



Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality

Source Water Protection Grants Announced

For the third year, the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality Source Water Program received \$200,000 to provide Source Water Protection grants through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF). This year, just under \$197,000 has been allocated to new projects pertaining to drinking water quality, quantity, security, and education.

The 1986 and 1996 amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act respectively created the Wellhead Protection and Source Water Assessment programs. Many Nebraska communities are currently protecting their drinking water source with the help and guidance of these existing programs. With the new opportunities provided by the Source Water Protection Grant Program, Nebraska's tradition as a national leader in drinking water protection can be taken to the next level. Past and future successes can be attributed to the cooperative working relationships shared between NDEQ and the Nebraska Health and Human Services System, Nebraska Rural Water Association, the Natural Resources Districts, and many other stakeholders.

These grants have been made available to units and subunits of government, education institutions, and non-profit organizations to carry out projects that will help protect the state's drinking water sources. Most source water protection activities that address drinking water quality, quantity, security, or education are eligible for grant funding. Eligible projects fall into one of two categories:

1. Source-specific (local) projects – grant funds are used to implement protection activities in existing source water protection areas, designated future source water protection areas, and the associated communities. Eligible projects must address drinking water education as a component of the project.
2. Regional/Non-area-specific projects – eligible projects impact more than one community, and must be widely transferable, such as source water education exhibits, media campaigns, and county planning projects.

This year, twenty-one proposals were submitted, with funding requests totaling over \$770,000. A committee of representatives from NDEQ, Nebraska Health and Human Services System, Nebraska Rural Water Association, and the Nebraska Association of Resources Districts reviewed all proposals. Nine source-specific and two regional projects were selected for funding for a total amount of \$196,546.

Projects funded for 2005 include:

City of Arapahoe: Source Water Protection and Conservation for the City of Arapahoe – \$20,320
Fencing the wellfield; seeding the wellfield and surrounding area; decommissioning of inactive wells, development of educational materials.

Village of Bee: Closure of Abandoned Wells – \$12,200

Close seven residential and one municipal well in the village of Bee.

Village of Bertrand: Village of Bertrand's Source Water Grant – \$9,887

The village will obtain it's own groundwater model to allow for more frequent use by Bertrand Community School, board presentations, and for public display in the city hall when not in use; purchase

of a Hach colorimeter for use by the Bertrand high school for test-your-well events; purchase of a GPS unit for updating of the contaminant source inventory; purchase of automatic rain shut-off devices for residential irrigation systems; purchase and installation of water meters to monitor water saving; purchase of bio-hazard spill kits.

Village of Bloomfield: Bloomfield's Education, Security, and Water Monitoring Project – \$25,227

Install water meters on city hydrants, city buildings, and the football field; install motion flood lights on the three water wells and water tower; produce educational articles and make website improvements; conduct a water festival to educate 5th grade students on water conservation; purchase a Hach Colorimeter, Personal Digital Assistant (PDA), and laptop computer for use by the Bloomfield Community School to begin a water quality testing program for interested parties in Bloomfield as well as local farmers with private wells.

Village of Brady: Protection & Conserving our Drinking Water for the Future – \$9,605

Fence the area around the water tower; purchase two GPS monitors to inventory coordinates of potential ground water contaminants in the Wellhead Protection Area; develop Wellhead Protection Brochures; publish newspaper article outlining water saving tips and information on local water consumption patterns; distribute sprinkler timers at the Village Offices along with water conservation tips.

Village of Dwight: Improving the Water Quality and Usage in Dwight – \$13,333

Install fencing and motion lighting around both well sites; develop educational materials that inform the residents in and around Dwight about how to maintain the quality of the Village's water supply; decommissioning of 30 abandoned wells within the Wellhead Protection Area.

Village of Greenwood: Greenwood Municipal Water Protection Program – \$4,359

Fence the water tower; install motion lighting at the water tower, wastewater treatment plant, and landfill site; purchase Wellhead Protection Area signage.

Village of Holstein: Holstein Water Quality and System Improvements – \$48,650

Abandonment of old wells and cisterns; install a drop-in transducer to display draw down on wells; install security doors on both well houses; distribute technical newsletters and informative fliers.

Village of Smithfield: Improve Quality and Quantity of Smithfield Water – \$14,140

Conduct a Contaminant Source Inventory within the Wellhead Protection Area using GPS units to mark the location of potential contaminants; offer rebates to homeowners to have their septic systems inspected and pumped by a certified septic system contractor; offer a rebate for households to buy and install water saving toilets, showerheads, and/or other household appliances to conserve water; install fencing and motion lighting around the well house; develop a newsletter and education brochures for distribution.

South Platte Natural Resources District: Cash for Grass – \$18,750

Enroll at least 30 homeowners across the district and convert at least 30,000 square feet of lawn to water conserving landscapes; publicize results of the program on the South Platte NRD website and in newspaper and radio news articles sent to media in the district.

The Groundwater Foundation: Pharmaceuticals & Personal Care Products in Source Water – \$20,075

Research and develop Pharmaceuticals and Personal Care Products (PPCPs) materials to add to the health department's resource manuals; host a training event/seminar similar featuring the available research on PPCPs in Nebraska and; develop and produce PPCP public education and awareness tools; provide written suggestions to local health departments and their partners on how to conduct a PPCP collection event and/or incorporate PPCP collection into their existing household hazardous waste collection events;

For more information:

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