

# Department of Environmental Conservation

## Water Quality Improvement Program (WQIP)

### Funding Questions

**1. Can multiple projects on the same property be funded through WQIP?**

Yes, WQIP may fund multiple projects located on the same property. Separate Consolidated Funding Applications must be submitted for each of the proposed projects. Also, the applications should clearly state how the projects coordinate and do not duplicate each other.

**2. Can an applicant submit more than one WQIP application?**

Yes. Eligible applicants may submit more than one application for WQIP funding, but only one application per project. Applicants are limited to 5 applications per round. Applicants may receive more than one grant award per round.

**3. Can a municipality apply for both the DEC/EFC Wastewater Infrastructure Engineering Planning Grant (EPG) Program and WQIP the same year?**

Yes, but not for the same project. WQIP projects are supposed to be ready for implementation (construction). If a facility needs to have a preliminary engineering report completed under EPG, then the project is not ready to be built, and therefore not ready for WQIP funding. In addition, for wastewater treatment projects, an engineering report is required to be attached with the WQIP application.

**4. Does WQIP have a Median Household Income requirement?**

No. WQIP does not have an income requirement.

**5. Can a municipality submit an application to obtain more funding for a project already awarded a WQIP grant in a previous round?**

Applicants that have received funding in a previous round will not receive additional funding in this or a future round for the same scope of work. However, WQIP will fund distinct phases or different activities and costs of a project in consecutive rounds of funding if the applicant sufficiently describes how the planned scope of work is distinctly different from the previous scope of work.

**6. Are costs incurred prior to the time of award eligible for reimbursement?**

For projects other than Aquatic Connectivity Restoration and Land Acquisition for Source Water Protection projects, eligible costs incurred May 10, 2021 or later may be eligible for reimbursement if you receive a WQIP grant. For Aquatic Connectivity Restoration projects, the contract term could begin April 29, 2020. For Land Acquisition for Source Water Protection projects, the contract term could begin August 1, 2019. However, any costs incurred prior to executing a contract are at the risk of the applicant. There is no guarantee that you will receive a WQIP grant or that the costs will be approvable for reimbursement.

## **Application/Contracting**

### **7. Can applicants provide additional documentation with the WQIP application?**

Applicants should only submit the supporting documentation that is required by the WQIP application for their particular type of project.

### **8. Is a municipal resolution required to be submitted with a WQIP Program application?**

No. A municipal resolution is not required to be submitted with applications for the WQIP program.

### **9. If a municipality currently has an open WQIP grant, will that negatively affect their chances of getting awarded another grant in this round?**

Municipalities with open WQIP grants are eligible to apply again this round. Applicants should keep in mind that a municipality's "Experience and Ability" are considered during the application review process; therefore, municipalities are encouraged to make sure the existing WQIP grant is up to date with the Department.

### **10. Is it possible to view the WQIP application questions in the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) before filling out the application**

Yes, they are available to view or download on the [CFA Program Questions webpage](#) (leaves DEC website).

### **11. Where can I find help filling out the CFA?**

DEC does not administer the CFA. For technical questions about the CFA, contact the CFA helpdesk at [cfa-tech@ny.gov](mailto:cfa-tech@ny.gov). Tips and resources are also available on the [CFA Help webpage](#) (leaves DEC website).

### **12. Can more than one entity apply for a WQIP grant together as co-applicants?**

Only one entity can be the applicant as DEC can only execute a contract with one entity per project. In the case of the MS4 category, for example, applications may be submitted on behalf of multiple MS4s, but a lead applicant must be selected and must register in the Grants Gateway.

## **Scoring**

### **13. What is the "Classification Points Factor" in the scoring criteria for several project types?**

These points are allotted to a project on the basis of the state-assigned classification of the receiving water at the point of discharge where appropriate.. For more information on the classification of waterbodies in NYS, please refer to the [DECinfo Locator](#) where you will find the Waterbody Inventory/Priority Waterbodies List segment assessments for each waterbody with additional information.

## **Project Timeline**

### **14. How long does an awardee have to complete a WQIP project?**

Projects selected for funding through WQIP should complete construction within 2-3 years of receiving the grant award. Some projects may extend to 5 years.

### **15. Will there be future rounds of WQIP if the July 30, 2021 deadline is missed?**

DEC anticipates that there will be future rounds of WQIP.

## **Flood Resiliency Requirements**

### **16. Where can I find floodplain maps and more information about WQIP flood resiliency requirements?**

Resources to help with this application requirement are on DEC's WQIP webpage at: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/4774.html>. Links to the FEMA Flood Map Service, Floodway Development and Floodway Guidance, and National Flood Insurance Technical Bulletins are in the Applications Resources table on this webpage. Send questions to [user.water@dec.ny.gov](mailto:user.water@dec.ny.gov).

### **17. How can I find out if my project is in an Enhanced Flood Hazard Area or Enhanced Coastal High Hazard Area?**

Enhanced flood areas will be identified as per provisions in the Community Risk and Resiliency Act, but to date, this has not been done. If you know that the area where your project is located has flooded in the past 10 years due to a storm, you may be required to do a flood analysis as part of your workplan if awarded a grant, depending on your project, and you need to attach a floodplain map with your application. Additional information about enhanced floodplain areas can be found in the NYS Flood Risk Management Guidance at [https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration\\_pdf/crrafloodriskmgmtgdnc.pdf](https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration_pdf/crrafloodriskmgmtgdnc.pdf)

## **Land Acquisition for Source Water Protection**

### **18. Where can I identify public water supplies?**

Contact your local county health departments to verify active public drinking water supplies. Contact information can be found by visiting: [https://www.health.ny.gov/contact/contact\\_information/](https://www.health.ny.gov/contact/contact_information/)

### **19. Once the land is acquired, can it be turned over to the local municipality? Can that happen within the three year grant term or would it need to happen after the term is completed?**

Upon approval by DEC, an applicant who acquired an interest in real property using this grant funding may sell, lease, exchange or donate the real property to a not-for-profit or municipality, who will continue to use the real property for the same public purpose, without an express act of the New York State Legislature. Any sale, lease, exchange or donation which will result in the real property no longer having a public purpose must be approved by an express act of the New York State legislature. There are no time constraints on when that transfer has to happen.

**20. Which TMDLs qualify for WQIP Land Acquisition Points?**

In order to receive points, the project must be identified in a DEC-**approved** watershed implementation plan (i.e., TMDL, Nine Element Watershed Plan or DEC HABs Action Plan).

The list of approved TMDLs are on DEC's website at:

<https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/23835.html>

**21. Will public water supplies listed as "Groundwater under the influence of surface water" be scored as a surface water or a groundwater?**

If the public water supply is groundwater under the influence of surface water (GWUDI), it will be scored as a ground water system.

**22. Could a single WQIP Land Acquisition Program or Project application be submitted for a HUC 12 watershed that benefits multiple public water supplies?**

Yes, a single application can be submitted for a HUC 12 watershed that will protect one or more active public water drinking water supplies within that watershed.

**Salt Storage**

**23. Would "deconstruction" of an old shed be an eligible cost under the salt storage category? What about security measures such as security cameras?**

Neither deconstruction costs nor security measures would be eligible costs.

**Nonpoint Source**

**24. Part of my municipality is combined sewer and part is MS4; which catch basins can I include in my application for a vacuum truck i.e. in the total count, plan and procedures?**

The MS4 project type is to provide resources to benefit the regulated MS4 areas in NYS. Therefore, the catch basin plan, count, and procedures associated with the WQIP application should only include those catch basins that are regulated under the MS4 permit. Combined sewer catch basins are regulated under a different program.

**25. As a regulated MS4 entity, am I able to apply for and use the vacuum truck outside of my MS4 area?**

The MS4 project type is to provide resources to benefit the regulated MS4 areas in NYS. Therefore, the catch basin plan, count, and procedures associated with the WQIP application should only include those catch basins that are regulated under the MS4 permit.