approve a higher cost per connection limit in accordance with the limits set forth elsewhere in this IUP. If the overall project cost and cost per connection limits are exceeded for Deputy Director approval, Board approval may be required.

Significant infrastructure that is needed to add communities and/or private households includes components that are not required for the primary consolidation or extension of service project, such as pump stations and significant transmission/distribution lines. Infrastructure such as laterals and minor piping that are needed to add communities and/or private households are not considered significant and can be considered as part of the primary consolidation/extension of service project.

Figure 1 shows examples of primary consolidation or extension of service projects that do not have significant infrastructure to include additional communities and/or private households. Conversely, Figure 2 shows examples of primary consolidation or extension of service projects that have significant infrastructure to include additional communities and/or private households and will require an additional cost per connection calculation for each additional community/private household. For the figures, a red circle indicates the receiving system, a blue circle indicates a subsumed system, and a green circle indicates a community served by a state small water system or private household. The straight black lines indicate a transmission pipeline, distribution pipeline, and/or lateral. The rectangle with a solid border is used to show the primary consolidation or extension of service project, and the rectangle with a dashed border is used to show the significant infrastructure added to the primary consolidation/extension of service project to add an additional community/private household.

Figure 1. Primary consolidation or extension of service projects

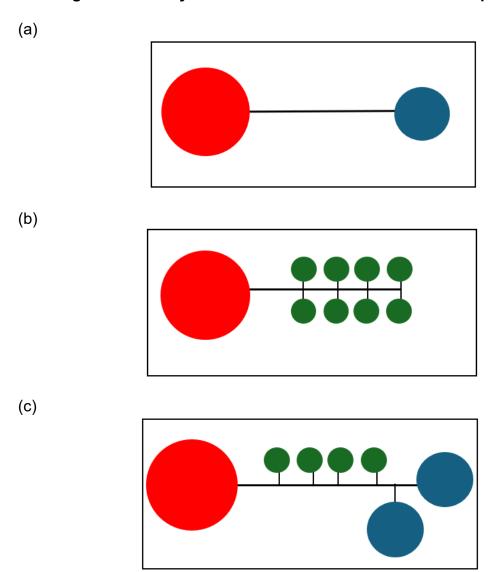


Figure 1(a) shows a consolidation between a receiving system and a single subsumed system, Figure 1(B) shows the consolidation of multiple private households with a receiving system, and Figure 1(c) shows the consolidation of multiple subsumed systems and private households via the same pipeline alignment, laterals, and minor piping. All these examples are considered a primary consolidation or extension of service project, and do not require an additional cost per connection calculation for each community/private household involved since there is not significant infrastructure to incorporate additional communities/private households.

Figure 2. Consolidation or extension of service projects with significant infrastructure to include additional communities

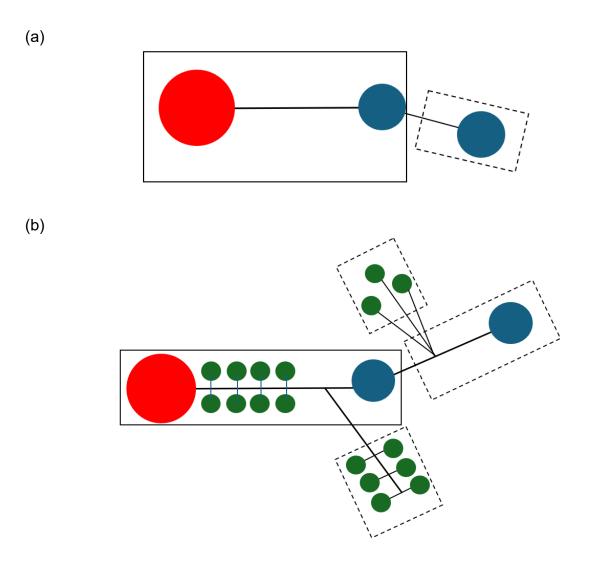


Figure 2(a) shows a consolidation of a receiving system and two (2) subsumed systems; however, the second subsumed system (far right) requires a significant length of pipeline that branches off the main pipeline alignment and is not required for the primary consolidation, thus triggering the cost per connection calculation for the specific community. Figure 2(b) includes the consolidation of private households and a subsumed system as part of the primary consolidation project but has additional pipelines branching off that incorporate two (2) sets of communities utilizing private systems and another subsumed system. As a result, an additional cost per connection calculation is required for these specific communities that are added to the primary consolidation project.

To determine the cost per connection for a specific community/private household for the types of projects identified in Figure 2, the cost per connection formula (Equation 1) will be used, and only the costs and connections associated with that specific community/private household will be included. State Water Board staff will coordinate with the applicant and/or engineering consultant to itemize the project costs associated with each specific community/private household added to the project. For construction costs, this includes the infrastructure that will primarily benefit the specific

community/private household (such as pipelines, storage tanks, treatment systems, etc.). For prior State Water Board costs, this includes agreements and workplans benefiting specific communities/private households.

If construction project costs (such as project-wide construction costs, allowance costs, etc.) and prior State Water Board project costs (such as planning, TA, etc.) cannot be clearly allocated to the primary consolidation/extension of service project or specific community/private household added to the project, then the remaining total of unallocated costs will be divided by the number of connections benefiting from the project, to determine the unallocated costs per connection. This value will then be multiplied by the connections associated with each specific community/private household added to the project (Equation 2) and added to the costs already allocated for the specific community/private household.

**Equation 2. Unallocated Cost for a Specific Community** 

 $\left(\frac{Total\ Unallocated\ Costs}{Number\ of\ Residential\ Connections\ Benefiting\ from\ Project}\right)x\ Number\ of\ Connections\ for\ Specific\ Community$ 

Assistance Program	Description	Funding Program	Approved Funding Amount	Approximate # of Households	Location of Households
Self-Help Enterprises Regional Bottled Water Program	The Self-Help Enterprises Regional Bottled Water Program will provide bottled water to households served by public water systems and private household wells, located in the Self-Help Enterprises Service Area (Kern, Kings, Tulare, Fresno, Madera, Merced, Mariposa, San Joaquin and Stanislaus), that have urgent drinking water needs.	SB 200 Safe and Affordable Drinking Water	\$ 9,707,680	3,600	Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Stanislaus, San Joaquin, and Tulare Counties
Rural Community Assistance Corporation (SB108 Drinking Water Well Replacement Program)	The Program provides funding for the replacement of failed drinking water wells for disadvantaged households that are served by domestic wells or for water systems serving disadvantaged communities with fewer than 15 service connections.	SB-108- General Fund SB-108- General Fund General Fund- Drought Emergency Support CA Emergency Relief Fund	\$ 11,069,014	50+	Statewide except in Self- Help Enterprises Service Area (Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Stanislaus, San Joaquin, and Tulare)

Assistance Program	Description	Funding Program	Approved Funding Amount	Approximate # of Households	Location of Households
Self-Help Enterprises Tanks & Hauled Water Program	The Program provides funding for the purchase and deliver temporary water storage tanks and hauled potable drinking water to households that have lost their water supply because of their well becoming dry, Assistance will be provided to homes until a long-term solution is in place. The agreement includes expanding the operations and maintenance in addition to a feasibility study to assess potential water source areas in drought locations.	AB 74 Provision 2.6(h),  SB 200 Safe and Affordable Drinking Water,  Drought Funding (General Fund),  General Fund Budget Act of 2022 Augmentation.	\$ 95,876,502	1490	Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Stanislaus, San Joaquin, and Tulare Counties

Appendix L. List of Programs to Assist Households Supplied by Domestic Wells							
Assistance Program	Description	Funding Program	Approved Funding Amount	Approximate # of Households	Location of Households		
Regional Private Domestic Water Well Abandonment, Repair, Replacement & Connection Program	The Program will develop and implement a Regional Private Domestic Water Well Abandonment, Repair, Replacement & Connection Program to assist disadvantaged households and state small water systems in Self-Help Enterprises' Service Area. The project will provide grant relief for domestic well abandonment, repair, or replacement, and to connect households to Public Water Systems where possible.	SB 200 Safe and Affordable Drinking Water  Drought Funding (General Fund),  CERF – Emergency Drinking Water  CERF – Drought	\$ 50,153,253	Approximately 678 Water Well repair/replacement, and 21 connections to public water systems	Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Stanislaus, San Joaquin, and Tulare Counties		
USDA Rural Development Household Water Well System Grants	The Program provides funding to qualified nonprofits and tribes to create a revolving loan fund for eligible individuals who own and occupy a home in an eligible rural area. The fund may be used to construct, refurbish, or service individually owned household water well systems. Terms for the loans include one percent fixed interest rate, 20-year maximum term, and an \$11,000 maximum loan per household.	USDA- federal funds	Varies	varies	<ul> <li>Rural areas and towns with populations of 50,000 or less</li> <li>Tribal lands in rural areas</li> </ul>		

Assistance Program	Description	Funding Program	Approved Funding Amount	Approximate # of Households	Location of Households
USDA Rural Development Single Family Housing Repairs Loans And Grants	The Program, also known as the Section 504 Home Repair program, provides loans to very-low-income homeowners to repair, improve or modernize their homes or grants to elderly very-low-income homeowners to remove health and safety hazards.  Maximum loan is \$40,000.  Maximum grant is \$10,000. Loans and grants can be combined for up to \$50,000 in assistance.	USDA - federal funds	varies	varies	Generally, rural areas with a population less than 35,000 are eligible.
Shasta County Drinking Water Drought Assistance Program	The Program will provide interim and long-term drinking water solutions to disadvantaged households with drought related water supply challenges and associated contamination or water quality issues.	SB 200 Safe and Affordable Drinking Water	\$2,474,998	varies	Shasta County
Imperial County Regional Point of Entry Installation and Urgent Drinking Water Needs Program	The Program will provide a point of entry (POE) water treatment system to qualified rural households to treat surface water from local canals, provide 2 years of operation and maintenance for each POE, and provide interim drinking water solutions to households with contaminated water and/or drought related water supply challenges.	SB 200 Safe and Affordable Drinking Water	\$3,184,725	50	Imperial County

Assistance Program	Description	Funding Program	Approved Funding Amount	Approximate # of Households	Location of Households
Santa Cruz County Regional Program	The Program will provide interim drinking water solutions to disadvantaged households with contaminated water and/or drought related water supply challenges.	SB 200 Safe and Affordable Drinking Water	\$601,000	50	Santa Cruz County
Butte County Regional Program	The Program will provide interim and long-term drinking water solutions to disadvantaged households with drought related water supply challenges	Safe and Affordable Drinking Water	\$5,745,082	varies	Butte County

Assistance Program	Description	Funding Program	Approved Funding Amount	Approximate # of Schools/ Households	Location of Schools/ Households
Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) Statewide Bottled Water for Schools Program	The Statewide Bottled Water for Schools Program is for the purchase and delivery of bottled drinking water for schools serving kindergarten or any of grades 1-12, and preschools and child day care facilities, located on public school property statewide, through the Work Completion Date or until a long-term solution, or other interim solution, is in place for each site, whichever occurs first. The funding provides a maximum of 1/4 gallon per person per school day for up to two years at any one school.	SB 200 Safe and Affordable Drinking Water	\$4,547,038	100 Schools	Statewide

	f Programs to Assist Household				
Assistance Program	Description	Funding Program	Approved Funding	Approximate # of Schools/	Location of Schools/
			Amount	Households	Households
Community Water	The Program will provide bottled	SB 200 Safe	\$ 3,976,612	450 households	Santa Cruz, San
Center Central	drinking water to approximately 250	and			Benito, San Luis
Coast Multi-County	eligible disadvantaged Households	Affordable			Obispo, Santa
Bottled Water	served by a private well or small	Drinking			Barbara, and
Project (Region 3)	water system with a Contaminated	Water			portions of Santa
	Water Supply within the jurisdiction				Clara, Monterey,
	of the Central Coast Regional Water				and Ventura
	Quality Control Board. These				Counties
	households must also be located				
	outside of any area already provided				
	with bottled drinking water.				
	Additionally, the grant will fund implementation of a 1,2,3 -				
	Trichloropropane (123-TCP) point-				
	of-entry (POE) Treatment Pilot in				
	Monterey, Santa Cruz and San				
	Benito Counties. The funding will				
	provide operation and maintenance				
	of 123-TCP POE treatment systems				
	previously installed in the project				
	area through Community Water				
	Center's 123-TCP Treatment Pilot				
	Project for DAC Households in				
	Northern Monterey County and				
	installing, operating and maintaining				
	additional treatment systems.				

Assistance Program	Description	Funding Program	Approved Funding	Approximate # of Schools/	Location of Schools/
			Amount	Households	Households
Self-Help Enterprises Regional Bottled Water Program	The Self-Help Enterprises Regional Bottled Water Program will provide bottled water to households served by public water systems and private household wells, located in the Self-Help Enterprises Service Area (Kern, Kings, Tulare, Fresno, Madera, Merced, Mariposa, San Joaquin and Stanislaus), that have urgent drinking water needs.	SB 200 Safe and Affordable Drinking Water	\$ 9,707,680	3,600 households	Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Stanislaus, San Joaquin, and Tulare Counties
Self-Help Enterprises Household Solutions Program	The Household Private Wells Assistance Program will conduct outreach to potential households, located in the Self-Help Enterprises Service Area (Kern, Kings, Tulare, Fresno, Madera, Merced, Mariposa, San Joaquin and Stanislaus), served by private wells and will conduct well testing and provide interim solutions including point of entry and/or point of use (POE/POU) filtration device to those participating households that have water quality issues. This program has been recently expanded to be able to assist public water systems and state smalls in addition to households served by domestic wells.	SB 200 Safe and Affordable Drinking Water	\$7,698,375	1,600 households	Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Stanislaus, San Joaquin, and Tulare Counties

Assistance Program	Description	Funding Program	Approved Funding Amount	Approximate # of Schools/ Households	Location of Schools/ Households
Drinking Water for Schools Round 2- RCAC	The Drinking Water for School Grant Program will provide assistance to eligible school districts through two nonprofit organizations that will act as Program Administrators. These Program Administrators will develop and implement projects for schools serving disadvantaged communities. The first priority will be to provide interim solutions such as Point of Use treatment to schools with impaired water quality. Projects may also be funded to improve access to drinking water if sufficient budget remains after meeting the water quality impairment needs.	SB 862 (Stats. 2018, ch. 449), then amended by AB 72 (Stats. 2019, ch. 1)	\$ 2,579,000	70 schools	Statewide
Drinking Water for Schools Round 2- Self Help Enterprises	The Drinking Water for School Grant Program will provide assistance to eligible school districts through two nonprofit organizations that will act as Program Administrators. These Program Administrators will develop and implement projects for schools serving disadvantaged communities. The first priority will be to provide interim solutions such as Point of Use treatment to schools with impaired water quality. Projects may also be funded to improve access to drinking water if sufficient budget	SB 862 (Stats. 2018, ch. 449), then amended by Assembly Bill (AB) 72 (Stats. 2019, ch. 1)	\$ 3,856,000	70 schools	Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Stanislaus, San Joaquin, and Tulare Counties

Assistance Program	Description	Funding Program	Approved Funding Amount	Approximate # of Schools/ Households	Location of Schools/ Households
	remains after meeting the water quality impairment needs.				
Valley Water Collaborative Expanding Co- Contaminant Well Sampling And Replacement Water Program	The funding is for establishing and implementing the Expanded Constituent Well Sampling and Replacement Water Program (Program) in conjunction and coordination with the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board's Nitrate Control Program, within the Management Zones encompassed by Valley Water Collaborative that are served by private wells or state small water systems. The Program provides domestic well testing and interim drinking water solutions including bottled water delivery, point of entry and/or point of use (POE/POU) filtration devices	Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund (SADW Fund)	\$5,540,725	1,232	Modesto, and Turlock Groundwater Basins
Tule Basin Water Foundation Expanding Co- Contaminant Well Sampling And Replacement Water Program	The funding is for establishing and implementing the Expanded Constituent Well Sampling and Replacement Water Program (Program) in conjunction and coordination with the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board's Nitrate Control Program, within the Management Zones encompassed by Valley Water	Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund (SADW Fund)	\$4,528,882	900	Tule Groundwater Basin

Assistance Program	Description	Funding Program	Approved Funding Amount	Approximate # of Schools/ Households	Location of Schools/ Households
	Collaborative that are served by private wells or state small water systems. The Program provides domestic well testing and interim drinking water solutions including bottled water delivery, point of entry and/or point of use (POE/POU) filtration devices				
SHE Domestic Well and Small Water System Flood Mitigation Program	The program will provide interim and long-term solutions served by domestic wells who have a failed or damaged water well due to flooding. Interim solutions consist of bottled drinking water, delivery of temporary water storage tanks, and hauled potable water. Long-term solutions consist of well repair, replacement, and installation of Point-of-Use and Point-of-Entry treatment systems, if needed. The Program will also provide connection to a public water system when possible.	General Fund – Control Section 11.86	\$14,000,000	Approximately 1114	Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Stanislaus, San Joaquin, and Tulare Counties