



Water Measurement Cost Share Grants

2026-27 Program Guide

October 2026



Water Measurement Cost Share Program Guide

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Questions or Need Assistance?

Contact us at:



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Oregon Water Resources Department
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Share Fund
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Salem, OR 97301

Water Measurement Cost Share Program Guide

Program Overview

The Oregon Water Resources Department's (OWRD) Water Measurement Cost Share (WMCS) Fund provides grants to help qualifying water users with part of the cost to voluntarily install, replace, or substantially repair a water measurement device.¹ The cost of measuring devices can be a challenge for water users, with devices costing several hundred to several thousand dollars. Grants can help with the cost of measurement devices that protect streamflow or existing water rights, measure groundwater use, or monitor water rights and streamflow.

Why Understanding Water Use is Important

- **Water Users:** Water measurement devices allow water users to understand the amount of water they divert from a stream or withdraw from groundwater. Understanding how much water they are using is critical for water users to comply with the conditions of their water rights. When water users understand how much water they are using and when, they often identify ways to use their water more efficiently - which can reduce overall water and power consumption.
- **OWRD:** Access to accurate water use data is key for OWRD to effectively distribute water, assess interference between junior and senior water right holders, and improve water availability models used to make informed decisions about issuing new water rights.

Definitions

Install – To put a new water measurement device into position and make it ready for use.

Replace - To install a new water measurement device in place of an existing or previously installed water measurement device. Replacement may occur when repair is not appropriate as determined by OWRD staff.

Substantially Repair – To implement actions necessary to restore the condition of a damaged water measurement device or components of the device.

¹ Through February 29, 2028, non-voluntary installation of water measurement devices in the Harney Serious Water Management Problem Area (H-SWMPA) may be eligible for funding. Please see page 10 for additional information.

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Eligibility

To qualify for funding, you must meet **ALL** the following:

◇ Who Can Apply

- You are the water right holder or have permission from the water right holder to apply for the grant.
- You are not currently required to measure your water as a condition of your water right or any other regulatory requirement.²

◇ Device Location

- **Surface Water Diversion** (for example, water diverted from a stream or reservoir): The measurement device must be installed at the authorized point of diversion identified in the water right.
- **Groundwater Diversion** (for example, water withdrawn from a well): The measurement device must be installed at the well or at the pump location on a sump where groundwater is withdrawn under the groundwater right.

◇ Compliance

- You are not applying for or receiving any other funding for the same expenses requested under WMCS. This includes other grants, city, local, state, federal, or non-profit funding.
- You are not currently out of compliance with an OWRD regulation order or notice of violation related to the property where the measurement device will be installed.

Note: Receiving a WMCS grant does not change whether you are required to report your water use to OWRD.

Examples of devices that are not eligible for WMCS funding:

- Devices used to measure water that you are required to measure as a condition of your water right or any other regulatory requirement.
- Devices used to measure domestic or other exempt-use water from a well.
- Devices that are not located at the authorized point of diversion or withdrawal, including devices that measure re-diversion from an irrigation ditch.

² Through February 29, 2028, non-voluntary installation of water measurement devices in the Harney Serious Water Management Problem Area (H-SWMPA) may be eligible for funding. Please see page 10 for additional information.

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Grant Process

Step 1: Work with your Watermaster to Select Your Device

- Contact your local OWRD [Watermaster](#) to identify and approve the appropriate water measurement device for your system. Devices must be Watermaster-approved before applying for WMCS grant funding.
-

Step 2: Submit your Application Package

- Apply [online](#) and upload designs (if applicable). Please have .pdf, .jpg, .doc, or .docx files available to upload.
 - If you cannot apply online, request a paper application from Grants staff and mail the completed packet to the Salem office. Please do not send originals as they will not be returned. To protect your confidential information, **we do not accept applications by email.**
-

Step 3: OWRD Application Review

Grants staff:

- Review application for completeness – they will contact you if anything is missing.
- Confirm your local Watermaster has approved the proposed device.
- Notify you if you are not eligible.

If eligible, Grants staff determine your grant amount and prepare a grant agreement.

Step 4: Grant Award

- Grants staff send you a grant agreement.
 - You sign and return the grant agreement.
 - OWRD signs the grant agreement and sends you a copy.
-

Step 5: Complete the Work

- You complete any necessary work including hiring contractors, scheduling the work, purchasing the materials and making payment arrangements.
 - You notify Grants staff when the work is done and submit a reimbursement request and match report with all invoices and receipts.
-

Step 6: Post-Work Inspection

- OWRD staff conduct a post-work inspection to confirm the approved device was installed correctly and is measuring properly. A report is sent to Grants staff.
-

Step 7: Reimbursement

- Grants staff review the post-work inspection report, match documentation, invoices/receipts, and approve your reimbursement request.
- Fiscal staff process the reimbursement request and mail you a check.

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Cost Match, Project Costs, and Insurance

Cost Match

Cost Match Amount Required: A minimum of 25% cost match of the total project is required. Each application must identify the amount of match funds that will be provided during the grant period, and this amount will be included in the grant agreement.

Cost match, or matching funds, refers to the contributions provided by the grantee or project partners to support a project. The purpose of matching funds is to supplement the resources provided by the grant and to demonstrate a shared commitment toward achieving the project's goals. All costs claimed as match must be:

- Directly related to the approved project activities.
- Necessary and reasonable for achieving the project's objectives.
- Properly documented and verifiable through financial records.

Grantees must maintain records that clearly show the source of matching funds, the amount contributed, and the time period when the match was spent. You will submit records of hours worked and the rate applied, and invoices or receipts for supplies and materials. This information will be submitted to OWRD Grants staff when the project is complete (using a form provided by OWRD).

Sources of Match: You may utilize other grants, city, local, state, federal, or non-profit funding, or private funding for your match. You may not utilize any other OWRD source for your match including: OWRD staff time, materials provided by OWRD, or funds from another OWRD grant program.

Funding Levels and Project Costs

Grant amounts are based on the estimated cost of the work. Water users will not be reimbursed for any expenses that exceed the approved grant amount or for any costs that are not deemed eligible.

Project costs may include work and materials associated with and necessary to install, substantially repair, or replace a streamflow gauge, measuring device, or headgate. Some project costs are eligible for either reimbursement or match while others may only be used as match. Please refer to the table below. Only items listed under 'Eligible for OWRD Reimbursement or Match' may be included in the project. The 'Ineligible Costs' section provides examples of expenses that are not allowed.

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1. Eligible Costs

Eligible costs are organized into the budget categories listed below:

Budget Category	Eligible for OWRD Reimbursement or Match	Not eligible for OWRD Reimbursement, Acceptable as Match only
Labor – Work directly related to the project performed by the grantee, family members, staff, or other third parties. Labor value is typically based on the Independent Sector rate.	X	✓ Grantee, staff, water user and family labor
Contractual – Work performed by hired contractors or consultants, including their labor, materials, and travel related to the project. Contractor travel reimbursed at the same rate as noted in the Travel section. All contracted services must comply with the BOLI wage and hour laws.	✓ Contracted labor, supplies and materials, travel expenses, or equipment time ✓ Mobilization	✓ Professional engineering, design, and technical consulting
Travel – Mileage, meals, and lodging directly related to the project, based on GSA and Oregon DAS per diem rates. Eligible travel may include trips to and from the project location, attendance at grant-specific meetings, and other approved project-related travel activities.	X	✓ Travel at current State rates
Supplies and Materials – Consumable items and materials consumed or used during the project and purchased directly by the grantee.	✓ Device to connect automation or telemetry ✓ Electrical to connect device to a power source (including AC, battery, and solar) ✓ Equipment rental	

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Budget Category	Eligible for OWRD Reimbursement or Match	Not eligible for OWRD Reimbursement, Acceptable as Match only
Supplies and Materials <i>(continued)</i>	✓ Flow regulator or control valve ✓ Headgates (brackets, sliding gates, operating wheels, threaded bars and rods) ✓ Materials such as concrete, fasteners, lumber, and pipe ✓ Stream gauge components (staff gauge, level sensor, data logger, enclosure, rating table, communication device, software) ✓ Totalizing flowmeters ✓ Weirs and flumes	
Other	✓ Project permit costs (excluding OWRD permit/authorization fees)	

2. Ineligible Costs

Ineligible costs and activities cannot be reimbursed by the OWRD and are not eligible for match. Ineligible costs and activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Equipment (vehicles, computers, printers, earth-moving equipment)
- Fencing
- Finance charges
- Non-travel related business meals
- Ongoing maintenance of any kind
- Road or driveway construction or reinforcement expenses

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- Indirect costs (e.g., accounting, insurance, office supplies, rent, utilities)
- Internet fees
- Landscaping costs
- Legal fees
- Subscription fees
- Water Resources Department permit/authorization fees
- Work completed by unlicensed electrician, plumber, etc. when a license is required

Insurance Requirements

OWRD requires insurance for all WMCS projects. The information below is designed to help applicants understand which types of insurance may be required and plan for any related costs. Not every project will need all the insurance requirements listed. If you are awarded a grant, your grant agreement will specify the exact insurance requirements. You will need to provide proof of coverage when you sign the grant agreement.

Insurance Typically Required for WMCS Grants to Individual Water Users

Insurance Type	Coverage Required
Homeowner's Insurance	The policy must cover the property where the project activities will occur and include OWRD as an additional insured for the duration of the project.

Insurance Typically Required for WMCS Grants to Businesses and Organizations

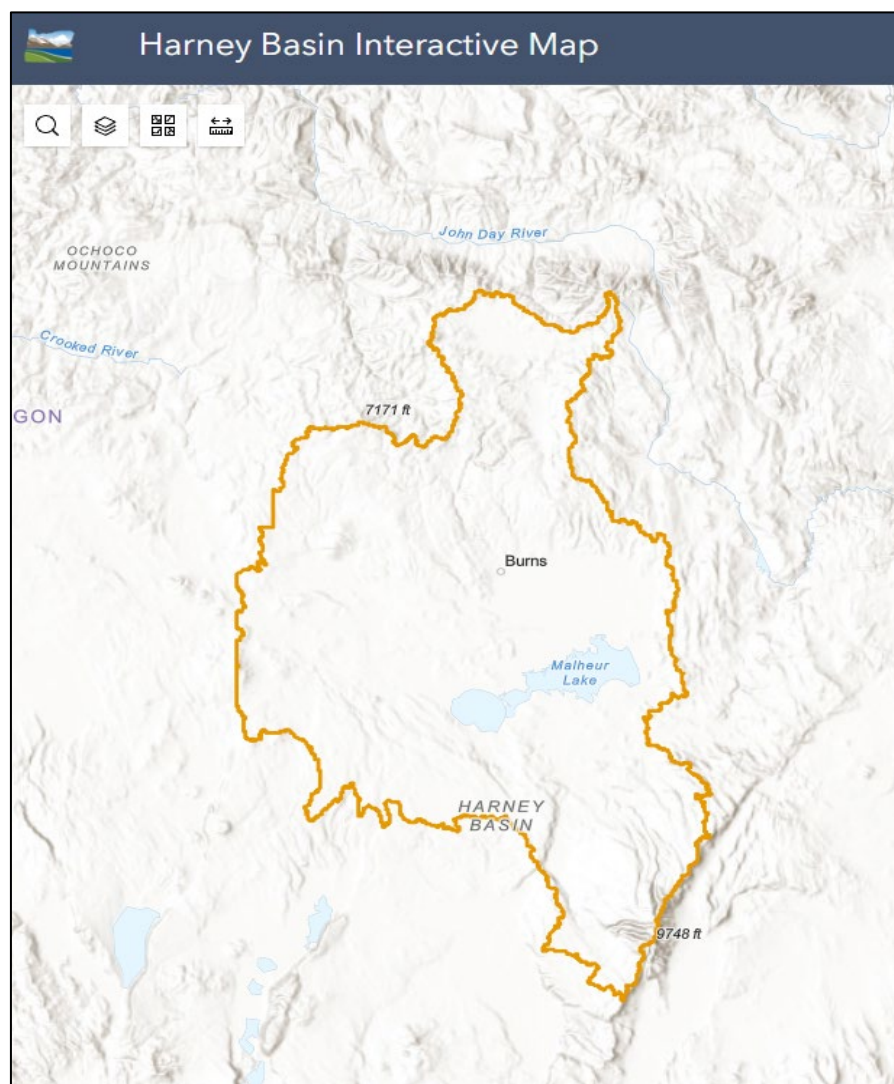
Insurance Type	Minimum Amount Typically Required
Worker's Compensation Insurance	Workers' Compensation: Amount required by ORS 656.017 —see Oregon's Workers Compensation Division for requirements Employers' Liability: \$500,000 per occurrence
Commercial General Liability	\$1,000,000 per occurrence, \$2,000,000 aggregate
Automobile Liability	\$1,000,000 combined single limit
Directors, Officers & Organization Liability	\$1,000,000 per claim
Crime Protection Coverage: Employee Dishonesty or Fidelity Bond	For grants up to \$100,000, minimum coverage amount should be at least the amount of the grant. For grants over \$100,000, minimum coverage amount should be \$100,000 per policy year.

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Harney Serious Water Management Problem Area

Through February 29, 2028, funding may be available to install required water measurement devices in the Harney Serious Water Management Problem Area (H-SWMPA).

Please visit [this map](#) to see if you are located within the H-SWMPA. To zoom to your property, select the magnifying glass in the upper left corner of the map and enter your address. The H-SWMPA area is outlined in gold - you must be in this area to be eligible.



The H-SWMPA area is outlined in gold in the interactive map.

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Resources

Selecting A Measurement Device

Please reach out to your local OWRD [Watermaster](#) to help you identify the appropriate device for your system. Your measuring device must be approved by your Watermaster.

- [How to Select and Install a Suitable Measuring Device](#)

Reporting Your Measurement Data

OWRD encourages WMCS grant recipients to submit their water use data. Information about water use reporting is available on the [OWRD website](#).

If you need to set up a new water-use reporting account, set up a user ID and password, ask a question about how to submit data, or update an address for the water use reporting program, contact the Water Use Reporting Program Coordinator at OWRD.WaterUseReporting@water.oregon.gov.

Other Water Measurement Resources:

- [Water Use Reporting Program Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#)
- [Instructions for Online Reporting](#)
- [How to Read Totalizing Flow Meters](#)
- [Recording and Reporting Form \(Fillable\)](#)
- [Water Use Measurement and Reporting Overview Fact Sheet](#)

Measurement Needs and Challenges

Accurate water use data is beneficial to water managers as well as water users; however, properly collecting water use data can be challenging. To ensure data are accurate, the correct device must be properly installed according to the engineering specifications and some devices must be periodically calibrated.

To provide accurate data once installed, the device must be maintained in good working condition, which can be hampered by natural conditions such as sand, ice, debris, or algae.

If you have difficulty with collecting or reporting data, please reach out to your local OWRD [Watermaster](#) to address these challenges and improve data accuracy.

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Questions and Answers

General Eligibility

◆ Is funding guaranteed if I am eligible?

No. Meeting the eligibility requirements does not guarantee funding. WMCS funding is limited, and grants are awarded based on available awards. You will be notified by Grants staff if you have been approved for a grant. Funding is guaranteed only once you receive and sign the grant agreement. Please do not complete work until you receive that approval, as costs incurred before grant approval are not eligible for reimbursement.

Application and Approval Process

◆ Is there a deadline to apply for funding?

No. Applications are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

◆ How will I be notified if I am approved or denied for funding?

- After your application is reviewed by Grants staff, we will decide whether you will be offered funding.
 - You will receive an email notifying you of approval or denial.
 - If you do not have email, we will contact you by phone or mail.
- Please see the [grant process](#) section for more information.

Reimbursement and Financial Concerns

◆ How will I receive the funding?

1. After all work is finished, you will:
 - Notify Grants staff.
 - Submit a reimbursement request with copies of all invoices or receipts.
 - Submit cost match documentation.
2. An OWRD Field staff member will complete a post-work inspection and send Grants staff an inspection report.
3. Grants staff will verify that all work is complete and the approved device was installed. Grants staff will then review and approve the reimbursement request for your eligible costs.
4. OWRD Fiscal staff will process the request and send you a reimbursement check by mail.

Please see the [Grant Process](#) section for more details.

◆ I'm worried about paying upfront and waiting for reimbursement. Can I get the money sooner?

No. WMCS is a reimbursement grant, so funds are only given after the work is completed and inspected.

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◆ Can I be reimbursed for my own labor and costs?

No. Your labor and your family members' labor cannot be reimbursed. However, you may count your labor costs toward the required match for the project.

◆ Can I complete all the work myself?

Maybe. You can complete the work yourself if it does not require a licensed or qualified professional. If any part of the project requires a qualified professional, such as an electrician, plumber, or contractor, that portion must be completed by someone who is properly licensed. For example, you may need an electrician to connect the device to a power source.

◆ How long do I have to pay the money back?

This is a grant, not a loan – there is nothing to pay back to OWRD.

◆ I already paid for work. Can I get reimbursed for it?

Maybe.

Not Eligible:

- If you had not started working on your project with a local OWRD Watermaster by October 1, 2026.

Possibly Eligible:

- If you had started working with a local OWRD Watermaster before October 1, 2026, the work is completed by March 31, 2027, and you apply for the reimbursement by April 30, 2027.
- Your project meets all other eligibility requirements.
- If funds remain available, you may be reimbursed on a first-come, first-served basis.

◆ Will I have to pay taxes on this funding?

Possibly. Grant funds are considered taxable income.

- Individuals will receive a 1099-G form for the year you are reimbursed.
- You are responsible for understanding tax impacts.
- OWRD cannot give tax advice—please contact the IRS or a tax professional for help.

◆ Do I have to pay the money back if I sell my property or end my lease after the work is done?

No, you do not have to repay the funds. Once the work is completed and inspected, the device belongs to you. WMCS does not impose ownership requirements after reimbursement.

Water Right Eligibility

◆ My well provides water for both my home's domestic water and to fulfill a water right. Is it eligible for funding?

Most likely. Contact your local Watermaster to determine whether one or more measurement devices are needed and where they should be installed. You may need

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multiple devices to distinguish between exempt (domestic) and permitted water use. Measurement devices for exempt use are not eligible for funding.

- ◆ **What if my property does not already have a water right?**

You are not eligible for this funding if there is not a water right.

Technical Requirements

- ◆ **Am I required to report my water use if I receive a WMCS grant?**

Receiving a WMCS grant **does not** change your existing water-use reporting requirements. If you are already required to report water use to OWRD, you must continue to do so. If you are not required to report, the grant does not create a new reporting requirement.

- ◆ **What if I am not sure how to report my water use data?**

For questions about how to report your water use, please contact the Water Use Reporting Program Coordinator at OWRD.WaterUseReporting@water.oregon.gov.

- ◆ **What if I am not sure how my device should be installed or if it is working properly?**

Please contact your local OWRD [Watermaster](#) for assistance with measurement device installation and operations.