

2025 Request for Source Water Protection Grant Proposals

The Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE) is requesting proposals for Source Water Protection (SWP) projects. Funding is authorized through section 1452 of the Safe Drinking Water Act as administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy.

These funds are a potential source of support for drinking water protection projects in Nebraska. Program overview, grant process, general program information, funding priority, project requirements and format are outlined in the attached guidance.

Project proposals will be reviewed by a committee at Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy and representatives of other organizations. Projects recommended by the reviewers will be forwarded to the Director of NDEE for approval.

Any questions you may have regarding this invitation may be submitted to the Source Water Protection Coordinator at NDEE.SourceWaterProtection@nebraska.gov, or (402) 471-9249. Questions will be answered directly and then posted on the NDEE website for reference.

Proposals for the SWP Grant must be submitted to the NDEE office in Lincoln by September 1st, 2025, at 5:00PM. Methods for submission can be located on page six of this document.

Contracts will not be signed until the official receipt of the FY25 Grant Award.

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QUICK REFERENCES:

- **EPA's Subaward Policy**
 - <https://www.epa.gov/grants/grants-policy-issuance-gpi-16-01-epa-subaward-policy-epa-assistance-agreement-recipients>
- **Reimbursement request forms**
 - <https://dee.nebraska.gov/forms/publications-grants-forms/wat087>
- **Community-based planning process**
 - <https://dee.nebraska.gov/forms/publications-grants-forms/wat120>
- **Required elements of a Wellhead Protection Plan**
 - <https://dee.nebraska.gov/forms/publications-grants-forms/wat132>
- **NDEE Source Water Protection Contact Information**
 - NDEE.SourceWaterProtection@nebraska.gov
 - 402-471-9249

SOURCE WATER PROTECTION PROGRAM GRANT OVERVIEW

Funding under section 1452 of the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act

ESTIMATED ANNUAL FUNDS	\$150,000 (Amount subject to change)
<p>ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS</p>	<p>Political subdivisions in Nebraska that operate a public water system serving a population of 10,000 or less that demonstrate financial hardship.</p> <p>Hardship eligibility criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current MHI (Median Household Income) of the political subdivision population must be less or equal to 120% of the statewide MHI reported in the 2018-2022 ACS five-year estimate of \$71,722. • 120% of State MHI: \$86,066 • Applicants that don't meet the hardship eligibility may submit a financial hardship report to the Department for additional consideration justifying the grant request. <p>To obtain your MHI contact the Source Water Protection Coordinator at 402-471-9249 or NDEE.SourceWaterProtection@nebraska.gov</p>
<p>GENERAL PROJECT REQUIREMENTS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects must focus on the protection of Nebraska public drinking water sources, not the operation and maintenance of the system or water treatment. • Projects must include activities in one or more of the following categories: water quality, water quantity, and/or public education on water. • Projects must have a good potential for success (i.e., tasks must yield measurable improvement in water quality, reduction of water use, increased resource reliability, citizen knowledge and/or behaviors, etc.). • Commitment must be demonstrated by the public water system and local government to develop, implement, support, and sustain a local protection program after funding is received. • On-the-ground activities must take place within existing wellhead protection areas, source water protection areas, designated future wellhead protection areas, or the associated area served by the community Public Water Supply System. • At least a 10% non-federal match to the total project cost is required. For example: a project totaling \$20,000 will receive \$18,000 in grant funds and would have a requirement of \$2,000 in match. Match can be in-kind and/or cash.

<p>ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that provide long-term benefits to drinking water quality, quantity, and/or education. • Contaminant source identification – research or investigation into a reoccurring water quality issue. • Contaminant pathway removal – includes the closure of abandoned or unused wells and pollution reduction. • Contaminant source management – implementation of best management practices (BMPs), ordinance development, and implementation of an existing Source Water or Wellhead Protection Plan. • Information and education sharing – workshops, brochures, meetings, and media campaigns (if paired with on-ground activities).
<p>INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities related to the operations and maintenance of drinking water systems including treatment, transmission, distribution, consolidation or storage. • Land purchases. • Projects that only develop a traditional Wellhead Protection Plan and do nothing toward implementation of the plan; these plans should not be confused with a Drinking Water Protection Management Plan. • Projects requesting only personnel expenses. • Projects geared towards the security aspect of Source Water, such as security fencing and cameras (Grants for these items are administered through the Drinking Water Program). • Subcontracting the development of a Wellhead Protection Plan (WHPP) or Drinking Water Protection Management Plan (DWPMP) to a third-party contractor.
<p>Funding Priority</p>	<p>Prioritization will be given for the following status/activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities with water quality data trending upward to the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) of a given contaminant. • Projects where activities will be sustained beyond the term of the grant. • Projects implementing on-ground management activities.
<p>Project Areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing Source Water Protection Area (Wellhead Protection Areas Included) • Designated future Source Water Protection Areas • Communities associated with these areas

<p>Federal Subaward Policy and SWP Subcontractor Policy</p>	<p>Applicants that receive funding must adhere to EPA’s Subaward Policy, CFR §200.320, which states that procurement of services or supplies of more than \$10,000 must obtain price or rate quotations from at least three qualified sources. It is <u>highly recommended</u> to obtain price or quotes prior to application submission to ensure costs remain within project budget and to expedite the start of project work. Learn about EPA’s Subaward Policy here: https://www.epa.gov/grants/grants-policy-issuance-gpi-16-01-epa-subaward-policy-epa-assistance-agreement-recipients</p> <p>The SWP Program will only reimburse an hourly rate equal to that of a Federal Employee at Level IV of the Executive Schedule (\$91.95). If the hourly rate of a subcontractor exceeds \$91.95, the difference must be covered by a non-federal funding source. This applies to both individual contractors/consultants (as mentioned in 2 CFR 1500.10), and contractors/consultants of multi-employee firms whose rates are determined by their respective firm or corporation.</p>
<p>REQUIRED COST-SHARE:</p>	<p>10% of Total Project Cost (Must come from a non-federal source)</p>
<p>TIMELINE</p>	<p>September 1, 2025 Proposals, including a DUNS (Data Universal Numbering System) and active UEI (Unique Equity ID) number, must be received at the NDEE Lincoln office by 5:00 PM of this due date.</p> <p>September/October 2025 Proposals are reviewed by committee.</p> <p>November 2025 Projects selected and sponsors notified. Final changes are made to work plans.</p> <p>November/December 2025 (Subject to change) Official agreements signed. Contracts will <u>not</u> be signed prior to NDEE receiving funds. <u>Any work done prior to the signed agreement date is not eligible for reimbursement. Once the award is received, agreements will be signed, and work may begin on the projects.</u></p>

APPLICATION DEADLINE	September 1, 2025, at 5:00PM
SUBMITTAL PROCESS	<p>Hand deliver, mail, or email a PDF to:</p> <p><u>Email:</u> NDEE.SourceWaterProtection@nebraska.gov</p> <p><u>Deliver or Mail to:</u> 245 Fallbrook Blvd, Suite 100 Lincoln, NE 68521</p>

PROPOSAL FORMAT AND REQUIRED INFORMATION

The following format and information are required for all proposals. Failure to use this format or to furnish the information requested may disqualify the proposal from funding consideration.

Please Note: A summary of the project will be posted on the Source Water Protection website if awarded funds from this grant.

General Format

- Not to exceed 10 pages (including Title Page, Project Description, and Project Area Map);
- Formatted for 8.5" X 11" paper
- Use 10 pt or larger type with single-spaced sentences, double spaced paragraphs, and 1" margins.
- Include DUNS, and active UEI number.

1) Title Page (one page)

- a) Project Title (if developing a Drinking Water Protection Management Plan, please incorporate into title).
- b) Project's Primary Sponsor: Organization name, address, telephone number, website (if applicable), DUNS number.
- c) Project Manager: Name of contact person, address if different from above, telephone number, and email address. **If possible, please include a secondary contact/representative from your community.**
- d) Project's Co-sponsors: Names of co-sponsoring organizations (if applicable).
- e) Funds requested and match offered.
 - i) If using "in-kind services" as a cost-share, please provide a scope of the services, and review the instructional document on requesting a reimbursement before utilizing the cost-share <https://dee.nebraska.gov/forms/publications-grants-forms/wat087>.
- f) Project Area.
- g) Project Period: Initial month/year – final month/year (not to exceed 2 years). (This will be changed depending on the receipt of the FFY25 Grant Award, before signing the initial contract.)
- h) Signatory: The individual having signatory authorization must include a statement authorizing the project in the cover letter of the application. This can read as follows: *I certify that the applicant has authority to undertake or participate in the proposed project.* Please also include the signatory's email address (this will be used for signing contracts if the entity is awarded funding).

2) Project Description

- a) Introduction/Background Information
 - i) Provide a brief historical perspective and justification for the project.
 - ii) Define the nature and extent of the need(s) to be addressed.
 - iii) Describe other activities ongoing or planned in the project area that relate to water quality, water quantity, and/or public education.
- b) Project Objectives
 - i) List objectives and describe what is expected to be accomplished during the period of the project. Objectives must relate to the identified water quality, quantity, or educational deficiencies and reflect progress in resolving those deficiencies.
- c) Project Tasks
 - i) Describe specific source water protection actions proposed to be implemented within the scope of the grant. Tasks must be related to specific project objectives
 - ii) Detail the information and education activities that are planned before, during, and after project implementation.
 - iii) Include in the proposal how public and stakeholder participation is included in project planning, design, and implementation.

- iv) Describe the method of evaluation that will be used to determine project effectiveness. The evaluation approach must be tailored to the specific project and will be based on factors such as the project's size and objectives.
- d) Partnerships
 - i) Identify the roles and responsibilities of organizations and groups involved in the proposed project regardless of funding source. The NDEE strongly recommends that a project team be assembled to involve the appropriate organizations and stakeholders in planning the project and preparing the project proposal.

3) Project Area Map (one page)

- a) Provide a map of the project area, including the Wellhead Protection Area if applicable. If assistance is needed in providing an updated map, please contact the Source Water Protection Program at NDEE.SourceWaterProtection@nebraska.gov, or 402-471-9249.

4) Work Plan (one page)

- a) **Each task and sub-task associated with the project should be laid out in a separate page. This will be used as "Attachment A – Work Plan" on the contract if your community is awarded funding. All reimbursements paid will be cross-referenced to this work plan, so please be thorough. Once a contract is signed, major deviations from the work plan will not be funded.**

5) Budget Summary Table (one page)

- a) The cost of the entire project must be defined and broken out by grant funds and matching funds in the included budget table. When including matching funds, the value of the cash and in-kind match may be combined in the budget although other federal funds may **NOT** be used to meet the 10% required match. Indirect costs will not be allowed. *See the following page for example*
- b) *The cost-share offered in the proposal will be the cost-share required in the agreement if your community is awarded funding. Amendments of cost-share will not be permitted after the initial agreement is signed.*
- c) NRD well decommissioning cost-share is an acceptable match for Source Water Protection Projects. However, please be aware that soliciting private well owners to decommission abandoned wells yields no guarantees. Your community will be required to pay the offered match percentage in cash if there is no participation from well owners.

EXAMPLE BUDGET FOR NDEE SOURCE WATER PROTECTION GRANT PROJECT

Activity	Grant Funds	Matching Funds	Total
Personnel			
Water Operator	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
NRD Program Manager	\$0	\$3,000	\$3,000
Travel			
Transportation	\$0	\$300	\$300
Lodging	\$435	\$0	\$435
Meals	\$0	\$210	\$210
Material & Supplies			
Brochures	\$0	\$200	\$200
Equipment*			
Pump with control	\$5,500	\$0	\$5,500
Contractual			
Proper Water Well Decommissioning	\$2,000	\$0	\$2,000
Implementation			
Water conservation efforts	\$3,000	\$0	\$3,000
Other			
Conference registration	\$0	\$400	\$400
TOTAL	\$15,935 (~80%)	\$4,110 (~20%)	\$20,045

*Equipment is defined as tangible, nonexpendable, personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit.

*If using personnel hours as an “in-kind service” for a portion of the cost-share, please list specific details of work and how they differ from the employee’s routine job description. In-kind services must be approved prior to signing agreements. For more information, please review the instructional form for using in-kind services at <https://dee.nebraska.gov/forms/publications-grants-forms/wat087>.