

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

**EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY &
ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION**

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Request for Interest (RFI)

AWWA M36 Water Audits

**Agency Document #: BWR-2024-AWWA-M36-WATER AUDITS
COMMBUYS #: BD-24-1045-BWR00-BWR01-92741**

September 13, 2023

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1. 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.

Once selected, a WMA public water supplier (PWS) is required to participate in the AWWA M36 Audit; however, the consulting firm hired by MassDEP 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.

MassDEP Commitment to Environmental Justice: MassDEP is committed to advancing equity, diversity, and environmental justice (EJ)¹ through its public investments. The agency seeks to prioritize the direction of these resources to benefit EJ communities and to address environmental inequities. To that end, MassDEP grant, and funding programs include criteria and evaluation parameters that emphasize equity, diversity and environmental justice, consistent with each program’s statutory authority and source of funding. Preference will be given to projects that provide direct benefit to environmental justice populations. Information on which communities are classified as environmental justice populations can be found at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/environmental-justice-populations-in-massachusetts>.

¹ “Environmental justice is based on the principle that all people have a right to be protected from environmental hazards and to live in and enjoy a clean and healthful environment regardless of race, color, national origin, income, or English language proficiency. Environmental justice is the equal protection and meaningful involvement of all people and communities with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of energy, climate change, and environmental laws, regulations, and policies and the equitable distribution of energy and environmental benefits and burdens.” See Environmental Justice Policy of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (updated June 24, 2021): <https://www.mass.gov/doc/environmental-justice-policy6242021-update/download>.

1.2 Background

Other state programs across the country have successfully implemented the AWWA M36 Audit methodology. Developing uniform approaches for identifying and communicating water loss allows PWSs and state agencies 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. Given this, 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.

1.3 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.

2. ESTIMATED CALENDAR

EVENT	DATE
RFI NOTICE (On COMMBUYS and MassDEP website), and RFI Release Date (On MassDEP website)	September 13, 2023
RFI Close Date; Deadline for electronic Responses to RFI to jen.durso@mass.gov	October 18, 2023
Consulting Firm procurement Release Date (est.)	November 8, 2023
Consulting Firm procurement response deadline (est.)	December 6, 2023
Estimated Notification of Successful Consultant Bidder(s)	December 20, 2023
Estimated Consultant Contract Start Date	January 9, 2024
Consultant Contract End Date	June 30, 2024

3. DATA NEEDS

As part of the Response to this RFI, all applicants must affirm that, by **January 9, 2024**, they will gather and have readily available the following detailed system information for either calendar year 2022 or 2023, 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 2022 or 2023 data listed above.

For Applicants who wish to have a “Bottom-Up Component Analysis” done, the Applicant must also affirm that it will gather and have readily available, by **January 9, 2024**, the following detailed system information for the calendar year 2022 or 2023, 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 mains size group;
- average duration of locating and containing reported failure events by mains size;
- total number of failures by distribution system appurtenance type that were reported to 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 the water utility;
- 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 should not require significantly more time on behalf of the Applicant.

4. 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 hired by MassDEP.

4.1 Evaluation Components

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

- a) Applicant's stated commitment to actively participate in the AWWA M36 Audit and provide documentation to MassDEP of in-kind services rendered. MassDEP estimates that approximately 100 hours will be required by the PWS or municipality to complete this audit.
- b) Applicant's ability to provide the data necessary to perform and complete a either a "Top-Down Audit" or a "Top-Down Audit" with a "Bottom-Up Component Analysis."
- c) PWSs or municipalities with recent MassDEP-approved high Unaccounted for Water (UAW) rates. Recent UAW rates are available at:

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/public-water-supply-tools-resources-performance-standards>

- d) 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.
- e) PWSs or municipalities that have recently done work to try and improve UAW rates.
- f) PWSs or municipalities located in EJ communities will be given preference if the Applicant meets the other required criteria.
- g) Quality and responsiveness of the proposal, including, completeness, organization, and conciseness.

4.2 Proposal Format

Proposal shall be limited to 2 pages (single-spaced, 8-1/2" by 11" sheet with 0.5" margins) and shall include the following sections:

- a) A short statement detailing how the Applicant will benefit from the completion of an AWWA M36 Audit.
- b) A discussion of the AWWA M36 audit requested. If a "Bottom-Up" Component Analysis audit is requested, the Applicant should be prepared to produce a copy of the final report from its most recent AWWA M36 audit with its proposal; a condition for selection for this type of audit.
- c) A discussion of available data and data gaps.
- d) A discussion of recent MassDEP-approved UAW values, as well as work the Applicant has undertaken to improve those values.
- e) A commitment to providing sufficient in-kind services to allow for data to be (1) provided and validated, for a complete and accurate AWWA M36 Audit, and (2) validated in the timeframe allowed.
- f) A commitment to work with a consulting firm to complete the AWWA M36 Audit on or before June 30, 2024.
- g) A contact list, including the PWSs' or municipalities contact email and telephone numbers.

5. HOW TO SUBMIT AN ELECTRONIC RESPONSE

INSTRUCTIONS—BY THE RESPONSE DEADLINE, PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR RESPONSE TO THE RFI VIA EMAIL TO THE EMAIL ADDRESS LISTED BELOW.

E-Mail: jen.durso@mass.gov

Response Deadline— Responses are due no later than **October 18, 2023, at 5:00 pm E.S.T.**

LATE RESPONSES WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.