

Drinking water planning and design funds for PFAS treatment

Questions and answers

Q1. I am wondering about the eligibility requirement “must have a minimum of four quarters of samples taken from entry points using applicable EPA methods and a rolling average that exceeds the EPA draft maximum contaminant level values for PFOS, PFOA, or the Hazard Index MCL.” Does the “entry point” mean entry to the distribution system, and does the rolling average have to be at those entry points? So, for example, if a well going to a treatment plant is over the MCL, but not when it enters the distribution system, do they not qualify?

A1. The entry point is defined as the point in a water supply where water enters the distribution system; it could be a treatment plant, a single well, or a combined discharge (where water from more than one source is combined before it enters a distribution system). It is expected that the data would be collected at the entry point(s) for the system.

Q2. To identify our funding category, what is meant by “reasonable demand estimates” up to the year 2040? Are these 2040 peak demands, average day demands, or other?

A2. Use maximum day demand needed for (up to) the 2040 population.

Q3. When using consulting help for design of treatment plants, does a municipality need to go through an RFP process to select a firm?

A3. The contracting and bidding requirements can be found in the sample grant agreement and are as follows:

4.3 *Contracting and bidding requirements*

Grantees that are municipalities must follow:

- (a) The contracting and bidding requirements in the Uniform Municipal Contracting Law as defined in [Minn. Stat. § 471.345](#).
- (b) The requirements of prevailing wage for grant-funded projects that include construction work and have a total project cost of \$25,000 or more, per [Minn. Stat. §§177.41](#) through [177.44](#). These rules require that the wages of laborers and workers should be comparable to wages paid for similar work in the community as a whole.
- (c) The grantee must not contract with vendors who are suspended or debarred in MN: <https://mn.gov/admin/osp/government/suspended-debarred/>

Q4. The City of Fridley has been identified as an eligible participant of the 3M MDL settlement case. My question is if we dispute or opt out of the settlement are we eligible for the Drinking water planning and design grant for PFAS treatment? Or if we decide to participate in the settlement, are we eligible for the grant funding?

A4. This grant is independent of the [Aqueous Film-Forming Foam \(AFFF\) Product Liability Litigation \(MDL\) /Public Water Systems Settlements](#). Eligibility for MPCA’s grant round is not impacted by participating in the national settlement.

Q5. I am working with a community that has had to shut down a well due to contamination from PFAS. The community does have four quarters of testing and exceeds the Health Based Value exceedance from the MDH, along with the proposed Hazard Index from the EPA for PFHXS. I was curious if the community would be a fit for the program to fund planning for water system improvements, or if there are other programs we should be considering? Any information you would be willing to share would be helpful so we can consider all options for funding.

A5. If the samples are from the appropriate method, there are 4 quarters of testing and the quarterly rolling average would exceed the EPA Proposed Draft Hazard Index MCL, the applicant would be eligible, as long as they meet the other minimum requirements of the RFP.

Q6. Are grant funds available to communities on a per-well basis or a system-wide basis? We have quarterly data available for some wells but not all. Any assistance would be appreciated.

A6. Please provide the data per well. The intent is that the system entry point is where the exceedance would occur; this could be the mixing of multiple wells or an individual well, depending on the system.

Q7. My understanding from this response is that we can submit individual applications for each well. Is that correct? Can you also clarify if we can submit applications for wells that don't meet the 4-qrt running average MCLs but that are likely going to be above the MCL? For example, we have a well with a single value, but the PFOA concentration is 16 ppt. If we can only submit wells with 4-qrt data, we only have 1 Well that qualifies. That Well has 4 quarters of data, but the running averages are well below the MCLs.

A7. Please submit an application for your community water system. Indicate which wells have data, what type of data, and what your exceedances are. We will evaluate what we receive to determine eligibility.

Q8. I see the grant is focused on PFAS treatment design. We are currently examining multiple options to deal with PFAS including alternate source development. Cloquet only has one well that is impacted by PFAS so alternate source development would likely be much more cost efficient than treatment. Would a hydrogeologic study with test drilling be an option under this funding?

A8. Planning and design for an alternate source, including study and testing drilling, would be eligible as long as the applicant is eligible for grant funds.

Q9. We are considering abandoning our PFAS-contaminated well and instead connecting to a local municipality. Would this grant opportunity cover the costs associated with (1) abandoning our well and water tower and (2) connection to the city's drinking water system?

A9. This type of project could be eligible if you also meet the requirements of an eligible applicant.

Q10. We are writing on behalf of Princeton Public Utilities. We are currently working with PPU how to best respond to PFAS in their drinking water system.

At this time, we are completing a study to determine which of the following is the best option for PPU:

- Optimization of the current system (only if sufficient supply can be gained)
- Additional/replacement well(s)
- Treatment

Our understanding is that the Drinking Water planning and design funds for PFAS treatment can be used in the design of additional/replacement drinking water wells due to PFAS contamination. However, we have not yet completed sufficient analysis to confirm the design parameters of these additional drinking water wells. We need to complete a well siting study, which will take several months and will not be completed by time applications are due.

Given the uncertainty, how should we proceed with the application? Should we assume "worst case" scenario, and ask for those funds?

A10. The planning and design grants would cover work needed to plan (determine what solution would work) and then design the solution for your facility. An application could be submitted that includes the costs for the study and then the subsequent design.