



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

Department of Environmental Protection

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NOTICE OF GRANT OPPORTUNITY **SEWAGE NOTIFICATION ASSISTANCE 2023-2024 GRANT PROGRAM**

Summary of Grant Opportunity: The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP or the Department) seeks proposals from Massachusetts regional or municipal wastewater utilities or systems that meet the definition of “Permittee” and are subject to 314 CMR 16.00, for innovative projects that will assist them in meeting the requirements of MassDEP’s Sewage Notification Regulations at 314 CMR 16.00 (the “Regulations”). The purpose of this grant program is to assist Permittees with expanding their efforts to meet the Sewage Notification regulatory requirements, which were promulgated to Promote Public Awareness of Sewage Pollution. Only projects that meet specific requirements of the Regulation will be considered for funding.

Grant Opportunity Application and Requirements: The Sewage Notification Assistance Grant Program document was issued on October 3, 2023, and is posted on MassDEP’s website at the following link:

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/grants-financial-assistance-watersheds-water-quality#sewage-notification-assistance-grant-program>

Environmental Justice: MassDEP is committed to advancing equity, diversity, and environmental justice (EJ) 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>.

Eligible Entities: Eligible applicants are regional or municipal wastewater utilities that meet the regulatory definition of “Permittee” as defined in 314 CMR 16.02. Eligible entities may have combined sewer systems or separate sewer and stormwater systems.

Eligible Projects: Eligible Projects will result in non-operational expenditures, capital investments, planning projects, or installation of equipment that will help Sewage Notification permittees meet one or more requirement(s) of 314 CMR 16.00. Eligible projects will also improve the timeliness, accuracy, and reliability of

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public notification; and/or improve the clarity and accessibility of this information to the public. Eligible Projects must also provide a shared benefit to Permittee and its environmental justice populations (if present in the Permittee's jurisdiction).

Examples of Eligible Projects include, but are not limited to:

- New or improved signage at public access points or at CSO outfalls;
- Services to design and/or implement a public notification system for subscribers to receive emails/text message notifications of CSO activation which will be hosted and supported/operated by the municipal or regional utility beyond the grant funding cycle;
- Consultant services for design or improvement of a website that will be hosted and supported/operated by the municipal or regional utility beyond the grant funding cycle;
- Purchase/installation of meters where metering was not previously present or where the meters will increase reliability or speed of discharge activation detection and flow measurement;
- Purchase/installation of other equipment including a one-time software or sensor installation used to detect/determine discharges and/or measuring volume (i.e., computer models); or
- Translation services.

Examples of projects that are not eligible for funding include, but are not limited to:

- Salary for existing or new municipal or contracted employees involved in work related to 314 CMR 16.00;
- Funding for the operation and maintenance of sewer systems;
- Meter rental and software subscription costs; or
- Funding for the operation of assets associated with metering or detecting discharges.

Both existing and proposed projects are eligible for this grant program, and funding will support work activities for any phase(s) of a project, from initial project planning through project implementation, so long as the work funded by this program is conducted during the contract period (i.e., started on or after July 1, 2023, and completed on or before June 30, 2024). All Applications must include a feasible timeline for completion (i.e., illustrating that the project can be completed on or before the June 30, 2024, deadline). For projects including work conducted before submission of the Grant Application, the Applicant must provide documentation such as invoices in the Grant Application.

Ownership of all equipment or resources purchased pursuant to a grant award shall remain the property of the grantee.

Funding Availability: MassDEP anticipates that up to \$563,289 in total funding may be available for projects through this program. Grant Awards may range from \$10,000 to \$563,289 per applicant, although the MassDEP review committee reserves the right, in its discretion, to grant smaller awards to proposals of exceptional merit. If there are remaining unspent capital funds available from other Department projects during the period between the announcement of this grant opportunity and the announcement of the grant awards, the Department reserves the right to allocate supplemental funds to this grant solicitation and/or initiate additional funding rounds. Applicants must only propose project scopes with timelines that can be completed between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024. All funding for awards issued through this program are subject to the availability of appropriations or funding from other Department sources.

Grant Application Process: The Sewage Notification Assistance Grant Program document on MassDEP’s website contains a grant application form, a procurement schedule describing the steps of the application process, all project proposal and qualification requirements, and a specific format for responding to this Grant Opportunity.

Bidders’ Conference: A Bidders’ Conference using Microsoft Teams will be held on Wednesday, October 11, 2023 at 1 PM to field questions from Grant Applicants. To obtain the meeting link information or the Teams link please contact Samuel Ashbrook via email at samuel.ashbrook@mass.gov with “FY 2024 Sewage Notification Assistance Grant Bidders’ Conference Details” in the email subject line.

Evaluation Criteria: The evaluation criteria components for MassDEP’s review and scoring of proposals are as specified in the Sewage Notification Grant Program Document.

Application Deadline: Applications are due electronically by 5:00 P.M. on Friday, November 10, 2023.

Match and Other Funding Obligations: Applicants are not required to provide matching funds. However, applicants are encouraged to identify other known sources of funding for a proposed project on the Application Form, from both secured and anticipated sources, which may make the Application more competitive during review and evaluation by MassDEP.

In addition, applicants are advised that grant awards involving capital funds, which is the case here, are required to be disbursed on a cost reimbursement basis, meaning that grantees will be reimbursed for funds already expended. To receive reimbursement for funds expended, grantees must submit a written request for payment, along with any other required documentation. All work must be completed on or before June 30, 2024, and grantees are strongly encouraged to submit written requests for payment, and any corresponding supporting documentation, on or before June 30, 2024, as well. Please see section L. for more information on required documents.

Additional Information: for additional information regarding the Sewage Notification Grant Program, please refer to the MassDEP website link:

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/grants-financial-assistance-watersheds-water-quality#sewage-notification-assistance-grant-program>