

Clean Water Fund Program Application Process and Contents for Storm Water Projects



Notice of Intent to Apply

The first step in the application process for obtaining Clean Water Fund Program (CWFP) financial assistance is to submit a notice of [intent to apply \(ITA\)](#), due Oct. 31 in the year prior to the state fiscal year (SFY). DNR staff will review the ITA, and if it is an eligible project, it will be posted on the corresponding SFY [CWFP project priority list \(PPL\)](#). To be eligible to submit an application, the project must appear on the corresponding SFY PPL. Projects that applied for Urban Nonpoint source and Storm Water Management or Targeted Run-off Management grants can waive the ITA deadline if the proper box on the grant application form is checked.

Deadline

Submit the CWFP financial assistance application **with all required documentation** through the [online application system](#):

- If competing for [principal forgiveness \(PF\)](#), applicants must submit the complete CWFP application by **Sept. 30**.
- If not competing for PF during SFY 2027, it is recommended that applicants submit an application by the Sept. 30, 2026, deadline due to potential limitations with [loan capacity](#).

Important: Incomplete applications will be ineligible for loan funding, unless supplemental funds are available, and the application is made complete. Applications made complete after the Sept. 30 submittal deadline will be ineligible for PF funding.

Facility Plan and Plans and Specifications

Storm Water Facilities Plans

An **approved** facilities plan is a requirement of the application. Any project seeking CWFP funds must be submitted to DNR for plan review and approval. The facility plan covers certain federal requirements such as the cost-effectiveness analysis.

- Submit required copies of the facilities plan to the DNR regional storm water engineer or to the DNR central office storm water engineer ([Amy Minser](#)) for approval. **Provide enough lead time** (preferably six months) before the Sept. 30 application deadline for the DNR to complete the facilities plan review.
- Include a [parallel cost estimate](#).

Plans and Specifications Submittal

Follow requirements in DNR's [Storm Water Technical Standards, Models, and Best Management Practices](#). Approvable plans and specifications must be submitted to the DNR by the application submittal deadline.

- Email plans and specifications to the DNR regional storm water engineer or to the DNR central office storm water engineer (Amy Minser) prior to the application deadline. **Approvable plans and specs must be received by the storm water engineer by the deadline in order for the application to be considered complete.**
- A copy of the approvable plans and specifications must also be uploaded with the application.

Application Contents

- Project budget
- Certification that the [User Charge System](#) and [Storm Water Ordinance](#) meet the requirements of s. [NR 162.26](#), Wis. Adm. Code., including [Equipment Replacement Fund \(ERF\) schedule](#), if required.
- A four-year projection of utility revenues and expenses

Required Documents

- Facility Plan Approval Letter**
- Approvable Plans and Specifications** for all parts of the project for which the municipality is requesting financial assistance.
- Municipal Storm Water Management Plan:** For runoff treatment works or BMP projects, municipalities are required to adopt local regulations for construction sites and adopt a municipal storm water management plan and ordinance for new development and redevelopment, consistent with performance standards and model ordinances under [s. 281.33, Wis. Stats.](#), in accordance with chs. [NR 162.24\(3\)\(h\)3](#) and [NR 162.25\(7\)](#), Wis. Adm. Code. Ordinances must be in place before funding is awarded.
- Financial Information:** Municipal financial information required by the Department of Administration as indicated below. This information is necessary in determining the affordability of the project and the financial capability of the municipality to repay the loan.
 - Municipality's current storm water utility budget, if applicable.
 - Municipality's most recent three years of financial statements, or internal financial statements, if no audit was done.
 - Principal and interest payment schedule for each outstanding bond issue.
 - Latest official statements, authorizing resolutions, or loan agreements for all outstanding debt obligations.

- [Interim Debt](#) – Submit the debt instrument to be refinanced with CWFP funds, if applicable.
- **Reimbursement Resolution:** A [reimbursement resolution](#) declaring intent to reimburse municipal accounts with financial assistance proceeds. It is **required** that an adopted reimbursement resolution be submitted with the CWFP application. However, if construction will begin prior to submitting a CWFP application, the municipality should pass a reimbursement resolution prior to starting construction. Construction includes land acquisition. Contact your bond counsel with questions on the reimbursement resolution.
- **User Charge System and Storm Water Management Ordinance:** Proposed or existing. Any required rate increases must be adopted prior to the CWFP loan closing. A [user charge system](#) is required for storm water projects that will be collateralized by a utility revenue pledge or that require an intermunicipal agreement. For runoff treatment works or structural BMP, adoption of a [storm water management ordinance](#) is also required prior to closing.
- **Contracts with System Users:** Any existing or proposed contracts with system users.
- **Intermunicipal Agreement:** A proposed or executed [intermunicipal agreement](#) if the project serves more than one municipality. An intermunicipal agreement is not required for metropolitan sewerage districts in which all municipalities being served have been annexed into the sewerage district.
- **Cost and Effectiveness Certification:** All applicants must certify that they have studied and evaluated the [cost and effectiveness](#) of the processes, materials, techniques and technologies for carrying out the proposed project. Applicants must certify that they have selected, to the maximum extent practicable, a project that maximizes the potential for efficient water use, reuse, recapture, conservation and energy conservation. The cost of construction, operations and maintenance and replacement must be taken into account.
- **Green Project Reserve (GPR):** Indicate if the project includes any [“green” elements](#) as described on [Form 8700-357](#).
- **Engineering and Professional Services Contracts:** Executed engineering contracts for planning and design, and non-engineering professional services contracts (if applicable) are required, if funds are requested for planning and design in the application budget. Copies of any existing executed amendments associated with costs requested in the budget must also be uploaded. If available at the time of application submittal, an executed construction management contract and any associated executed amendments must also be uploaded.

Requested Documents

- **Design Life Calculation Worksheet:** Required for all projects, except those that consist **solely** of installation or replacement of pipeline and associated appurtenances. The [Design Life Calculation Worksheet](#) is required for pipe re-lining and/or rehabilitation projects. Both a signed PDF version and an Excel version of the worksheet must be submitted at least nine weeks prior to loan closing.

Application Completeness Review

An assigned DNR project manager will review your submitted application for completeness. If the application is complete, the DNR project manager will email the municipality (and consulting engineer if applicable) indicating that the application is complete; and the project will be included on the corresponding SFY [CWFP funding list](#), typically posted by early December. The DNR project manager will then work with the municipality and consulting engineer on closing the loan.

Contact Information

If you have any questions about the application process, contact:

- Lisa Bushby, Clean Water Fund Program coordinator, at Lisa.Bushby@wisconsin.gov
- Sarah Bolitho, storm water projects specialist, at Sarah.Bolitho@wisconsin.gov
- Ryan Atkinson, Emerging Contaminants Program specialist, at Ryan.Atkinson@wisconsin.gov

For more info on storm water projects, refer to dnr.wi.gov/aid/documents/EIF/guide/Stormwater.html.

PUB-CF-052 01/2026 Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), PO Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921



Legal Notices: This document is intended solely as guidance and does not contain any mandatory requirements except where requirements found in statute or administrative rule are referenced. Any regulatory decisions made by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in any matter addressed by this guidance will be made by applying the governing statutes and administrative rules to the relevant facts. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provides equal opportunity in its employment, programs, services and functions under an Affirmative Action Plan. If you have any questions, please write to Equal Opportunity Office, Department of Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240. This publication is available in alternative format (large print, Braille, audio tape, etc.) upon request. Please call 608-235-7105 for more information.