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September 5, 2023 MassDEP's Official Answers to Questions 2024-2025 Technical Assistance Grant Opportunity

On June 29, 2023 the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) issued a Technical Assistance Grant Opportunity (TAG Opportunity) for parties interested in enhancing their participation in assessment and cleanup activities at disposal sites in their communities (<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/technical-assistance-grants-waste-site-cleanup>). MassDEP awards Technical Assistance Grants (TAGs) to selected community and citizens' groups to allow those groups to obtain expert assistance, increase public participation and provide public education about disposal site assessment and cleanup activities. MassDEP accepted Questions regarding the TAG Opportunity through the Grant Procurement Calendar deadline of August 25, 2025. MassDEP's Official Answers to the Questions received by the deadline are provided below. Please note that, where multiple applicants essentially asked the same question, MassDEP has combined the content of these questions to provide a single, consistent response.

1. Would the Stockbridge Road Landfill in Scituate be considered an eligible disposal site?

MassDEP Response: Yes. Response actions at the landfill are being conducted by MassDEP's Solid Waste Program in accordance with 310 CMR 19.000 (Solid Waste Regulations) and 310 CMR 19.150 (Landfill Assessment Requirements). As such, the landfill is considered to be "Adequately Regulated" in accordance with 310 CMR 40.0114 of the Massachusetts Contingency Plan (MCP), and therefore eligible for a TAG. The MCP at 310 CMR 40.1452(5)(c) states that disposal sites are eligible for a TAG if "deemed by the Department to be Adequately Regulated pursuant to 310 CMR 40.0110 et. seq., and for which response actions have not been completed." Page 2 of the TAG Opportunity also identifies sites deemed by MassDEP to be "Adequately Regulated" in accordance with the MCP as "Eligible Disposal Sites" for funding through the TAG Program.

2. Does MassDEP provide a generic grant outline to assist new community groups with knowing the appropriate information to include in an application?

MassDEP Response: Yes. The Technical Assistance Grant application includes multiple specific questions that require brief responses from the applicant. As such, the application format offers a “generic outline” of the information that groups should include in their TAG application.

3. I attended the Zoom information meeting, but can you refer me to any other information?

MassDEP Response: Information about the TAG Program, including the TAG Opportunity and TAG Application, may be found on the TAG webpage: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/technical-assistance-grants-waste-site-cleanup>

4. The town is negotiating an agreement to purchase a former manufacturing facility that is a disposal site. As part of this agreement, the current owner requests that the town assume a debt owed to MassDEP for prior assessment work conducted. Can TAG funding be used to defray part of the debt for past assessment activities?

MassDEP Response: No. Expenses incurred before a TAG is awarded cannot be reimbursed with TAG funding, as noted on page 5 of the TAG Opportunity. Furthermore, TAG awards cannot be used for the “taking or arranging for any response actions at the disposal site,” as stated in accordance with 310 CMR 40.1454(2)(f). The primary objective of the TAG Program is to encourage effective community public participation and education in the response action process (see 310 CMR 40.401451), and it is not intended to provide funding for any past or current response actions or other activities that are already mandated by the MCP.

5. A large tire dump is located on a private property in our town and we would like to see it cleaned up. Our research suggests that the site is not classified as a hazardous waste site. Could the Technical Assistance Grant Program be used to fund a cleanup at this site?

MassDEP Response: No. As noted on page 3 of the TAG Opportunity, and in accordance with 310 CMR 40.1452(5), to be eligible for a TAG a disposal site must be: (1) a tier classified disposal site; per 310 CMR 40.0500; (2) a disposal site on the USEPA National Priorities List (NPL); or (3) a disposal site that has been designated as “adequately regulated” pursuant to 310 CMR 40.0110. Based on the information provided, the property does not appear to fall into one of these categories and is therefore not eligible for a TAG.

In addition, even if the tire dump was determined to be an eligible disposal site, TAG funding may not be used for “taking or arranging for any response actions at the disposal site,” as

stated in accordance with 310 CMR 40.1454(2)(f) and on page 5 of the TAG Opportunity. See also, MassDEP's Response to Question 4 above.

To determine whether a property is listed as a disposal site, please refer to MassDEP's online disposal sites database at the following link:

[Look Up Site Information on the EEA Data Portal](#)

6. Is the Barnes Air National Guard Base eligible for a TAG?

MassDEP Response: Yes. Disposal sites that are eligible for TAG funding include: (1) disposal sites that are tier classified, (2) disposal sites that are on EPA's National Priorities List, and (3) disposal sites that are deemed adequately regulated pursuant to 310 CMR 40.0110 because response actions are being conducted under another regulatory program (see 310 CMR 40.1452(5) and TAG Opportunity, page 3). Although the Barnes Air National Guard Base is not listed on EPA's National Priorities List, response actions are being conducted under the federal Superfund law (Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act or CERCLA) and are therefore deemed to be adequately regulated pursuant to 310 CMR 40.0111(1)(a).

7. Can TAG funding be used by a local Climate Action Plan Committee to formulate a local Climate Action Plan?

MassDEP Response: No. The purpose of TAGs is to encourage better public participation in the cleanup process at disposal sites. As such, an application for a TAG must identify a specific disposal site(s) and include activities aimed at enhancing public participation in the cleanup work at that disposal site. Information about TAG eligibility may be found on the TAG webpage: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/technical-assistance-grants-waste-site-cleanup>

8. A tier classified disposal site contaminated with PFAS is located upgradient from several private drinking water wells in our town. Would the local Board of Health be eligible to apply for a TAG?

MassDEP response: Yes. Municipalities, including municipal boards such as Boards of Health, are considered eligible applicants as long as the municipality is not liable or potentially liable for taking response actions at the disposal site (See 310 CMR 40.1453(1)(b) and 310 CMR 40.1453(4)).