

# US EPA TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR WATER & WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE



From: EPA Pacific Northwest Region Infrastructure and Technical Assistance Section  
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EPA provides technical assistance (TA) to help communities meet the goals of the Safe Drinking Water Act and the Clean Water Act. This TA can address water and wastewater issues in several ways, including development of well-planned infrastructure projects. Generally, these programs target communities that are small, rural, disadvantaged and/or tribal communities.

The TA providers offer diverse services, including but not limited to:

- Water infrastructure needs identification
- Capital improvements planning
- Grant application development
- Regulatory compliance assistance
- Enhancing financial, managerial, or technical capacity of the utility
- Disaster and Climate Resiliency
- Utility cybersecurity

This fact sheet summarizes several TA programs and resources available to communities and to water/wastewater utilities. This list is not exhaustive but is intended as a good place to start.

## ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE CENTERS

The [Environmental Finance Centers](#) (EFCs) are organizations that, through cooperative agreements with EPA, provide TA to local governments, states, tribes, utilities and non-governmental organizations. The EFCs work to ensure that communities that have difficulty securing public funding receive the help they need to access resources for infrastructure improvements.

In EPA Region 10 (Pacific Northwest), [RCAC](#) administers the EFC. This EFC supports communities in a range of activities that bolster communities' ability to obtain state and federal support, including:

- Drafting funding applications.
- Providing project and construction management services.
- Identifying affordable financing and long-term operations and maintenance (O&M) strategies.
- Assisting states and Tribes to expand their capacity to administer and disburse funding.
- Supporting states and/or municipalities in community outreach and engagement.
- Supporting responsible asset management.
- Researching appropriate revenue approaches, including establishing use rates.
- Conducting income surveys to establish funding eligibility and facilitate project funding planning.
- Calculating the long-term financial impact on rate payers of funding new capital projects.

To learn more about the accessing the services provided by the EPA Region 10 EFC, contact Ryan Gross ([Gross.Ryan@epa.gov](mailto:Gross.Ryan@epa.gov), 206-553-6293).

## EPA OFFICE OF WATER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAMS

EPA Office of Water grant programs provide funding to organizations to help communities and utilities address water/wastewater issues. Additional information on TA from the EPA Office of Water can be found at [Water Technical Assistance | US EPA](#).

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### TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR SMALL SYSTEMS

This program provides grants to organizations (like RCAP or NRWA) to assist small public water and wastewater systems build financial and managerial capacity and improve water quality and sustainability. The grantees also help private well owners protect supply and improve water quality. For more information, visit [Training and Technical Assistance for Small Systems Funding | US EPA](#).

For more information about the Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP), visit [About Us | RCAP](#). For more information about the National Rural Water Association (NRWA) or one of its 50 affiliated [State Rural Water Associations](#), visit [Home | NRWA](#).

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### RURAL, SMALL, AND TRIBAL WASTEWATER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Rural, Small, and Tribal Technical Assistance (RST TA) providers deliver targeted technical assistance and training to rural, small, and tribal municipalities and wastewater treatment systems to protect public health and safeguard the environment. RST TA providers ensure that rural, small, and tribal communities that have difficulty in securing public funding receive the help they need to access resources to support infrastructure improvements. They also support rural, small, and tribal wastewater treatment systems – centralized and decentralized – build technical, managerial and financial capacity to operate their systems well and maintain compliance. For more information, visit [Rural, Small, and Tribal Wastewater Technical Assistance | US EPA](#).

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### CREATING RESILIENT WATER UTILITIES

EPA's Creating Resilient Water Utilities (CRWU) initiative provides drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater utilities with practical tools, training, and TA needed to increase resilience to climate change. CRWU staff can assist water sector utilities and stakeholders by promoting a understanding of climate change and identify long-term adaptation options for decision-making related to implementation and infrastructure financing. For more information, visit [Creating Resilient Water Utilities \(CRWU\) | US EPA](#) or email: [CRWUhelp@epa.gov](mailto:CRWUhelp@epa.gov).

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### TRIBAL SET ASIDE PROGRAMS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

EPA's tribal funding programs deliver TA to tribes, often in coordination with Indian Health Service (IHS). For more information about tribal infrastructure funding programs, please visit [Drinking Water Infrastructure Grants - Tribal Set-Aside Program | US EPA](#) and [Clean Water Indian Set-Aside Program | US EPA](#).

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### WATER SECTOR CYBERSECURITY TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDER PROGRAM

This program trains state and regional TA providers to assess cybersecurity practices at water/wastewater systems and guide systems through developing a cybersecurity action plan to reduce risks and enhance resilience. The program includes follow-up assistance opportunities after the original assessment. For more information and to request assistance, visit: [EPA Cybersecurity Best Practices for the Water Sector | US EPA](#).

## EPA OFFICE OF WATER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TRAINING AND TOOLS

**EPA Office of Water offers online training, resources, and tools to address many of the challenges facing water/wastewater utilities.**

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### DRINKING WATER CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

This EPA webpage provides training and resources to help water systems build their technical, managerial, and financial capacity, maintain certified operators, and establish partnerships. Find tools and resources at: [Building the Capacity of Drinking Water Systems | US EPA](#).

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### WATER RESILIENCE

This EPA webpage provides a list of training and resources (both direct and classroom/webinar based) related to disaster resilience of water and wastewater utilities for natural disasters. Find tools and resources at: [Drinking Water and Wastewater Resilience | US EPA](#).

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### WATER INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESILIENCY FINANCE CENTER

The Water Finance Center provides financing information to help local decision makers make informed decisions for drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure to protect human health and the environment. This EPA webpage includes clearinghouse of funding opportunities, webinars, and SRF 101 and other learning modules. To access the online resources, visit [Water Infrastructure and Resiliency Finance Center | US EPA](#).

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### AREA-WIDE OPTIMIZATION PROGRAM

The Area-Wide Optimization Program (AWOP) is a voluntary program that creates a framework for increased cooperation and mutual support between utility operators and state agency staff. The program provides tools and approaches for drinking water systems to meet water quality optimization goals and provide an higher – and sustainable – level of public health protection to their consumers. The program teaches problem-solving skills designed to improve operations at utilities without costly capital improvements. For more information, visit [Optimization Program for Drinking Water Systems | US EPA](#).

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### DRINKING WATER RULE IMPLEMENTATION AND COMPLIANCE ASSISTANCE

This EPA webpage provides information on upcoming and past training opportunities for drinking water professionals, public officials, and citizens interested in gaining knowledge and skills related to compliance with the SDWA, Building the Capacity of Drinking Water Systems, and Drinking Water Grant Opportunities. It also offers virtual sanitary survey training for states. For more information, visit [Drinking Water Training | US EPA](#).

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### AMERICAN IRON AND STEEL (AIS) AND BUILD AMERICA BUY AMERICA ACT (BABA) ASSISTANCE

This EPA webpage provides training and resources for states, water systems, and/or manufacturers to support implementation and oversight of the SRF AIS and BABA requirements. For more information, visit:

- [State Revolving Fund American Iron and Steel \(AIS\) Requirement | US EPA](#)
- [Build America, Buy America \(BABA\) | US EPA](#)

## OTHER EPA OFFICES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

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### COMPLIANCE ADVISORS FOR SUSTAINABLE WATER SYSTEMS

The Compliance Advisors from the Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA) serve as part coach and part consultant to help troubleshoot issues, develop recommendations to return systems to compliance, and increase the technical capacity of small water and wastewater system operators to maintain compliance. For more information visit [Compliance Advisors for Sustainable Water Systems Program | US EPA](#).

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### THRIVING COMMUNITIES

The Thriving Communities Program in the Office of Environmental Justice is a new TA program that will help underserved communities build their capacity to access federal resources. The program is currently accepting applications from TA providers and will be available to the public in early 2023. For more information visit [The Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers Program | US EPA](#).

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### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES FOR COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

The national Technical Assistance Services for Communities (TASC) program provides independent assistance through an EPA contract to help communities better understand the science, regulations, and policies of environmental issues and EPA actions. Under the TASC contract, a contractor provides scientists, engineers, and other professionals to review and explain information to communities. The services are determined on a project-specific basis and provided at no cost to communities. This assistance supports community efforts to get more involved and work productively with EPA to address environmental issues. For more information visit [Technical Assistance Services for Communities \(TASC\) Program | US EPA](#).

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## STATE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

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### STATE REVOLVING FUND PROGRAMS

In addition to EPA TA programs, states can provide TA programs through SRF set aside funding. For more information about each state's SRF program and potential state-run TA, please visit the links below.

- Alaska- [Alaska Dept of Environmental Conservation SRF](#)
- Idaho- [Idaho Dept of Environmental Quality SRF](#)
- Oregon- [Oregon Health Authority DWSRF](#), [Oregon Dept of Environmental Quality CWSRF](#)
- Washington- [Washington State Dept of Health DWSRF](#), [Washington State Dept of Ecology CWSRF](#)

EPA collaborates with states to identify utilities for compliance and capacity-building focused TA programs, such as the [Alaska Native Villages and Rural Communities Water Grant Program | US EPA](#) and the [AWOP](#).