

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



EPA Makes Grants Available to States to Implement Water Quality Monitoring and Public Notification Programs at the Nation's Beaches

EPA is making almost \$10 million in grants available in 2007 to eligible states to protect public health at the Nation's beaches. These grants are available to coastal and Great Lakes states to help them implement programs to monitor water quality at the beach and to notify the public when water quality problems exist.



Background

Each swimming season, state and local health and environmental protection agencies monitor the quality of water at the Nation's beaches. When bacteria levels in the water are too high, these agencies notify the public by posting beach warnings or closing the beach.

To improve water quality testing at the beach and to help beach managers better inform the public when there are water quality problems, Congress passed the Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health Act (BEACH Act) in October 2000. This Act authorizes EPA to award grants to eligible states, tribes, and territories to develop and implement beach water quality monitoring and notification programs at coastal and Great Lakes recreational waters at beaches. These grants also help states develop and implement programs to inform the public about the risk of exposure to disease-causing microorganisms in the waters at the Nation's beaches.

Funding

In 2007, EPA expects to award \$9,900,000 in grants to eligible states, tribes, and territories for the beach program. For this sixth year of the BEACH Grants, EPA expects to award grants based on an allocation formula to all eligible States and Territories who apply. EPA consulted with states and the Coastal States Organization in 2002 to develop this formula, which considers three factors: 1) beach season length, 2) beach miles, and 3) beach use. EPA used the same formula as was used in 2006, which includes using shoreline miles as a surrogate for beach miles, while EPA evaluates beach length data.

Based on this allocation formula, if all 35 eligible states and territories apply, the size of the grant award ranges from \$150,000 to \$534,700. EPA expects all 35 eligible governments to

apply. If fewer apply or qualify for the grants, then EPA will redistribute available funds to states according to the following principles:

- 1) States that meet the program performance criteria published by EPA in June 2002 (EPA-823-B-02-004) will receive the full amount of funds for which they qualify under the allocation formula.
- 2) States that have not met the requirements for implementation grants may receive grants for continued program development. Any program development grants that the Agency awards will be for the limited purpose of completing work needed to qualify for implementation grants. Therefore, we expect that funding levels for continued program development grants will be lower than the amount described in 1) above.
- 3) EPA may award program implementation grants to local governments in states that have not met the requirements for program implementation.
- 4) EPA may use the grant allocation formula to make additional funds available for implementation grants to states that have met the performance criteria.

If all 35 eligible states and territories apply and meet the performance criteria, the distribution of funds for year 2007 is expected to be:

For the state or territory of:	The year 2007 allocation is expected to be:	For the state or territory of:	The year 2007 allocation is expected to be:
Alabama	\$262,510	Mississippi	\$257,720
Alaska	\$150,000	New Hampshire	\$204,660
American Samoa	\$302,200	New Jersey	\$279,870
California	\$522,920	New York	\$352,830
Connecticut	\$224,010	North Carolina	\$303,920
Delaware	\$211,040	Northern Marianas	\$303,430
Florida	\$534,700	Ohio	\$224,300
Georgia	\$287,200	Oregon	\$229,570
Guam	\$302,680	Pennsylvania	\$223,150
Hawaii	\$323,660	Puerto Rico	\$329,240
Illinois	\$244,120	Rhode Island	\$212,990
Indiana	\$205,960	South Carolina	\$297,940
Louisiana	\$325,370	Texas	\$385,180
Maine	\$256,240	U.S. Virgin Islands	\$303,270
Maryland	\$271,150	Virginia	\$279,020
Massachusetts	\$255,940	Washington	\$272,250
Michigan	\$280,610	Wisconsin	\$225,960
Minnesota	\$204,390		

EPA has set aside \$50,000 for eligible tribes who may apply to develop a beach program. EPA expects to apportion these funds evenly among all eligible tribes that apply.

How Long Will the Funding and Project Periods Last?

The expected funding and project period for Implementation Grants awarded in 2007 is one year. In future years, EPA may award more grants to eligible states, tribes, territories and local governments to support the development and implementation of monitoring and notification programs.

Who Is Eligible to Apply?

In order to be eligible for BEACH Act grants, states and territories must have coastal and Great Lakes recreational waters next to beaches or similar points of access used by the public. Under the BEACH Act, EPA can also award grants to eligible tribes. To receive BEACH Act grants, tribes, like states and territories, must have coastal and Great Lakes recreational waters next to beaches or similar points of access used by the public. In addition, a tribe must demonstrate that it meets the “treatment in the same manner as a state” criteria contained in section 518(e) of the Clean Water Act. EPA encourages those Tribes with coastal recreation waters to contact their regional Beach Act grant coordinator for further information regarding the application process as soon as possible.

In July 2002, EPA published the *National Beach Guidance and Required Performance Criteria for Grants* (EPA-823-B-02-004) which explains the requirements for states, tribes, and local governments to qualify for implementation grants. You can find this document on EPA’s website at <http://www.epa.gov/waterscience/beaches>. You can also get the guidance by writing or calling the Office of Water Resources Center, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Mail Code 4100T, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20460. (202-566-1731) or by sending an e-mail to: center.water-resource@epa.gov.

The BEACH Act authorizes EPA to give a grant to a local government to implement a monitoring and notification program. We may do so only if the Agency finds that the state is not implementing a program that met the requirements of the Act one year after we published performance criteria for beach programs on July 19, 2002. Local governments may contact their EPA Regional office for further information about BEACH Act grants.

How Does a State or Territory Apply?

Eligible states and territories may get an application from their regional EPA beach contact. These contacts are listed in the *Federal Register* Notice of Availability for the BEACH grants on EPA’s Beach Watch web site at www.epa.gov/waterscience/beaches/grants.

For More Information

For more information on the BEACH grants, please contact your EPA Regional beach program representative or the Office of Water’s Standards and Health Protection Division at (202) 566-0400.