

Refrigerant emission reduction grant

Request for Proposals (RFP)

FY 2019

This document describes the Refrigerant emission reduction grant, including information on who may apply for funding, match requirements, activities eligible for funding, and other information that will help applicants submit an application. Applications are due no later than **4:00 pm Central Time on Wednesday, May 15, 2019**.

The applicant should check the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) webpage for any updates, including questions, answers and addendums: <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/refrigerant-emissions-reduction-grants>.

Sample Grant agreement, Grant application form, Affidavit of Noncollusion, and other documents can all be found on the MPCA website at <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/refrigerant-emissions-reduction-grants>.

1. Overview

The MPCA requests proposals from eligible applicants for projects that aim to reduce emissions of high global warming potential (HGWP) greenhouse gas (GHG) refrigerants from facilities within Minnesota. The MPCA is providing this grant funding to identify and encourage voluntary reduction efforts of high air emissions in communities around the State.

Once largely used, ozone damaging refrigerants such as Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) have been phased out making way for replacements, also known as HGWP GHG refrigerants. While these replacements spare the ozone layer, they have 1,000 to 9,000 times greater capacity to warm the atmosphere than carbon dioxide. If released, one 30-pound tank of R-22, the most common refrigerant, is more potent than the carbon dioxide emitted into the atmosphere by driving nearly seven additional cars each year. Some substitutes are available to HGWP GHG refrigerants, and alternative methods to reduce refrigerant use can be identified and can reduce emissions associated with refrigerants. Through leak detection, monitoring and repair, system retirement and retrofitting, green refrigerant technology, environmentally friendly refrigerants, and sale and recycling, the emissions from refrigerants can be greatly reduced.

2. Funding

Approximately \$40,000 in funding is available. Additional funding may become available or MPCA may choose not to award all funding. MPCA has authority to administer this RFP pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 115D.04.

Maximum award: The maximum grant award is \$40,000 per applicant.

Match requirement: There is no match requirement. However, applicants who provide a match, whether cash or in-kind, will rank higher during the application review process.

Payment schedule

Grant funding for eligible costs will be paid on a reimbursement basis upon submission of approved invoices on an agreed-upon schedule between the grant recipient and MPCA.

3. Eligible and ineligible applicants

Eligible applicants

Consultants, professional and trade associations, organizations, businesses, educational institutions, and governmental units.

Applicants must have a proven working relationship with the industry, equipment, refrigerant, or process the project is targeting, have the ability to identify opportunities for HGWP GHG reductions, build on efforts that have already been made, provide direct support to implement changes, and calculate environmental outcomes and cost-effectiveness for project implementation.

Preferred qualifications

- Demonstrated technical expertise to reduce HGWP GHG refrigerant use and emissions
- Proven ability to facilitate potential solutions to a common environmental problem
- Ability to:
 - Document recommended solutions for facilities, including potential environmental impact, refrigerant reductions, and cost-effectiveness, so facilities are empowered to make decisions and implement actions
 - Assist facilities with implementation and overcoming potential barriers
 - Ability to assist facilities in tracking and reporting environmental outcomes, such as refrigerant emissions, reductions, and cost-effectiveness of the projects and provide the results in reports
 - Determine from each facility what additional tools they need to increase sustainable project implementation

Ineligible applicants

Individuals are ineligible. The MPCA may also deem an applicant ineligible because of, but not limited to: enforcement issues, labor standards, or tax status.

Entities that are currently suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota and/or the federal government are ineligible applicants.

4. Eligible and ineligible projects

Eligible projects

The intent of this program is to reduce the emissions of HGWP GHGs that result from the accidental release or utilization of these gases in refrigeration units. Eligible projects are those that identify opportunities for HGWP GHG reduction and encourage reduction practices at facilities in Minnesota. Projects that repair current, retrofit existing, or install new systems that use alternative refrigerants with a lower global warming potential may apply.

Applicants shall:

- a. Apply on behalf of and/or provide technical assistance to multiple businesses or organizations interested in reducing HGWP GHG emissions at their facilities in Minnesota. The number of participating businesses or organizations may be known or estimated. If the project is awarded funding, the number of facilities included in a final workplan as a part of the grant agreement cannot be less than the estimated number of participants provided in the application.
- b. Conduct and provide research regarding the potential interest of local businesses and organizations. An estimated number of participants must be provided at the time of application and awardees are expected to secure the estimated number of participants as part of a

workplan. If awarded and following the grant agreement, up to 10% of the grant funding may be used to further gather and secure interest from participants.

- c. Assist participating facilities in implementing cost-effective solutions that reduce emissions and help calculate and report the outcome of those projects.
- d. Applicants are asked to consider whether any participating facilities are located in an environmental justice area. A map of EJ areas is located at <http://mpca.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=f5bf57c8dac24404b7f8ef1717f57d00>

Ineligible projects

Any project that does not fit the description of an eligible project.

5. Application submission instructions

All applicants must submit 1) the grant application form, 2) documentation (e.g. case study, report) of your technical experience with emission reductions in refrigeration, and 3) Affidavit of Noncollusion.

Applications must be received electronically by the MPCA **no later than 4:00 pm Central Time on Wednesday, May 15, 2019**. The email properties header will reflect the date and time submissions are received. Application submissions received after the deadline will not be considered eligible. Email applications to grants.pca@state.mn.us with the subject line: **"FY19 Refrigerant emission reduction grants"**. The MPCA is not responsible for any errors or delays caused by technology-related issues.

6. Application questions

We are obligated to be transparent in all aspects of our grant work. To meet our obligation, all questions must be submitted in the same manner and answers are only provided via the [MPCA website](#). It is the applicant's responsibility to check the MPCA website for the most recent updates about an open RFP, including questions and answers and addendums.

Applicants who have any questions regarding this RFP must email questions to grants.pca@state.mn.us, subject line: "Emission reduction RFP Question". Answers to questions will be posted frequently on the [MPCA website](#).

MPCA personnel are not authorized to discuss this RFP with applicants outside of the question and answer forum. Contact regarding this RFP with any MPCA personnel may result in disqualification.

Additional Information

Application review process

Applications received by the grant deadline will be reviewed by MPCA staff and community-based reviewer(s) based upon the Score Sheet in Exhibit 1. Late applications will not be considered for review.

All applicants will be notified by MPCA staff within approximately 60 days of application due date. Applicants selected for funding will be contacted concerning the next steps in the award process, including execution of the appropriate agreements and workplan submissions. For projects that are not chosen to receive funding immediately, final award decisions may be deferred until a later date. Deferred applications will receive a final determination notice by June 30, 2019.

Eligible and ineligible costs

Eligible costs

Any cost that is directly related to the project and not deemed ineligible below or by MPCA staff.

Ineligible costs

Ineligible costs include costs that are not directly related to the project. The following costs, including but not limited to, even if they are directly related to the project, are ineligible

- Any expenses incurred before the contract is fully executed including applicant's expense for preparing the eligibility and cost applications or any expenses incurred during work plan application and final work plan development
- Bad debts, late payment fees, finance charges or contingency funds, interest, and investment management fees
- Attorney fees
- Engineering/consultant fees
- Employee worksite parking
- Lobbying, lobbyists and political contributions
- Mark-up on purchases and/or subcontracts
- Taxes, except sales tax on eligible equipment and expenses
- Activities associated with permit fees
- Activities addressing enforcement actions or that involve a financial penalty
- Memberships (including subscriptions and dues)
- Reimbursement to non-staff stakeholders for their attendance at stakeholder participation meetings
- Food (other than staff per diem), alcoholic refreshments
- Entertainment, gifts, prizes and decorations
- Merit awards and bonuses
- Donations and fundraising
- Computer(s), tablets, and software, unless unique to the project and specifically approved by the MPCA as a direct expense
- Purchase or rental of mobile communication devices such as pagers, cell phones, and personal data assistants, unless unique to the project and specifically approved by the MPCA as a direct expense

Grantee responsibilities

Awardees are required to be a registered vendor in SWIFT and will sign the grant agreement using SWIFT. To register, go to the Supplier Portal webpage [SWIFT](#) and click on the *Vendor Registration Link*.

Grant agreement

Each awardee must enter into a grant agreement. The agreement will address the conditions of the award, including implementation of the project. Once the agreement is signed, the recipient is expected to read and comply with all conditions of the agreement.

A sample State of Minnesota Grant Agreement can be found on the [MPCA website](#) for your reference. Much of the language reflected in the agreement is required by statute.

Reporting requirements

Grantee will submit brief interim grant reports at two months, at six months or halfway through the project, and a final report no later than 30 days prior to the end of the grant. Interim report(s) will document achievement or progress toward workplan tasks as well as detailed budget expenditures. Final project report will include, at minimum, facilities worked with and facility information, projects, and emission reductions that resulted. It is the preference of the MPCA for grantees to allow MPCA staff the option to view the grant-supported improvements in person and potentially work with awardees to educate others.

Public data

Applications are private or nonpublic until opened. Once the applications are opened, the name and address of the applicant and the amount requested is public. All other data in an application is private or nonpublic data until all agreements are fully executed. After all agreements are fully executed, all remaining data in the applications is public with the exception of trade secret data as defined and classified in Minn. Stat. § 13.37. A statement by a grantee that the application is copyrighted or otherwise protected does not prevent public access to the application (Minn. Stat. § 13.599, subd. 3).

Conflict of interest

We will take steps to prevent individual and organizational conflicts of interest, both in reference to applicants and reviewers per [Minn. Stat. § 16B.98](#) and [Conflict of Interest Policy for State Grant-Making](#).

Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

- A grantee or applicant is unable or potentially unable to render impartial assistance or advice to the department due to competing duties or loyalties.
- A grantee's or applicant's objectivity in carrying out the grant is or might be otherwise impaired due to competing duties or loyalties.

In cases where a conflict of interest is suspected, disclosed, or discovered, the applicants or grantees will be notified and actions may be pursued, including but not limited to disqualification from eligibility for the grant award or termination of the grant agreement.

Grantee bidding requirements

Grantees that are non-governmental organizations (NGO's) must follow:

The grantee must take all necessary affirmative steps to assure that targeted vendors from business with active certifications through these entities are used when possible:

- [State Department of Administration's Certified Targeted Group, Economically Disadvantaged and Veteran-Owned Vendor List](#)
- Metropolitan Council's Targeted Vendor list: [Minnesota Unified Certification Program](#)
- Small Business Certification Program through Hennepin County, Ramsey County, and City of St. Paul: [Central Certification Program](#)

The grantee must maintain written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award and administration of contracts.

The grantee must not contract with vendors who are suspended or debarred in Minnesota:

<http://www.mmd.admin.state.mn.us/debarredreport.asp>

Audits

Per [Minn. Stat. § 16B.98](#) subd. 8, the grantee's books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices of the grantee or other party that are relevant to the grant or transaction are subject to examination by the granting agency and either the legislative auditor or the state auditor, as appropriate. This requirement will last for a minimum of six years from the grant agreement end date, receipt, and approval of all final reports, or the required period of time to satisfy all state and program retention requirements, whichever is later.

Affirmative action and non-discrimination requirements for all grantees

- A. The grantee agrees not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status in regard to public assistance, membership or activity in a local commission, disability, sexual orientation, or age in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. [Minn. Stat. § 363A.02](#). The grantee agrees to take affirmative steps to employ, advance in employment, upgrade, train, and recruit minority persons, women, and persons with disabilities.
- B. The grantee must not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of physical or mental disability in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. The grantee agrees to take affirmative action to employ, advance in employment, and otherwise treat qualified disabled persons without discrimination based upon their physical or mental disability in all employment practices such as the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment, advertising, layoff or termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training, including apprenticeship. Minn. R., pt. [5000.3500](#).
- C. The grantee agrees to comply with the rules and relevant orders of the Minnesota Department of Human Rights issued pursuant to the Minnesota Human Rights Act.

Voter registration requirement

The grantee will comply with [Minn. Stat. § 201.162](#) by providing voter registration services for its employees and for the public served by the grantee.

Priorities

It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to ensure fairness, precision, equity, and consistency in competitive grant awards. This includes implementing diversity and inclusion in grant-making. [The Policy on Rating Criteria for Competitive Grant Review](#) establishes the expectation that grant programs intentionally identify how the grant serves diverse populations, especially populations experiencing inequities and/or disparities.

Points will be awarded to:

- Projects with at least one prospective partner located in communities with higher concentrations of low-income residents and people of color, including tribal communities. Click here to see if the project is located in an area of concern for Environmental Justice: <http://mpca.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=f5bf57c8dac24404b7f8ef1717f57d00>. Applications must address the number of prospective partner facilities located in Environmental Justice areas they are committed to serving.

Projects with at least one prospective partner classified as a small business that is veteran-owned, economically disadvantaged, or targeted group businesses in Minnesota based on the business's ownership by a woman, a minority, a person with a substantial physical disability, or by its location in an economically disadvantaged area. Please reference additional information here: <https://mn.gov/admin/business/vendor-info/oep/sbcp/>

Exhibit 1: Application evaluation score sheet for refrigerant emission reduction

Evaluation factors

A 100 – point scale will be used to evaluate eligible applications and develop final recommendations.

Applications will be evaluated and ranked according to the following criteria:

1. Project impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of facilities that the applicant proposes to serve • Workplan clearly identifies methods used for each portion of the project, detailed key steps to be completed, who will be performing the work (e.g., project partners, key personnel, etc.), and details how the project will be implemented • Potential environmental outcomes • Additional/higher match proposed 	40
2. Preferred qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated technical expertise to reduce HGWP GHG refrigerants use and emissions • Proven ability to facilitate potential solutions to a common problem/challenge • Ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document recommended solutions for facilities, including potential environmental impact, refrigerant reductions, and cost-effectiveness, so facilities are empowered to make decisions and implement actions • Assist facilities with implementation and overcoming potential barriers • Assist the facilities in tracking and reporting the environmental outcomes, such as refrigerant emissions, reductions, and cost-effectiveness of the projects and provide the results in reports • Determine from the industry what additional tools they need to increase project implementation 	35
3. Environmental Justice:	<p>Projects with at least one prospective partner located in an area with higher concentrations of lower income residents and/or people of color or on tribal lands will receive up to 15 points. <i>Click Here to see if the project is located in an area of concern for Environmental Justice:</i> http://mpca.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=f5bf57c8dac24404b7f8ef1717f57d00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least two areas of concern: 15 points • One area of concern: 5 points • Not within an area of concern: 0 points 	15
4. Organization type	<p>Projects with at least one prospective partner classified as a small business that is certified veteran-owned, economically disadvantaged, or targeted group business in Minnesota based on the business's ownership by a woman, a minority, a person with a substantial physical disability, or by its location in an economically disadvantaged area will be awarded 10 points. Please reference additional information here.</p>	10
Total		100