



FACTS ON

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY REGION FIVE
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Construction Grants Branch

The rapid growth of the American population and its continuous trend toward urban centers has resulted in a tremendous increase and concentration of domestic and industrial wastes. These wastes, discharged to municipal sewers, are one of the major causes of water pollution unless properly treated.

Therefore, treatment facilities are desperately needed throughout the country and especially in Region V which has in its area, a large percentage of the urbanized concentrated domestic and industrial discharge.

Over 30 million Americans live within close reach of the five Great Lakes, four of which are located within Region V, and 80 percent of these people live in metropolitan areas.

Every municipality is responsible for treating the pollution it creates. To assist in this effort, a system of Federal financial aid was established through Section 8 of the Federal Water Pollution Act, enacted by Congress in 1956 with amendments in 1961, 1965, and 1966. It provides the statutory authority for the activities undertaken by the Region V Construction Grants Branch.

The prime mission of the Region V Construction Grants Branch is to insure that properly designed, cost effective, and environmentally compatible municipal sewage treatment plants are constructed utilizing the best available technology to abate and prevent further pollution of fresh water resources in the Region.

One of four branches in the Air and Water Programs Division, Construction Grants is organized under a chief into six sections. Four of these sections concern themselves with the activities undertaken in one or more of the six states in Region V. The fifth section is assigned to overall program support, particularly in matters concerning Industrial Waste Cost Recovery, Environmental Impact, Uniform Relocation and Property Acquisitions. The sixth deals with matters pertaining to technology, operation and maintenance.

The Branch currently administers to the needs of over 800 projects now underway, and several hundred more in the pre-offer phase of the application process. Many hundred more applications are anticipated in FY 73, even

at existing funding levels. Over 2,000 municipalities in the six-state Region have identifiable needs which require immediate attention.

Since the Water Pollution Control Act of 1956 authorized grants to municipalities for the construction of water pollution abatement facilities, 2,281 grant offers had been made in Region V as of April 30, 1972, with estimated total project costs of \$2.4 billion and \$743.8 million for the total Federal share.

This compares to a nationwide total for the same time period of 12,566 grant offers with estimated total project costs of \$12.6 billion and \$3.5 billion for the total Federal share.

The goals of the Construction Grants Branch are to stimulate municipalities to begin water pollution abatement programs, the means for financially distressed areas to initiate pollution abatement programs, financial as well as technical assistance at the State and municipal level to combat water pollution as quickly and efficiently as is now possible, and the elimination of water pollution.

Any municipality having authority to construct, maintain, and operate a sewage treatment plant may apply, through its State agency, for Federal assistance.

The functions of the Construction Grants Branch include helping municipalities through preapplication and predesign conferences, review and assessment of applications from municipalities for consistency with established criteria, analysis and recommendations relative to overall environmental considerations, final recommendations for Federal funding of municipal projects, local-EPA contract documents with special performance conditions.

Also, review, analysis, and approval of construction plans and specifications; discharge of collateral responsibilities concerning labor standards, wage rates, anti-kickback provisions, civil rights, and other regulations pertaining to project contracts; analysis of accomplishments and process progress payments to augment grant dollar flow; conduct of on-site inspections for adherence to pertinent agreements and conditions.

And, to bring about project close out and final conclusion of all matters and conditions pertaining to the Federal grant, as well as post completion follow-up inspections to insure proper operation and maintenance of sewage treatment works which the agency has helped to construct.