The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

executive office of energy & environmental Affairs department of environmental

**PROTECTION**

ONE HUNDRED CAMBRIDGE STREET SUITE 900, BOSTON, MA 02114



**Request for Interest (RFI) AWWA M36 Water Audits**

**Agency Document #: BWR-2026-AWWA-M36-WATER AUDITS**

**September 30, 2025**

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**This information is available in alternate format.**

**Please contact MassDEP at 617-292-5500**

**TTY# MassRelay Service 1-800-439-2370**

**MassDEP Website: www.mass.gov/dep**

# RFI INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION

## 1.1 Description

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP or the Department) is soliciting interest from Water Management Act (WMA) registrants and permit holders to receive a free American Water Works Association (AWWA) M36 “Top-Down” Audit from a private consulting firm hired by MassDEP. MassDEP will hire the private consulting firm through a public procurement process to be completed at a later date.

A Top-Down Audit is a desktop exercise that involves the gathering of records, data, and procedures, with limited field testing. For certain facilities that meet the outlined data criteria, a “Bottom-up Component Analysis” can also be done. The Bottom-up Component Analysis is a refinement of the Top-Down Audit that involves field testing and the formulation of strategies to reduce real losses of water in the withdrawal, treatment and distribution system.

Once selected, a WMA public water supplier (PWS) will work with the consulting firm hired by MassDEP. The consulting firm will guide the Audit and provide a report to both the PWS and MassDEP following its completion of the Audit.

Based on the response to this Request for Interest (RFI), a list of WMA PWSs approved for the completion of a “Top Down” M36 Audit, or a “Top Down” M36 Audit with a “Bottom-up Component Analysis,” will be included in a competitive procurement solicitation for the services of a private consulting firm to be released by MassDEP later this year. The purpose of this procurement will be to select the consulting firm that will conduct the AWWA M36 Audits. Since time and funding constraints may limit the number of AWWA M36 Audits that can be conducted, a final list of WMA PWSs receiving an AWWA M36 Audit will not be available until after MassDEP selects a consulting firm.

## Disadvantaged Communities

MassDEP is committed to advancing Disadvantaged Communities through its public investments. To that end, preference will be given to projects that provide direct benefit to Disadvantaged Communities. Information on how communities are classified as Disadvantaged Communities and which communities they are can be found at [The Disadvantaged Community Loan Forgiveness Program on Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/the-disadvantaged-community-loan-forgiveness-program#disadvantaged-community-designation).

## Background

MassDEP is using the AWWA M36 Audit as a common methodology for public water suppliers (PWSs) throughout the Commonwealth to clearly identify water loss needs and objectives. Additionally, a water audit is required when a WMA permittee is not meeting the Unaccounted-for Water (UAW) Performance Standard of 10 percent or less. Thus, the AWWA M36 Audit will help these permittees meet their WMA permit conditions.

## Eligible Entities

Eligible Entities are PWSs or municipalities with current WMA permits or registrations.

* “Top-Down” audits are available to PWSs or municipalities that either: (1) have not done an AWWA M36 water audit before; or (2) have done a recent AWWA M36 audit but did not obtain a data validity score over 51.
* A “Bottom-up Component Analysis” will be available to PWSs or municipalities that: (1) recently completed an AWWA M36 audit; (2) obtained a validity score of 51 or greater; and (3) have the detailed data necessary to perform the analysis within the timeframe specified in this RFI.

**MBTA Communities Act:** Please note participation in the M36 program will be limited to Public Water Suppliers that are located within communities that are either not subject to, or in compliance with M.G.L. CH.40A §3A, the MBTA Communities Act Law. For more information, please visit: [MBTA Communities Act Compliance Resources I Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/multi-family-zoning-requirement-for-mbta-communities).

# ESTIMATED CALENDAR

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **EVENT** | **DATE** |
| **RFI NOTICE (On COMMBUYS and MassDEP website), and RFI Release Date (On MassDEP website)** | September 30, 2025 |
| **RFI Close Date; Deadline for electronic Responses to RFI to:** **jen.durso@mass.gov**  | October 30, 2025 by 5:00 p.m. E.S.T. |
| **Consulting Firm procurement Release Date (est.)** | November 7, 2025 |
| **Consulting Firm procurement response deadline (est.)** | December 8, 2025 |
| **Estimated Notification of Successful Consultant Bidder(s)** | December 15, 2025 |
| **Estimated Consultant Contract Start Date** | December 18, 2025 |
| **Consultant Contract End Date** | June 30, 2026 |

#  DATA NEEDS

As part of the Response to this RFI, all applicants must affirm that, by **February 2, 2026,** they will gather and have readily available the following detailed system information for either calendar year 2024 or 2025, for inclusion in this AWWA M36 Audit grant program:

* production metering and error percentage;
* distribution system pressures;
* reservoir or tank storage numbers;
* water imported;
* leak detection and repair;
* customer metering and billing and potential errors;
* authorized consumption from flushing, fire-fighting and related activities;
* water conservation activities;
* water rates and production costs; and
* infrastructure rehabilitation plan.

Applicants must make a prospective written commitment in the Response to this RFI to submit the required 2024 or 2025 data listed above.

In addition, applicants who wish to have a “Bottom-Up Component Analysis” done must ***also*** affirm that they will gather and have readily available, by **February 2, 2026,** the following detailed system information for the calendar year 2024 or 2025, for inclusion in this AWWA M36 Audit grant program:

For all leaks and breaks (either reported or found during a leak detection survey):

* total number of failures, by main size, that were reported to and repaired;
* total length of mains for each main size group;
* average duration of locating and containing reported failure events by main(s) size;
* total number of failures by distribution system appurtenance type that were reported and repaired;
* total number of appurtenances for each system appurtenance group;
* average awareness duration for reported failure events by system appurtenance type;
* average duration of locating and containing reported failure events by system appurtenance;
* total number of failures by service connection size (<1" or ≥1") that were reported to and repaired by the PWS;
* total number of service connections for each service connection size group;
* average awareness duration for reported failure events by service connection size group; and
* average duration of locating and containing reported failure events by service connection size group.

For more information on the above-listed data need, please see the AWWA M36 Audit data manual, which can be purchased online at: <https://www.awwa.org>.

From data collection through the completion of the Top-Down AWWA M36 Audit, MassDEP estimates that it will take the Applicant approximately 100 hours to collect the necessary data, meet with the selected consultant to discuss the system, and review the final report findings. A Bottom-Up Component Analysis may require an additional time commitment of approximately 25 hours.

# EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applicant responses to this RFI will be used to rank Applicants and will determine who is eligible for the completion of an AWWA M36 Audit by the consulting firm (to be procured by MassDEP).

## Evaluation Components

A MassDEP selection committee will review applications from responding PWSs and municipalities. Applications will be evaluated based upon the following criteria:

* + 1. Applicant’s stated commitment to actively participate in the AWWA M36 Audit and provide documentation to MassDEP of in-kind services rendered. Applicant’s ability to provide the data necessary to perform and complete either a “Top-Down Audit” or a “Top-Down Audit” with a “Bottom-Up Component Analysis.”
		2. Whether the Applicant is a PWS or municipality with high Unaccounted for Water (UAW) rates recently reviewed and approved by MassDEP. Recent UAW rates are available at: [PWS Performance Standards](https://www.mass.gov/service-details/public-water-supply-tools-resources-performance-standards)

Whether the Applicant is a WMA permittee that has received an Interim Allocation from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation instead of Final Water Needs Forecast, because of high UAW or other water accounting concerns.

* + 1. Whether the Applicant has recently done work to try and improve UAW rates.
		2. Preference will be given to projects located in Disadvantaged Communities if there are not sufficient funds for all requests received. Please see Appendix B for a list of Disadvantaged Communities for the purpose of this RFI.
		3. Quality and responsiveness of the proposal, including, completeness, organization, and conciseness.
		4. MBTA Communities Act Compliance (as applicable).

## Application Format

Applicants must use the application provided as part of this RFI, identified as **Attachment A**. Responses should not exceed the three (3) pages provided in **Attachment A**, exclusive of any requested attachments.

# HOW TO SUBMIT A RESPONSE

Responses must be submitted by email to Jen D’Urso, jen.durso@mass.gov, with the subject line, “FY26 M36 Water Opportunity”.

Responses are due no later than **October 30, 2025, by 5:00 pm E.S.T.**

**LATE RESPONSES WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED**.

#

# ATTACHMENT A

**M36 APPLICATION FORM**

**Overview:** MassDEP uses the AWWA M36 Audit as a common methodology for public water suppliers (PWSs) throughout the Commonwealth to clearly identify water loss needs and objectives in order to work together more efficiently and establish infrastructure and management goals that minimize costly non-revenue water production, prioritize the replacement of aging or failing infrastructure, and manage infrastructure assets. In addition, a water audit is required when a WMA permittee is not meeting the Unaccounted-for Water (UAW) Performance Standard of 10 percent or less.

**Section 1: Applicant Information**

Applicant Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Project Contact Person\*: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*\*Contact person must be from the entity requesting funding.*

Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**By checking this box** [ ]  **the applicant confirms that they are authorized to submit this grant application on behalf of the specified Permittee listed above.**

**Section 2: Ability to Perform Proposed Project**

If awarded an M36 Water Audit Opportunity, the awardee must be able to enter into a contract with MassDEP within 15-30 days of Grant Award.

**By checking this box** [ ]  the Applicant confirms that its entity is able to enter into the contract and perform the project and meet all requirements of this state grant.

**By checking this box** [ ]  the Applicant acknowledges and agrees that its entity is able to commit to providing sufficient in-kind services to allow for requested data to be:

1. provided by February 2, 2026, for a complete and accurate AWWA M36 Audit; and

(2) validated in the timeframe allowed.

**By checking this box** [ ]  the Applicant acknowledges and agrees that its entity is able to commit to work with a consulting firm to complete the AWWA M36 Audit on or before June 30, 2026.

**Section 3: Required Questions**

1. **Project Benefit:** Please write short statement identifying how the project supports lowering UAW values and how the Applicant will benefit from the completion of an AWWA M36 Audit. Please list the calendar year of any other M36 Audits that have been completed.
2. **Audit Requested:**

**Top Down:** [ ]  **Bottom Up:** [ ] M36 Final Report Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Reports dated prior to 2024 will not be accepted.*

If bottom up, please attach a copy of your most recent AWWA M36 Water Audit Final Report to this application.

1. **Available Data:** Please identify available data and data gaps.
2. **Please check any applicable criteria:**

| Check Box | **Criteria:** |
| --- | --- |
|[ ]  WMA permittees that have received an Interim Allocation from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation instead of Final Water Needs Forecast, because of high UAW or other water accounting concerns. |
|[ ]  PWSs or municipalities that have recently done work to try and improve UAW rates. Please describe:  |
|[ ]  PWSs or municipalities serving a Disadvantaged Community (Please see Appendix B of this RFI) |
| [ ]  [ ]  [ ]  | MBTA Communities Act Compliance:YesNoNot Applicable |

# ATTACHMENT B

**Disadvantaged Communities by Tier (FY25)**

**Tier 1:**

Amesbury, Ayer, Barnstable, Berkley, Billerica, Bourne, Braintree, Brewster, Cummington, Deerfield, Dighton, Douglas, East Longmeadow, Eastham, Falmouth, Gloucester, Great Barrington, Groveland, Hampden, Harwich, Hopedale, Hudson, Hull, Kingston, Lakeville, Leyden, Lunenburg, Mashpee, Maynard, Medford, Merrimac, Millis, North Attleborough, Northampton, Northbridge, Norwood, Pembroke, Pepperell, Plainville, Plymouth, Plympton, Raynham, Rehoboth, Richmond, Rochester, Rutland, Seekonk, Southampton, Sterling, Stockbridge, Sturbridge, Tewksbury, Tyngsborough, Uxbridge, Waltham, West Bridgewater, West Tisbury, Westhampton, Westminster, Westport, Wilbraham, Winthrop, and Woburn

**Tier 2:**

Abington, Acushnet, Agawam, Alford, Ashburnham, Ashby, Attleboro, Auburn, Avon, Becket, Belchertown, Bellingham, Blackstone, Blandford, Bridgewater, Brimfield, Carver, Charlton, Clinton, Conway, Dalton, Dartmouth, Dennis, Dracut, East Bridgewater, East Brookfield, Easthampton, Egremont, Fairhaven, Framingham, Freetown, Granby, Granville, Hadley, Halifax, Hanson, Hatfield, Haverhill, Hinsdale, Holbrook, Holland, Hubbardston, Huntington, Lancaster, Lee, Leicester, Leominster, Malden , Marlborough, Methuen, Middleborough, Milford, Millbury, Millville, Monson, Monterey, Montgomery, Mount Washington, New Ashford, New Braintree, New Marlborough, Northfield, Norton, Oakham, Otis, Oxford, Paxton, Peabody, Pelham, Petersham, Phillipston, Quincy, Randolph, Revere, Rockland, Rowe, Salem, Salisbury, Saugus, Sheffield, Shirley, Somerset, South Hadley, Southwick, Stoughton, Swansea, Townsend, West Boylston, West Brookfield, Weymouth, Whitman, Williamstown, Worthington, and Yarmouth

**Tier 3:**

Adams, Amherst, Ashfield, Athol, Barre, Bernardston, Brockton, Brookfield, Buckland, Charlemont, Chelsea, Cheshire, Chester, Chesterfield, Chicopee, Clarksburg, Colrain, Dudley, Erving, Everett, Fall River, Fitchburg, Florida, Gardner, Gill, Goshen, Gosnold, Greenfield, Hancock, Hardwick, Hawley, Heath, Holyoke, Lanesborough, Lawrence, Lowell, Ludlow, Lynn, Middlefield, Monroe, Montague, New Bedford, New Salem, North Adams, North Brookfield, Oak Bluffs, Orange, Palmer, Peru, Pittsfield, Plainfield, Royalston, Russell, Sandisfield, Savoy, Shelburne, Shutesbury, Southbridge, Spencer, Springfield, Sunderland, Taunton, Templeton, Tisbury, Tolland, Tyringham, Wales, Ware, Wareham, Warren, Warwick, Webster, Wendell, West Springfield, Westfield, Whately, Williamsburg, Winchendon, Windsor, and Worcester

[**Date Source**](https://www.mass.gov/doc/affordability-calculation-october-2024/download)

**Note**: FY25 is the most current year for which data was available at the time of the publication of this RFR. New calculations are typically published in October.