Funding Resource: Biden-Harris Launches new $19 Million Grant Program to Combat Climate Change Impacts on Drinking Water

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced on September 7th that $19 million in funding through a new grant program that will work to improve the climate resilience of the nation's infrastructure. EPA's Drinking Water System Infrastructure Resilience and Sustainability grant will support drinking water systems in underserved, small and disadvantaged communities that are working to prepare for and reduce vulnerability to impacts from climate change ranging from extreme flooding to extreme drought.

Environmental justice and equity are a central part of EPA's programs and this action advances progress under President Biden's EJ Strong Initiative by investing in communities with a legacy of environmental injustice concerns. Through this grant, EPA is seeking applications for projects that will benefit underserved, small, and disadvantaged communities.

This grant will be made available through a competitive Request for Application process. Eligible applicants for this funding opportunity include public water systems, a water system located in an area governed by an Indian Tribe, eligible territories, and states on behalf of communities that are underserved and small or disadvantaged. Eligible activities for funding include planning, design, construction, implementation, operation, or maintenance of a program or project that increases drinking water system resilience to natural hazards. The funding opportunity will remain open for 60 days on the Grants.gov webpage.

Background
EPA's Drinking Water System Infrastructure Resilience and Sustainability grant program was established under the America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA) of 2018. AWIA improves drinking water and water quality, deepens infrastructure investments, enhances public health and quality of life, increases jobs, and bolsters the economy. For more visit: https://www.epa.gov/dwcapacity/drinking-water-system-infrastructure-resilience-and-sustainability

THIS MONTH

Funding Resource: Biden-Harris Administration Launches new $19 Million Grant Program to Combat Climate Change Impacts on Drinking Water

Resource: Upcoming EPA Region 8 Webinar on Using the Service Line Inventory Template

Resource: WaterTA

Free Resources to Help Your Utility be Proactive with Cybersecurity

Training Resource: How to Prepare your Utility for Disasters: A Webinar for Very Small Drinking Water Systems that Serve Under 3,301 People

Resource: New EPA Region 8 Lead Service Line Inventory (LSLI) Website

Resource: Lead Service Line Inventories (LSLI) Monthly Office Hours – Ask EPA

Training Resource: EPA Headquarters Upcoming Webinars and past Webinar Recordings

Announcement: Lead and Copper Sampling – How to Avoid Sample Invalidation

Upcoming Regulatory Deadlines

Key EPA Contacts

Resource: Upcoming EPA Region 8 Webinar on Using the Service Line Inventory Template

EPA Region 8's Drinking Water Program has one more currently scheduled training webinar for Tribal public water system managers and operators on using the Region 8 service line inventory template.

Completing the Region 8 Service Line Inventory Template. Erica Wenzel, Lead Service Line Specialist, will be offering three webinars scheduled for:

§   Tuesday September 19, 2023 12:00 – 1:00 PM MDST

Completing the Region 8 Service Line Inventory Template Erica Wenzel

Tuesday September 19, 2023 12:00 – 1:00 PM MDST
Join on your computer, mobile app or room device
[Click here to join the meeting](#)
Meeting ID: 286 558 879 693
Passcode: vXuaoQ
[Download Teams](#) | [Join on the web](#)

Or call in (audio only)
[+1 202-991-0477, 876706387#](#)   United States, Washington DC
Phone Conference ID: 876 706 387#
[Find a local number](#) | [Reset PIN](#)

Training will feature an overview and demonstration of the EPA Region 8 Lead Service Line Inventory Spreadsheet and Instructions document. The inventory spreadsheet and instructions were specifically created for Public Water Systems on Tribal lands in Region 8 that are required to complete a Lead Service Line Inventory and would like to be provided forms for conducting their inventories and submitting them to EPA. The inventory template was designed to take some of the guess work out of conducting the inventory and help your water systems succeed in meeting the requirements. The overview will explain some of the special features, and formatting of the template. The demonstration will show operators how to fill out the Water System General Information form and enter data into the spreadsheet. EPA Region 8's Service Line Inventory Template, or inventory spreadsheet, can be found at https://www.epa.gov/region8-waterops/reporting-forms-drinking-water-systems-wyoming-and-tribal-lands-epa-region-8.

Resource: WaterTA

All communities deserve access to clean, reliable water. Yet too many communities across America face challenges in providing safe drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater services to their residents. The [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#) presents an unprecedented opportunity to address water infrastructure needs by providing $50 billion in new funding – the [largest federal investment in water in the history of our nation](#). New and existing EPA [Water Technical Assistance (WaterTA) programs](#) will be utilized to support effective implementation of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

What is WaterTA?

EPA's free Water Technical Assistance (WaterTA) supports communities to identify water challenges, develop plans, build capacity, and develop application materials to access water infrastructure funding. To implement WaterTA, EPA collaborates with states, tribes, territories, community partners, and other key stakeholders. Learn more about **[WaterTA services and programs](#)**.

Help for Your Community

EPA WaterTA aims to assist communities with applications for federal funding, quality infrastructure, and reliable water services. If your community is facing water infrastructure challenges and could benefit from support, we encourage you to learn more about **who can receive WaterTA and the challenges WaterTA can help your community address** then complete and submit a webform request by clicking on the link below:

Request Water Technical Assistance for Your Community

Free Resources to Help Your Utility be Proactive with Cybersecurity

As cyber-attacks against critical infrastructure facilities, including water and wastewater systems, continue to increase, so does the need for a proactive cybersecurity approach. The first step in building a cybersecurity program is to conduct a cybersecurity assessment to identify strengths, gaps, and vulnerabilities in current cybersecurity practices. EPA has two free cybersecurity assessment methods utilities can use to assess their cybersecurity practices: The Water Cybersecurity Assessment Tool (WCAT) and the Water Sector Cybersecurity Evaluation Program.

Water Cybersecurity Assessment Tool (WCAT)

Water and wastewater utilities can use this tool to evaluate and self-assess their current cybersecurity practices. The tool utilizes EPA's Cybersecurity Checklist which contains important cybersecurity controls needed for a strong cybersecurity program. Each question provides a utility with the option to provide a "Yes", "No", or "In progress" response, as well as an Explanation of Response where more detail can be provided to support each response. After conducting the assessment, the tool creates a comprehensive Assessment Report which includes all the information collected during the assessment. The tool also generates a Risk Mitigation Plan Template for each question that was answered "No" or "In Progress" as these controls are missing and represent potential cybersecurity gaps and vulnerabilities at the utility. Moving forward, a utility can use the Risk Mitigation Plan Template to begin developing plans to mitigate these cybersecurity gaps. The Risk Mitigation Plan gives the utility a method to track their progress as they build develop their cybersecurity program.

Water Sector Cybersecurity Evaluation Program

Water and wastewater utilities may prefer to undergo a third-party assessment led by a cybersecurity professional. To support this approach, EPA provides the Water Sector Cybersecurity Evaluation Program. Under this program, water and wastewater utilities can register and work with a cybersecurity professional to undergo an assessment of their cybersecurity practices. After registering, EPA will reach out directly to the utility and coordinate a date and time for a virtual assessment. During the virtual assessment, the cybersecurity professional will use the Water Cybersecurity Assessment Tool to review each question with the utility, documenting the responses to each question. A benefit of receiving an assessment through this program is utilities can ask questions and engage with a cybersecurity expert during the assessment. Upon completion, the utility will receive their full Assessment Report and Risk Mitigation Plan Template through a secure file sharing method so they can begin addressing their cybersecurity gaps and vulnerabilities. EPA will not receive a copy of any utility's assessment since this assessment is intended only for the utility.

Cybersecurity Technical Assistance Resources

Along with cybersecurity assessment methods, EPA offers cybersecurity technical assistance resources to assist utilities in building their cybersecurity programs. These resources can be used throughout the entire cybersecurity assessment process and can be helpful when working through a Risk Mitigation Plan and mitigating vulnerabilities found during an assessment. Appendix B of EPA's Guidance Document features Checklist Fact Sheets for each question and control from EPA's Cybersecurity Checklist. The Fact Sheets cover these cybersecurity controls in more

detail, including why the controls are important, tips on implementing the controls at a utility, and additional resources available to assist with implementing each control. Additionally, EPA offers direct technical assistance through the Cybersecurity Technical Assistance Program for the Water Sector. Utilities can submit cybersecurity questions through this program and receive remote assistance (phone or email) from a cybersecurity subject-matter expert. EPA strives to respond to each request for technical assistance within two business days.

Ready to Build Your Cybersecurity Program?

Visit the [EPA's Cybersecurity for the Water Sector Website](#) to learn more about these resources, and others, that can bring your utility one step closer to cybersecurity resilience.

Training Resource: How to Prepare Your Utility for Disasters: A Webinar for Very Small Drinking Water Systems that Serve Under 3,301 People

Register Here!

On Tuesday, October 10th from 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM CDT, join the US EPA for a free webinar on how to prepare your utility for disasters! This webinar will demonstrate how to create a Risk and Resilience Assessment (RRA) and Emergency Response Plan (ERP) using drought and water contamination scenarios, provide information on a new opportunity where operators may be eligible to earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for creating an RRA and ERP, share 10 quick and easy tips on how to prepare your utility for disasters. This workshop is meant for very small drinking water systems (those that serve under 3,301 people and do not need to comply with America's Water Infrastructure Act). We also encourage water sector technical assistance providers and consultants to attend. For more information, please contact us at dwresilience@epa.gov.

Resource: New EPA Region 8 Lead Service Line Inventory (LSLI) Website

EPA Region 8 has launched a new website with information on lead service line inventories (LSLI) for public water system operators and managers in Wyoming and on Tribal Lands. On the [Drinking Water Ops](#) home page, the new website can be found under the section **Regulations and Compliance** by clicking on the link titled Lead Service Line Inventories (LSLI) or by going to https://www.epa.gov/region8-waterops/lead-service-line-inventories-wyoming-and-tribal-lands-epa-region-8.

Developing and maintaining a service line inventory is a new requirement of the Revised Lead and Copper Rule. All community water systems and non-transient, non-community water systems are required to develop and submit to EPA an initial inventory of service line materials by October 16, 2024.

On this website you will find EPA Region 8 contacts for more information. Below the contacts are descriptions and links to several NEW forms: 1) *EPA Region 8 Lead Service Line Inventory Template*; 2) *EPA Region 8 Lead Service Line Inventory Template Instructions* document which supports the template and contains guidance on how to use the template as well as tips on how to complete a service line inventory and 3) *EPA Region 8 Lead Service Line Inventory General Information Form* for public water systems who have completed their inventory using a format other than the EPA Region 8 Service Line Inventory Template.

On this same page are descriptions and links to several National EPA documents that support developing a service line inventory. These include: 1) the National *Guidance for Developing and Maintaining a Service Line Inventory*; and 2) NEW *Small Entity Compliance Guide* and 3) NEW *Fact Sheet for Developing and Maintaining a Service Line Inventory*. The *Small Entity Compliance Guide* and the *Fact Sheet* were developed for small systems such as most Tribal public water systems. There is also a link to a recorded webinar: *Getting the Lead Out: Guidance for Developing Service Line Inventories*. EPA Region 8 will soon be adding additional recorded webinars by EPA Region 8 staff on lead service line inventories and completing the Region 8 service line inventory template.

Last, check out the links in the sidebar on **Related Information** for additional helpful information on the Revised Lead and Copper Rule and lead in drinking water.

Resource: Lead Service Line Inventories (LSLI) Monthly Office Hours – Ask EPA

Jill Minter, Lead Service Line (LSL) Coordinator, and Erica Wenzel, Land Copper Rule and LSL Specialist, will be holding virtual Lead Service Line Inventories monthly office hours, beginning October 18, 2023, from 10am to 11am Central Time, and at the same time on the 3rd Wednesday of every month thereafter. This will be a time for operators and managers to ask EPA any questions on developing lead service line inventories as well as hear questions from other operators. An email will be sent out each month to tribal public water system contacts with the LSLI Office Hours Teams meeting link, which is also copied below.

If interest is high, we can schedule additional LSLI Office Hours. We are thinking that holding monthly LSLI Office Hours will be an efficient way to answer questions and share information that may be common to multiple systems. The forum should also provide a good opportunity to learn from other operators who are also developing inventories and facing similar challenges. Do consider attending to listen in even if you do not have questions to ask that month. While we have scheduled monthly Office Hours, please know that water system operators and managers are always welcome to contact EPA with questions by email or by phone as well.

Monthly Meeting Info (Starting October 18 and then the 3rd Wednesday of every month):

Microsoft Teams meeting
Join on your computer, mobile app or room device
Click here to join the meeting
Meeting ID: 216 909 557 054
Passcode: e2Efid
Download Teams | Join on the web

Or call in (audio only)
+1 202-991-0477,,904938593#   United States, Washington DC
Phone Conference ID: 904 938 593#
Find a local number | Reset PIN

Training Resource: EPA Headquarters Upcoming Webinars and Past Webinar Recordings

EPA's Small Drinking Water Systems Webinar Series (click to find upcoming webinars and past webinar recordings)

Click here to receive notifications for upcoming webinars.

Upcoming Webinars (registration for UCMR 5 not yet available):

Date	Topic
October 10	How to Prepare Your Utility for Disasters
October 31	Fifth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring rule (UCMR 5)
November 28	TBD
Recording Available Now	Cybersecurity 101 Training for Water Systems Webinar

Additional EPA Drinking Water Training

Find information on upcoming and past training opportunities for drinking water professionals, public officials, and citizens interested in gaining knowledge and skills related to compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act, Building

Capacity of Drinking Water Systems, and Drinking Water Grant Opportunities. You can find current trainings and past trainings and webinars here.

Announcement: Lead and Copper Sampling – How to Avoid Sample Invalidation

For managers and operators:

- Samples must be collected at taps normally used for drinking. Acceptable sample locations for community water systems are kitchen or bathroom taps ONLY.
- It is recommended to use the homeowner sample instruction form and submit these to the lab. If a homeowner indicates they collected the sample anywhere, but a tap normally used for drinking (such as from a hose bib, sill cock, bathtub, etc.) you should not send this sample to the lab as it will be rejected by EPA and you will be required to collect a replacement sample.
- Sample at Tier 1 sites first. Samples can be taken from the regular or back-up sites but are required to be collected at Tier 1 sites first. Move to the Tier 2 sites only if you run out of Tier 1 sites. Move to the Tier 3 sites only if none of the Tier 1 sites are available. Move to "other" sites last.
- Please tell your operators that if they cannot collect a sample at a site on the list to move to another site on the list and document the issue that they had (for instance nobody was home). They should **not** go next door unless that site is on the list.
- **IMPORTANT**: Once sampling is complete, send an email to R8DWU@epa.gov stating the sites you couldn't sample at and why in order to avoid sample invalidation.
- Please have your operators indicate the address and name on the lab slip so the result can be matched to a site on the plan.
- If a site needs to be removed from the plan due to access issues, house is abandoned, etc. please send an email to R8DWU@epa.gov right away.

Upcoming Regulatory Deadlines

Date	Event	Location
Last day of every calendar month	Last day to collect monthly total coliform samples	Sites approved on your RTCR sample plan
10th of every month	Last day for EPA to receive total coliform and DBP samples collected during the previous month	N/A
September 30th	Last day to collect Lead and Copper samples for system who have a seasonal monitoring period of June – September (check your To-Do)	Sites approved on your LCR sampling plan

Key EPA Contacts

Region 8 Tribal Team

Motaz Zarooq – Denver, CO Office – 303-312-6780 – zarooq.motaz@epa.gov
Joe Faubion – Helena, MT Office – 406-457-5005 – faubion.joseph@epa.gov
Andrea Griese – Pierre, SD Office – 605-945-1192 – griese.andrea@epa.gov
Bryce Faliskie (EPA WaterTA/BIL Funding Opportunities) – Denver, CO Office – 303-312-6651 – faliskie.bryce@epa.gov

Other R8 Drinking Water Employee Contact Information Can be Found Here.

This newsletter can be viewed online by visiting: https://www.epa.gov/region8-waterops/epa-region-8-tribal-drinking-water-monthly-newsletter.

If you would like to be added or removed from this newsletter distribution list, please email griese.andrea@epa.gov.