

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



EPA Grants Available in 2009 for 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 2009 to eligible coastal and Great Lakes states, territories and tribes 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, territories and tribes to develop and implement beach water quality monitoring and notification programs for coastal and Great Lakes recreational beach waters. These grants also help these governments 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 2009, EPA expects to award \$9.9 million in grants to eligible states, territories and tribes for their beach water protection programs. For this ninth year of the BEACH Act grants, EPA has set aside \$100,000 for eligible tribes who may apply to develop a beach program. EPA expects to apportion these funds evenly among all eligible tribes that apply. EPA expects to award grants to all eligible states and territories that apply based on an allocation formula. 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.

Based on this allocation formula, the amount of each implementation grant ranges from \$150,000 to \$528,000, if all 35 eligible states and territories apply. 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 eligibility requirements for implementation grants and that have met the statutory conditions applicable to previously awarded section 406 grants will be awarded the full amount of funds allocated to the State under the formula described above.

- 2) EPA may award program implementation grants to local governments in States that the Agency determines have not met the requirements for implementation grants.
- 3) Consistent with CWA Section 406(h), EPA will use grant funds to conduct a beach monitoring and notification program in the case of a State that has no program for monitoring and notification that is consistent with EPA's grant performance criteria.

If all 35 eligible states and territories apply and meet the performance criteria, the allocation of funds for this year will be:

For the state or territory of:	The allocation is expected to be:	For the state or territory of:	The allocation is expected to be:
Alabama	\$262,000	Mississippi	\$257,000
Alaska	\$150,000	New Hampshire	\$205,000
American Samoa	\$302,000	New Jersey	\$278,000
California	\$517,000	New York	\$348,000
Connecticut	\$223,000	North Carolina	\$302,000
Delaware	\$211,000	Northern Marianas	\$303,000
Florida	\$528,000	Ohio	\$224,000
Georgia	\$286,000	Oregon	\$229,000
Guam	\$303,000	Pennsylvania (Erie County)	\$222,000
Hawaii	\$323,000	Puerto Rico	\$328,000
Illinois	\$243,000	Rhode Island	\$213,000
Indiana	\$206,000	South Carolina	\$297,000
Louisiana	\$322,000	Texas	\$383,000
Maine	\$255,000	U.S. Virgin Islands	\$303,000
Maryland	\$269,000	Virginia	\$277,000
Massachusetts	\$254,000	Washington	\$270,000
Michigan	\$278,000	Wisconsin	\$225,000
Minnesota	\$204,000		

How does the allocation described above relate to the August 13, 2008 *Federal Register* Notice regarding expected changes to the Beach Act grant allocation formula?

On August 13, 2008, EPA published proposed changes to the allocation formula that the Agency expects to implement starting with the BEACH Act grants to be awarded in 2010 (73 FR 47154). The allocation of grant funds for this year is not affected by the notice EPA published on August 13, 2008.

How Long Will the Funding and Project Periods Last?

The funding and project periods for the fiscal year 2009 implementation grants will last one year.

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* which explains the requirements for states, territories, tribes, and local governments to qualify for implementation grants. You can find this document on EPA’s Web site at www.epa.gov/waterscience/beaches. You can also get a free printed copy of the guidance by calling 202-566-1729 or writing to EPA’s Office of Water Resource Center at: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Mail Code 4100T, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20460, or by sending an e-mail to: center.water-resource@epa.gov. Request EPA document number 823-B-02-004.

The BEACH Act authorizes EPA to give a grant to a local government to implement a monitoring and notification program. EPA 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 EPA 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 EPA regional office beach program 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.

To Get More Information

For more information on the BEACH grants, please contact your EPA regional office’s beach program representative (see www.epa.gov/beaches/plan/wherelive_region.html to locate your representative) or contact EPA headquarters’ Standards and Health Protection Division at (202) 566-0400.