



## Fact Sheet

# Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF)

## *Emergency Loan Program*

The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) is a federal infrastructure loan program that enables states to provide low interest loans and technical assistance to drinking water systems for infrastructure improvements. The program guidelines allow states to use these funds for emergency recovery activities according to established emergency funding procedures.

### **Emergency loans**

Our primary goal is to respond to and recover from public health threats. The emergency loan program will help ensure we are ready and able to award loans to water systems experiencing an emergency, so they can restore water service as quickly as possible.

We learned from past emergency events, such as the 2014 Carlton Complex wildfire in that affected 45 water systems, that there is immediate need to prepare for unanticipated events like drought or wildfire.

The emergency loan program financially assists eligible communities experiencing the loss of critical drinking water services or facilities due to an emergency and demonstrating a substantial fiscal need according to established DWSRF criteria.

For purposes of this program, emergency refers to an event like a natural disaster (flooding, fires, or drought) that causes damage or disrupts normal public water system operations and requires immediate action to protect public health and safety. A failure to maintain, replace, reconstruct, upgrade, or make necessary infrastructure improvement does not constitute an emergency.

When we determine an emergency exists and emergency funding is available, we may award an emergency loan to an eligible public water system. These funds will be available for the construction, reconstruction, replacement, rehabilitation, temporary repair, or improvement necessary to continue or restore operation of a public water system that is in violation of health and safety standards due to an emergency as defined above.



*Damage from the 2014 Pateros wildfire.*



*Helicopters dump water from the Columbia River onto the Mills Canyon wildfire near Entiat in 2014.*

*Partnerships for Safe and Reliable Drinking Water*



## Availability of funds

Emergency awards are available to eligible communities for projects that achieve the greatest mitigation of health risk.

## Application process

To be considered for an emergency loan, an applicant submits a [completed emergency application package](#) to the department. You can also get general information about the program by accessing the [emergency program guidelines](#).

## Loan terms

The emergency loan terms include two-year loans with the following terms:

- Interest rate: 1 to 1.5 percent
- Forgiveness: up to 75 percent
- Loan term: six years
- Time of performance: two years from contract execution to project completion date
- Repayment starts the first October after contract execution

## Authorization and rulemaking

Rulemaking is necessary to amend chapter 246-296 WAC, Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Loan Program, to include requirements for water systems to obtain a low-interest or no-interest loan specifically for emergency recovery activities. We initiated rulemaking to adopt requirements to address emergency funding. We also prepared a CR-103E to adopt emergency rules for the DWSRF loan program if emergency funding is required before we complete the permanent rule.

In addition, the federal loan program requires states to submit an Intended Use Plan (IUP) to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) annually by mid-May. The IUP must include a description of procedures for identifying and accepting emergency projects. EPA must approve the IUP before states can award loans.

## For more information:

Contact your regional engineer or Janet Cherry at 360-236-3153 or [Janet.Cherry@doh.wa.gov](mailto:Janet.Cherry@doh.wa.gov)

You can also find more information on the DWSRF website:

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/DWSRFEmergencyLoan>



Our publications are online at

<https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/eh/dw/publications/publications.cfm>

For people with disabilities, this document is available on request in other formats. To submit a request, please call 1-800-525-0127 (TDD/TTY call 711).