



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Pacific Southwest / Region 9

Clean Water Indian Set-Aside Program

Water Division
Tribal Water Section • October 2016

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Background

The purpose of the Clean Water Act Indian Set-Aside (CWISA) Program is to provide funding for wastewater infrastructure to federally recognized tribal governments and Alaska Native Villages. Funds may be used for planning, design, and construction of wastewater collection and treatment systems. The CWISA Program is administered by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in cooperation with the Indian Health Service (IHS). The CWISA Program was established by the 1987 Amendments to the Clean Water Act, in Section 518(c).



How to Apply

To apply for funding from the CWISA Program, tribes must first contact their IHS Area Office (www.dsfc.ihs.gov/staff) to determine if their wastewater needs are eligible to be entered into the HIS Sanitation Deficiency System (SDS) list. EPA provides funding for wastewater projects that are ranked and listed on the SDS list.

How the Program Works

The SDS identifies current sanitation deficiencies for existing tribal homes; projects for future needs will not be considered. EPA uses the SDS list to identify priority wastewater projects for funding. CWISA Program Coordinators in each EPA Region and IHS Area work together to determine the projects to be funded based on the ranking of projects in the SDS and available CWISA Program funding. Projects are ranked in the SDS based on eight factors: health impact, existing deficiency level, previous service, capital cost, operation and maintenance (O&M) capability, contributions, local tribal priority, and local conditions. For example, projects that would resolve public health concerns would rank higher than projects designed to rectify water quality problems.

Tentative Schedule

	DATE	MILESTONE
Year 1:	January – May	Tribes identify sanitation needs to IHS Area Offices
	June	Deadline for submission of Tribal needs to IHS Area Offices
	June – July	IHS Area Offices review and rank projects submitted to the Sanitary Deficiency System (SDS)
	August – October	IHS Headquarters reviews IHS Area Offices SDS project submissions
	November	Final SDS lists are made available to EPA Regional CWISA Program Coordinators
Year 2:	December – March	EPA Regional CWISA Program Coordinators select projects from SDS
	April – September	EPA Regional CWISA Program Coordinators notify tribes that have been selected for funding and award CWISA Program funds

Annual Funding Levels

EPA Region 9 receives over \$10 million and funds approximately 40 wastewater projects.

- The average award amount for individual projects is \$300,000. In recent years, award amounts have ranged from \$50,000 to over \$3,000,000. Award amounts will vary depending on the type of project.
- No matching funds are required.

Eligible Projects

All projects funded by the CWISA Program must support wastewater-related activities or projects. The CWISA Program funds cannot be used to pay for the cost of O&M of the wastewater facility nor can they be used to pay for repairs to the treatment system in emergency situations. Project components that are eligible for funding include (but are not limited to):

- Project planning, design, and preparation of Preliminary Engineering Report (PER)
- Infrastructure construction and major sewer rehabilitation
- Wastewater treatment facilities (conventional or alternative)
- Correction of combined sewer overflows
- Collector sewer pipelines
- On-site wastewater treatment systems (e.g., septic systems)
- Project follow-up and drafting as-built drawings of funded wastewater projects
- Operator training of new infrastructure equipment for first year of project



Project: Gilson Wash Lift Station

Project construction was completed in January of 2016 to serve 823 homes with community wastewater service for the San Carlos Apache Tribe. The scope at the Gilson Wash Lift Station included: replacement of the existing pumps, pump controls, piping, electrical service, and all electrical components; adding concrete risers to the existing lift station wet well and valve vault, replacing the lift station and valve vault covers, installation of a new metering manhole, installation of a light pole, constructing a raised earthen lift station site pad, bypass pumping, and installation of perimeter fencing. Prior to the lift station rehabilitation, the

facility had only one operable pump that was 13 years old. The lift station was at capacity and had deteriorated to the point that it was not correctable by routine maintenance. There was imminent threat that the facility would fail within two years. The combined cost of this project work was \$925,000, including \$659,000 of EPA funds.

EPA Contacts

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