



Source Water Protection Grant Frequently Asked Questions

Can the SWP grant be used to fund the purchase of water rights?

No, the SWP grant cannot be used to fund the purchase of water rights.

Can the SWP grant provide any grant money for either system planning or construction?

SWP grants are specifically for protecting the drinking water source area and cannot be used for system operation, maintenance, or construction costs. Drinking Water SRF Planning Grants and Loans are available for these types of projects. Learn more here or contact Tim Wendland at (208) 373-0439.

Can the SWP grant fund any activities associated with acquiring land to protect our source?

The SWP grant cannot be used to purchase land; however, it can be used to fund a land survey to identify the property boundaries of the land to be acquired for protection. The SWP grant cannot be used for Environmental Assessment costs associated with purchasing the land. Environmental Assessments and potential cleanup costs may be eligible for assistance through DEQ's Brownfields Assessment Program. Learn more here or contact Eric Traynor at (208) 373-0565.

Can an applicant submit multiple SWP grant applications for different projects?

Yes. An applicant can submit multiple applications; however, each applicant or organization can only be funded a total of the maximum grant amount identified for that grant cycle. For 2019-20, the maximum award is \$10,000. So, an applicant can only be funded a total of \$10,000 for all the projects selected. They could potentially have two projects for \$5,000 each funded for a total of \$10,000; however, if they submit two applications for \$10,000 each, only one will be funded.

Can the SWP grant be used to fence the water treatment facility?

The purpose of the SWP grant program is to protect the drinking water source (prior to reaching the drinking water system), so the grant can be used to fence around a water source (including a well head, surface water intake, or spring box) to protect it from security threats and potential contamination. This grant cannot be used for fencing only the treatment plant. If a treatment plant is on the same lot/area as the source and it is unreasonable to fence it separately from the source, it could be eligible for source water protection grant funding.

Can the SWP grant be used to install a telemetry system at the well house to provide instant notification of unauthorized entry?

The SWP grant can be used to protect drinking water sources by securing the wellhead through fencing, locks, and an alarm system. The telemetry system for unauthorized entry would be eligible for the source water protection grant

Can the SWP grant be used to purchase a new flow meter and level indicator at the reservoir?

No, system upgrades such as flow meters, or level indicators are not eligible for funding from the SWP grant. The purpose of this grant is to protect source water prior to reaching the drinking water system. Operation and maintenance costs are not eligible for funding from the source water protection grant.

Can the SWP grant be used to properly abandon a well that was previously improperly abandoned?

Yes, fixing a well so that it is properly decommissioned is eligible for funding.

Can the SWP grant be used for a household hazardous waste collection event?

Yes; however, the SWP grant is one-time funding, and it is recommended that the applicant demonstrate how the HHW program will be continued in the future.

We are in the process of updating our protection plan. Do we need to complete this prior to submitting our SWP grant application to have priority?

No, but the source water protection plan will need to be developed or updated prior to the completion of the grant project in order to be give priority.

I see where the only attachment mentioned in the SWP grant application was for the project area map. We were going to prepare several key participant support letters. Can they be attached and who should they be addressed to?

Yes, you can attach other documents as well as maps. Address any support letters to the Source Water Protection Grant Selection Committee.

Are federal agencies eligible for SWP grant funding?

No, federal agencies are not eligible for SWP grant funding. Are state and local government agencies eligible for funding? Yes, state agencies and local government agencies in Idaho, including city and county governments, are eligible for funding.

Is there a percentage guide for indirect rate per DEQ?

Yes, unless the applicant has a federally approved indirect cost rate, the percentage guide shall be the federal 10% de minimus of the modified total direct costs (for these projects, this will be 10% of all budget categories with the exception of equipment, which is not eligible for indirect under this guidance). Indirect (overhead) costs are those costs incurred for common or joint purposes within the applicant's organization that benefit more than one program cost objective or project. These costs are not readily allocable or assignable to a specific project as a direct cost. Common indirect costs include, but are not limited to, salaries of administrative staff, building maintenance and utilities, basic office supplies, rent, cell phones, etc. Applicants, that do have a federally approved indirect cost rate must use apply that rate to their budget, and must also include a copy of their approved indirect cost rate agreement with their application. Applicants may choose to identify indirect costs as match, if these are costs that the organization will cover outside of the grant request.

The budget details section of the SWP grant application states: "Please provide additional information on the amounts budgeted above. Describe how DEQ funds will be used and how match commitments will be applied." Then there are 6 specific questions with areas to fill in with the answers. Do you need an attached narrative to answer the questions in quotes above, or are the 6 questions/answers intended to fulfill this directive?

The 6 questions are intended to fulfill the request for additional information. However, there is not a question that specifically addresses match information so please include information on what match was provided within each question/ budget category. For example, the first question is "How many personnel hours are included?" Please specify if any of the personnel hours are included as match.

The grant guidelines state that project costs and applied match must comply with federal guidelines for applicable cost principles. Where would we state this intent to comply?

This is a requirement of the grant and, if selected, will be included in the final contract agreement, which will be signed by both DEQ and your organization.

Are there setback requirements when fencing a source water area (well, spring or surface water intake)?

Drinking Water Rules require a 100 foot radius for spring sources and 50 foot radius for wells to be fenced to prevent the trespass of livestock. There is no setback requirement for fences to prevent the trespass of wildlife or people.

Is an engineering review required for fencing a drinking water source?

No, an engineering review is not required. Drinking Water Rules require plan and spec review and approval for "material modifications," which are defined as modifications intended to increase the capacity or alter the methods or process employed. Fencing is not considered a material modification. As part of the grant requirements, grant recipients need to have DEQ approval prior to installation of fencing to prevent the trespass of livestock to insure the required setbacks are met.

Can SWP grant funding be used to investigate if a facility (in a source water protection area) is leaking and potentially contributing contaminants to a PWS drinking water source (aquifer or surface water)?

SWP grant funding cannot be used to investigate if a problem exists with a specific facility. SWP funding can be used for contaminant source identification (research). SWP grant funding could be provided to identify the source or potential sources of contamination where an existing contamination issue may pose a risk to a public drinking water source.

Can SWP funding be used to correct problems found at a facility so it does not potentially contaminate source water?

SWP funding cannot be used for capital improvements or operation and maintenance costs. Any improvements to a facility to correct a problem would likely be considered a capital improvement or maintenance issue.

A water system asked if they could apply for funding to pay for an individual farmer's secondary containment for a fuel storage tank and a concrete pad under the tank near their well to protect groundwater.

Grants funds cannot be used to fund a project that provides a benefit to one specific individual.

Can the grant be used to fund training for cross connection control?

No. This grant is intended to protect source water, which is drinking water before it reaches the drinking water system. Cross connection control is a threat to drinking water after the water reaches the drinking water system. The SWP grant can be used for training related to source water, potential contaminants sources, protection strategies, and best management practices to protect source water, etc. but not training on issues not related to protecting drinking water sources.

Can the grant be used to properly abandon injection wells?

The SWP grant can be used to properly abandon or decommission publically owned wells, including injection wells that pose a risk to drinking water sources. The grant cannot be used to fund the proper abandonment of privately owned wells because it provides a benefit to one specific individual (well owner). The SWP grant also cannot be used to fund the proper abandonment of motor vehicle disposal wells, which are required by law to be decommissioned.

Can the SWP grant be used to repair a spring box or reservoir?

No. The SWP grant cannot be used for water system maintenance or system construction. The Drinking Water SRF program can provide loans for system construction. For more information, visit DEQ's grant and loan website at <http://www.deq.idaho.gov/water-quality/grants-loans.aspx>.

Can SWP Grants be used to install a new fire hydrant?

SWP funding cannot be used for operation and maintenance costs. This includes installation of hydrants at the end of a service line for the purpose of flushing the line. However, if a case can be made that the fire protection is specifically for protection of the watershed serving the drinking water source, the project will be considered. This would need to be for a surface water source where wildfire is a potential threat and damage from fire within their source water protection area would directly result in contamination of the drinking water source.

Additional Questions?

For additional questions on SWP grants, contact your regional DEQ office or contact Rachael Smith at (208) 373-0249 or email Rachael.Smith@deq.idaho.gov.