


FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR SOURCE WATER ASSESSMENTS AND PROTECTION

Under the 1996 amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act, states may use a portion of the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) to protect both surface and underground sources of drinking water (i.e., source water). Source water protection begins in local communities with the identification of sources of public drinking water supplies and the assessment of potential contamination threats to these supplies. Some of the DWSRF funds can be used to fund these assessments. The information gathered in these efforts can then empower local governments, water suppliers, and the public to work toward the development and implementation of source water protection plans.

Why Do We Need Source Water Protection?

Protecting source water is the right thing to do. Preventing contamination of water supplies makes good sense in terms of both public health and economics -- and, it preserves our resources for the future. Cleaning up contaminated drinking water sources can cost millions, and the costs of providing safe drinking water through treatment also are increasing as regulations addressing public health concerns expand. Source water protection can prevent contamination at a fraction of these costs.

Source water protection also can reduce the regulatory burden imposed on public water systems because exemptions and waivers are available for a number of requirements (e.g., monitoring waivers, filtration exemptions) and are being considered in the development of many new regulations (e.g., ground water disinfection rule, chemical monitoring reform, enhanced surface water treatment rule). Thus, it makes sense to make source protection an integral part of public water supply policies.

How Can Your Community Tap into the SRF Funds?

Up to 10 percent of a State's DWSRF money may be set aside for source water protection. This money will be available for only a limited time, however. So State Drinking Water Programs are deciding now whether they will set aside a portion of their DWSRF money to support Source Water Assessment and Protection Programs. You and your community leaders can call your State Drinking Water Program and express your support for source water protection. You can also let them know of your community's interest in receiving support for source water protection efforts.

Where Do You Call?

For the person to contact in your State, call

EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at

1-800-426-4791