State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
California Department of Public Health

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Universal Pre-Application
For all Drinking Water Funding Programs
July 2009

1. Q: How much money is available?

   A. The Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SDWSRF) program has approximately $70 million annually for project funding;

   One section of Proposition 84 administered by CDPH utilizes the Universal Pre-application. This section authorizes $160 million for smaller water systems.

2. Q: What is eligible for funding?

   A. CDPH funding programs primarily support construction of public water system facilities (sources, treatment, distribution, and storage). Funding is also available for preconstruction phase activities (planning/feasibility projects). In addition, funds are available for protection of water sources from contamination.

3. Q: Who is an eligible applicant?

   A. Community water systems, schools that are public water systems and non-community water systems operated by not-for-profit entities are generally eligible for funding. For details, see the respective criteria at http://www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/drinkingwater/pages/dwpfunding.aspx

4. Q: How do I apply for funding for my water system or project?

   A. CDPH funding programs utilize the Universal Pre-application, which provides information to enable CDPH to establish project priority lists for each of the funding programs. CDPH then sends a letter of invitation to a specific group of the highest ranked systems/projects for a funding program to complete a full application for funding.

   Letters inviting application are generally sent out by each funding program at least annually, and in some programs, more frequently.

5. Q: When is my pre-application due? What if I miss the deadline?

   A. The Universal Pre-application will be available from July 27 through September 8, 2009. If you miss the deadline, you will have another opportunity to submit a pre-application during summer of 2010.

6. Q: Can I submit a pre-application for more than one project?

   A. Yes. We recommend you identify each project with a unique name. This is especially important for similar projects (e.g. Transmission main replacement – north of Oak Street; Transmission main replacement – west of Maple Street).

7. Q: What priority list(s) will my project be placed on?

   A. Each pre-application will be evaluated and placed on the priority list(s) for which it is eligible.

8. Q: How often is the priority list established?

   A. CDPH updates the project priority list for each funding program annually.

9. Q: If I am placed on a priority list, does this guarantee that my project will be funded?

   A. No. Funding is available only to those projects invited to submit a complete application, following review of the application and fulfillment of requirements of the specific funding program. For some of the funding programs, demand exceeds the amount of available funding.

10. Q: My system needs funding for construction projects, but I don't know whether we ever submitted a pre-application to CDPH for funding. What should I do?

    A. We suggest you check existing CDPH project priority lists prior to submitting a new pre-application. If your system's project funding needs are not reflected on the existing priority lists, you should submit a new "Universal Pre-application" for each project in need of funding. Please give each pre-application a unique project title (e.g. Treatment of Jones Well for high nitrate).

11. Q: Can my ranking on a priority list change?

    A. The project standing on a priority list may change because other projects have been received subsequently which have a higher ranking "score" than your project. In addition, CDPH may reevaluate a project if additional information becomes available which results in a change in the project ranking "score".

12. Q: Can a project receive funding from more than one CDPH program?

    A. Yes. CDPH may invite a project/water system to complete a full application for funding from one or more grant/loan programs, depending on the project ranking on the program's priority list.

13. Q: How long will it take to receive funding to build my project?

    A. The length of time after submitting an application before you will receive funds will depend upon how ready you are to proceed. Completing plans and specifications and compliance with California Environmental Quality Act are usually the most time-consuming activities. The average time from application submittal to execution of the funding agreement is about one and a half years.

14. Q: If I submit a pre-application, what am I obligated to do?

    A. There is no further obligation until your project is determined to be at a high enough ranking to receive an invitation to apply for funding. At that time, you will be required to respond to whether you will be submitting an application or whether you wish to be bypassed for this funding cycle. You may also advise CDPH to remove your project from one or more priority lists.

    During the CDPH evaluation process, you may be contacted for more information or to provide information missing on your pre-application.

15. Q: Do I need to hire an engineer to help me submit a pre-application?

    A. No. In general, whoever completes the pre-application should know about your water system problem and the project needed to solve the problem. The pre-application can be "Saved" as "Pending" while you check for supporting information. You can revise the pending pre-application before you "Submit" it.

16. Q: What is the maximum funding (grant/loan) that can be requested?

    A. There is no limit on the funding which can be requested. Each funding program of CDPH has different specific limits. The maximum funding which may be offered by CDPH could be a combination of funding from several grant and/or loan funds.

17. Q: If my project is not planned to be started before 2011, can I submit a pre-application now?

    A. Yes. Your pre-application is evaluated and ranked. At the time you are invited to complete a full application for a specific program, you may waive/by-pass the opportunity. Note, however, that if you by-pass, you may not be invited to submit a full application in a future year for the funding program, depending on availability of funds and requests for funding.

18. Q: What will happen with projects on the existing priority lists?

    A. Pre-applications on the existing priority lists will remain on those lists. Pre-applications from the SDWSRF-ARRA Project Priority List not receiving ARRA funding will be incorporated in the non-ARRA SDWSRF priority. In addition, pre-applications for projects on those lists which are eligible for other CDPH funding programs will be placed on the other project priority lists with the appropriate ranking.

19. Q: I don't know much about using a computer/the Internet; where can I get help with the pre-application?

    A. Assistance is available from the CDPH headquarters in Sacramento (916)-449-5600 (ask for help with the universal pre-application), from Drinking Water Program field offices (see attached map and contact information), or you can email **dwpfunds@cdph.ca.gov**