



CLEANENERGYRESULTS



NOTICE OF GRANT OPPORTUNITY 2026 - 2028

Wastewater Energy Recovery Pilot Grant

MassDEP's Official Answers to Questions

May 20 , 2026

On May 8, 2026, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (“MassDEP”) posted a Notice Of Grant Opportunity, Wastewater Energy Recovery Pilot Grant 2026-2028 (WWER) for the Clean Energy Results Program seeking proposals from publicly owned wastewater facilities, privately owned wastewater facilities, municipal or state-owned facilities, public or privately-owned schools, colleges and universities, nonprofit or privately owned facilities. In accordance with the Wastewater Energy Recovery Pilot Grant Estimated Procurement Calendar, MassDEP is holding two Bidders’ Informational Conferences via Zoom; the first on May 11, 2026; and the second to be scheduled in early October 2026, specific date to be announced later. At each Conference MassDEP informally responds verbally to questions from interested parties. In addition, following each Conference MassDEP accepts written questions submitted via email.

Presented below are MassDEP’s official answers to the questions received during the first Bidders’ Informational Conference, held on May 11, 2026, as well as answers to any questions submitted via email, and received prior to the May 13, 2026 submission deadline. As no written questions were submitted prior to the May 13, 2026, deadline, the responses below document and enhance, where necessary, the responses to the verbal questions received at the May 11th Zoom Bidders’ Informational Conference. The information in this document is intended to assist all parties interested in applying for funding through the Wastewater Energy Recovery Pilot Grant.

Questions

Q1. Is the “Burdened Area” metric replacing the 'environmental justice' communities? Or is it a different thing?

A1: Environmental Justice populations is a term defined differently from the Burdened Areas definition. For this grant opportunity we are using Burdened Areas as defined in the EOEEA Mass [EnviroScreen](#) tool¹. The use of the Burdened Area designation continues the agency’s prioritization of resources to address inequitable environmental burdens. For purposes of this grant, we are evaluating project location using Burdened Areas, as shown in the newly developed Mass EnviroScreen mapping tool. Whether a proposed project is located within or will impact a Burdened Area will be used in evaluating applications under the criteria of “location”.

Q2. Will the feasibility, design and install portions of the grant have phases that will close at different points?

A2. Yes. The grant phases will close when the money budgeted for each of those phases is expended.

Q3. Is this grant suitable for a WWTF that is breaking ground in the fall so the technology could be incorporated into the facility as it is constructed?

A3. Yes, this grant could be utilized for a wastewater treatment facility (WWTF) that is breaking ground in the fall, so long as the proposal meets all eligibility criteria, including applicable procurement requirements and the timeline for the particular phase for which the applicant is applying.

Q4: Is the grant retroactive to cover final design phase services that are currently underway?

A4: If you are requesting whether you can apply for the Design Phase grant to cover the cost of a project design that has already been started, the answer would be no. However, if an applicant wants to apply for the Construction Phase to implement this technology they can apply and produce schematic drawings that are 100% design and bid ready as well as all of the other required information for the Phase 3 application.

¹ MassEnviroScreen was developed by the Office of Environmental Justice and Equity (“OEJE”) within the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (“EOEEA”) to support implementation of the [Commonwealth’s 2024 Climate Act](#).

Q5: When and how will it be advertised that the Design and Construction Phases of the grant are open and accepting applications?

A5: In accordance with state grant rules, MassDEP will post an official Notice of the availability of the on COMMBUYS and on the MassDEP WWER webpages as well as inform the public and interested parties through our many listservs.

Q6: Are there any recommended/approved partners who provide assessment phase services?

A6: MassDEP does not specify, approve or recommend the use of any particular consultant, that is up to the applicant. The [WWER 4-page Pilot Grant Outreach brochure](#) in its description of the phases explains in the Energy Assessment section, that a Technical Assistance Study can be performed by an energy utility, consultant, wastewater energy recovery technology provider, or applicant's engineering team.

Q7: Will more money be made available if the \$5M gets used up?

A7: At this time our budget is \$5M. Depending on the interest and future availability of additional funds the budget may be adjusted in the future.

Q8: Do you believe this grant will be around again in the future?

A8: The purpose of this grant is to support the installation of this technology in Massachusetts. Following the construction of funded systems, we will analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of this effort. If this pilot is successful, projects using this technology may be supported in future rounds of Gap Energy Grant opportunities or by other funding programs.

Q9: Would this grant apply to wastewater facility projects that are currently nearing the end of construction and getting ready for startup for an energy assessment?

A9: If a wastewater facility, even if newly constructed, wants to install WWER technology, that facility applicant would be treated as an existing facility retrofitting its infrastructure. Such a facility would be eligible to apply for any of the phases as it deems appropriate. The applicant would have to demonstrate that its proposal is technically and financially feasible.

Q10: Would the State Clean Water Revolving Loan fund be included as a possible funding source for the WWER system as well as potentially a thermal network? Are there any constraints on that grant fund?

A10: We did have a slide in the presentation referencing the [State Revolving Fund \(SRF\)](#) as a potential source of funding for WWER projects. The important factor to understand when thinking about that funding source is that it is all about timing for that funding cycle. Funds secured through SRF can either be zero percent interest (a grant) or a low interest loan and are eligible only to municipal water facilities. A WWER project may be proposed in the Project Evaluation Form submitted for SRF support as part of a larger facility project proposal. A standalone application to fund a WWER installation through SRF is challenging and not likely to be successful under SRF evaluation criteria, as other priority projects (such as projects to address PFAS contamination or lead service line replacement) likely would secure more points on an application. We encourage any applicant interested in this funding source to review the SRF financial assistance requirements in the link above.

Q11: What unit of operation is "within bounds" for this grant (municipal pipes conveying wastewater) or only within the treatment plant itself?

A:11 This grant fund is eligible to projects located in municipal sewer pipes, pump houses or at the main treatment facility itself.

Q12: Will the slides be available? Sorry if you have already answered.

A12: The Bidders' Informational Conference [slides](#) have been posted on the MassDEP WWER webpage as of May 13, 2026. Please see enclosed link.