



Public Water Supply (PWS) Energy Efficiency Grant Program

Frequently Asked Questions • April 2026

Eligibility: Applicants and Facilities

Q: Are federally operated facilities considered publicly owned?

A: Yes. However, federal funds cannot be used as match, as the funding opportunity is administered using federal pass-through dollars.

Q: Is a pumping station an eligible facility under this grant?

A: Yes. A pumping station is eligible if it is municipally owned, part of the public water infrastructure, and has a third-party energy assessment completed within the last five (5) years.

Q: Is a non-profit entity considered an eligible applicant?

A: It depends. Only publicly owned water treatment plants are eligible for this program. First, the nonprofit must own the water treatment plant. Second, because only local government entities can apply and the facility must be publicly owned, a nonprofit may qualify if its members are entirely governmental entities. In that case, the PWS could be considered a “publicly owned” local government facility.

Q: Is eligibility limited to municipalities that operate their own water treatment plants?

A: No. Eligibility is not limited to operation, but rather ownership. The water facility must be publicly owned and located within the State of Illinois by the municipality applying for grant funding.

Q: Are private trailer park facilities eligible to apply?

A: No. Only publicly owned water treatment plants are eligible for funding.

Existing or Planned Projects

Q: What types of projects are eligible under this program?

A: Please refer to the first round press release for example projects:

<https://epa.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/epa/about-us/documents/news-releases/2024/08.28.24-IEPA-PWS-EE-Awards-Final.pdf>



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Q: Would upgrades to a City's pumping station control systems, including PLC automation and integration with VFDs, be eligible under the program?

A: Yes. Upgrades to control systems, including the implementation of PLC-based automation and integration with VFDs for improved system efficiency and performance, would be considered eligible for funding under the program.

Q: Can an existing energy assessment be used to justify projects or equipment not specifically included in the original report?

A: No. If the proposed project or equipment is not included in the original assessment, an addendum from the original third-party assessor or another qualified third-party assessor is required to confirm expected performance and comparable energy savings.

Q: Can a City pursue a geothermal HVAC system if the original assessment only identified standard HVAC replacement?

A: Yes. The City may use the existing assessment to meet eligibility requirements, provided it was completed within the past five (5) years and supports HVAC system replacement. A geothermal system may be proposed as an alternative; however, the City must provide updated cost and energy savings estimates specific to the geothermal system. This information may be provided by a qualified contractor or technical professional. A new comprehensive assessment is not required, but all project data must align with the originally identified system and meet program documentation requirements.

Q: Our forecast includes replacing 5 high-service pumps and 2 backwash pumps, along with all associated VFDs due to end-of-life. Would replacing existing VFDs with newer VFDs qualify for the grant program? Or would funding only apply if VFDs were not previously installed and we were adding them for the first time?

A: Yes. Replacement pumps and VFDs can qualify under the PWS Energy Efficiency grant program. However, they must have been identified in a third-party energy assessment completed within the last five years. If they were not included, an addendum from the original third-party assessor (or another qualified third-party assessor) is required to confirm projected performance and energy savings.



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Q: Would installing solar panels to offset electricity usage/costs qualify under this grant program?

A: No. Renewable energy projects, including solar, are not eligible under this program. However, a separate program, the Resilient Energy for Wastewater Infrastructure (REWI) grant, does include renewable energy as an eligible activity. While it does not apply to public drinking water facilities, wastewater utilities may be eligible. If interested, you can review the REWI program webpage for details.

<https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/energy/energy-resiliency/resilient-energy-for-wastewater-infrastructure-grant-program.html>

Energy Efficiency Assessment

Q: Does a utility (e.g., ComEd or Ameren) energy efficiency assessment meet the program's energy assessment requirement?

A: Yes. Utility-provided energy efficiency assessments are acceptable, provided they were completed within the last five (5) years.

Q: Is the Public Water Infrastructure Assessment Program still active?

A: No. This program is no longer active, and funding is no longer available. Applicants may contact the former program partner, EnergySense Resilience Center (formerly SEDAC), for assistance in identifying free or low-cost assessment resources.

Q: Who is considered a qualified third party to conduct an energy efficiency assessment?

A: The Illinois EPA does not recommend specific companies; however, the assessment must be conducted by a qualified professional energy assessor. This typically includes individuals certified through recognized organizations such as the Building Performance Institute (BPI) or the Association of Energy Engineers (AEE), among others. The assessor should have the technical capability to perform energy benchmarking and analysis and provide supporting data, such as energy intensity and projected savings.

Q: Can an in-house electrical engineer perform the required energy assessment audit?

A: No. The energy assessment must be completed by a third party and cannot be performed by an individual employed by the same entity applying for funding.



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Q: Can an energy plan that reviews system energy use meet the requirement for a third party energy assessment?

A: No. An energy plan that provides general strategies or recommendations, but does not include specific equipment recommendations, energy intensity metrics, or projected energy savings, does not meet the requirement. A third-party energy assessment would still be required.

Q. The City has a condition assessment report for its water treatment facility that outlines needed improvements and replacements (e.g., pumps, motors, chlorine gas systems, SCADA upgrades, and structural repairs). While the report does not include specific energy efficiency analysis, the proposed upgrades are expected to improve overall efficiency. The City intends to calculate and include projected energy savings in the application. Would this report meet the program's requirement for an energy efficiency assessment?

A. No. An energy plan or condition assessment that provides general recommendations, but does not include specific equipment-level energy analysis, energy intensity metrics, or projected energy savings, does not meet the program requirement. A third-party energy assessment is still required. Additionally, the assessment must be completed by an independent third party and cannot be performed in-house by the applicant.

Application Process

Q: Where do we submit the application?

A: Applications must be submitted online via Euna Grants (formerly Amplifund): <https://il.amplifund.com/Public/Opportunities/Details/fc791b17-9a1b-4ddc-b2e7-b4fea6047dc5>

Q: I created an Euna Grants account, but the system logs me in as “administrator.” What should I do?

A: This typically occurs when the account creation or registration process was incomplete. Try re-registering or logging in again. If issues continue, we can request assistance from the GATA unit.

Q: What should the Narrative Project Plan include?

A: Once you create a Euna Grants login, you can access the Narrative Project Plan form directly. It is viewable without submitting the full application.



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Q: Can a consultant create a GATA account and submit an application on behalf of a municipality?

A: No. The application must be submitted through the municipality's GATA account, as the program is limited to government-owned facilities.

Q: Where can I access the required application forms?

A: Click "**Apply**" to access the application portal. Then select "**Application Forms**," where you'll find a complete list of all required forms.

General Inquiries & Guidance

Q: Is this a newly established grant program?

A: No. The first round of funding closed in 2024.

Q: How many communities were awarded in the first round of the program?

A: Three (3) communities were awarded in the first round.

Q: How much funding did each community receive in the first round?

A: Please refer to the first round press release for details on award amounts:
<https://epa.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/epa/about-us/documents/news-releases/2024/08.28.24-IEPA-PWS-EE-Awards-Final.pdf>

Q: How many communities applied for Round 1 of the program?

A: This information is not publicly available. A FOIA request would be required to obtain application data.

Q: What can a municipality do to position itself for the highest possible grant award?

A: Review the PWS EE Program webpage and the scoring criteria in Euna Grants to understand how applications are evaluated.

Q: Where can I find information about eligible projects?

A: All guidance is available on the program webpage and within Euna Grants.



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Q: If we miss this round of funding, will there be another opportunity in the future?

A: This second round is expected to conclude funding for this specific program. While our Office remains committed to supporting Public Water Infrastructure through future funding opportunities, the timing and structure of those programs are not yet determined. To stay informed about upcoming or newly released opportunities, please sign up for our Office ListServ: <https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/energy.html>