

Planning Requirements for Public Water Systems

May 2006

DOH PUB. #331-202
(Updated)

Purpose

This fact sheet has two purposes:

1. To help water system managers determine the appropriate level of planning for their system.
2. To clarify when systems must submit additional information in order to meet financial viability requirements for Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) applications.

Requirements for a new or updated Water System Plan (WSP)

A Group A community system is required to submit a WSP (on a six year schedule) for review and approval when the system:

- Has 1000 or more service connections.
- Is a new Group A system.
- Is expanding. (To determine if your system is expanding, contact your regional planner.)
- Wants to be eligible for the “document submittal exception” process that allows development of certain types of projects without submitting construction documents to the Department of Health (DOH) for review.
- Has had problems related to planning, operation, or management of the system and has been directed to develop a WSP by DOH.
- Is a municipally-owned system within a Critical Water Supply Service area. (If the system falls into this category and might be considered “non-expanding,” contact a DOH regional planner about the appropriate planning document.)
- Is required to do so by DOH to meet DWSRF eligibility requirements. Systems with a current WSP may be required to submit a project-specific amendment to their WSP to meet DWSRF eligibility requirements.

Requirements for a Small Water System Management Program (SWSMP)

There are two levels of SWSMP activity required by the drinking water regulations:

Development and implementation

- All systems (both community and non-community) not required to submit a WSP to DOH must (at a minimum) develop and implement a SWSMP. Generally, systems are not required to submit the SWSMP to DOH.
- Sanitary surveyors will generally discuss development of a SWSMP with the water system during the sanitary survey process.



Submittal for approval

- A very few systems must submit their SWSMP for DOH approval when:
 1. A new non-transient non-community system is created.
 2. A SWSMP is required for DWSRF purposes.
 3. A system has been directed by DOH to submit their SWSMP for approval (i.e., when a system has operational, managerial or financial problems and DOH determines that completion of a SWSMP might assist in correcting those problems).
- DOH regional planners and regional engineers have guidance available that will clarify what is needed to obtain approval of a SWSMP.

Public Works Board financial viability requirements related to DWSRF loan application

- Most systems will find that there are no additional planning-related financial viability requirements placed upon them by the Public Works Board when applying for DWSRF loans.
- Privately owned systems whose applications score high enough to be in the DWSRF funding range are required by the Public Works Board to fill out a supplemental financial application that includes information on business references, tax returns, balance sheet statements, and long-term debt. In addition, applicants are asked to fill out a financial capacity spreadsheet. This information, along with an on-site visit with the applicant, is used to evaluate the applicant's ability to repay a DWSRF loan and readiness to proceed with the project.

More information

Office of Drinking Water regional planners:

Southwest Regional Office	360-236-3030
Northwest Regional Office	253-395-6750
Eastern Regional Office	509-456-3115

Public Works Board financial viability requirements:

Enid Melendez	360-725-5012
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