

# Environmental Loans E-Bulletin

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Posting wage rates is an important part of complying with Davis Bacon requirements.

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The Environmental Loans E-Bulletin is written by staff in the WI DNR Environmental Loans Section to provide up-to-date information on both the Clean Water Fund Program (CWFP) and the Safe Drinking Water Loan Program (SDWLP). These E-Bulletins are sent periodically to alert you to upcoming deadlines, highlight program changes and provide assistance on topics that need clarification.

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## The Unanswered Question: Will there be Principal Forgiveness for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2014 Projects?

Unfortunately, our crystal ball is not predicting whether Congress will include provisions for Principal Forgiveness (PF) for SFY 2014 projects in the Federal Fiscal Year 2013 budget. As much as we would like to be able to plan for the next year, until Congress acts on our future funding, we have no reliable insights into the continuation of PF. Keep in mind that Congress provides funds for the Clean Water Fund and Safe Drinking Water Loan Programs through an annual Appropriations Bill. It is in those appropriation bills where PF funding was specified for the past few years. If other requirements are included in the appropriation language (as they were in the past), we will alert you to those as well.

You can be sure that as soon as we are aware of any news regarding PF, we will forward that information to all of our customers. Until then, we are grateful that we have been able to help some communities with the cost of their projects.

*We wish you all the  
best in 2013!*



WI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
ENVIRONMENTAL LOANS PROGRAM



## Timing is critical - Conditional Bid Awards may be the Answer for SFY 13 SDWLP Projects

We continue to work with legislative staff to draft statutory changes enabling us to award the SFY 13 Principal Forgiveness (PF) funds for both the CFWP and the SDWLP. Municipalities that want or need to close their loans now may do so with language in the Financial Assistance Agreement specifying the PF funds as “conditional” until the statutory change is finalized.

In addition, for the SDWLP there is a statutory deadline that requires loans be closed by June 30<sup>th</sup> (note that June 26<sup>th</sup> is the fourth Wednesday of the month – the last day in June that we can close a loan). Thus we have a very limited time period in which we can process SDWLP loans if municipalities choose to wait to bid their projects until after the legislation is passed. Keep in mind that, depending on workloads, project complexity, completeness of submittals, and compliance with requirements, it can take 2 to 4 weeks for us to complete our reviews of bidding documents. We also need time to prepare your Financial Assistance Agreement and review your first disbursement request.

In order to ensure your ability to be awarded the PF that the SDWLP allocated to your project on the SFY 13 Funding List, we **strongly encourage** you to move forward with your bidding process as soon as possible. If you are holding off bidding your project(s) until after the legislation passes, you are putting your SFY 13 funding at risk as we may not be able to get all the loans closed by June 26<sup>th</sup>, especially if multiple applicants wait until the last minute to submit bid documents.

Municipalities need to complete their bidding and submit to us their executed contract a minimum of **8 weeks** in advance of their loan closing date. An option for keeping your project moving forward may be to award the construction contract as conditional on receiving PF funding. That way your project will be ready to proceed to loan closing once we are granted the authority to make PF awards.

Also note that we have a statutory deadline to close all remaining SFY 2011, 2012 and 2013 Safe Drinking Water Loan Program projects by June 26, resulting in us, DOA and Bond Counsel having a significant loan closing workload at the end of June. We will be reviewing the documents in order of receipt, so the earlier you can submit the information, the earlier your funding can be secured.

## Upcoming Deadlines:

### June 26, 2013:

All SFY 11, SFY 12 and SFY 2013 SDWLP loans must be closed by this date.

### June 30, 2013:

Deadline for SFY 14 SDWLP loan applications.

CWLP loans must be closed **within 8 months** of the applications being accepted by the Department.

## 2013 WISCONSIN SEWER USER CHARGE SURVEY

The Wisconsin Rural Water Association (WRWA) and MSA Professional Services, Inc. are working in collaboration to survey wastewater systems in Wisconsin in order to complete a comprehensive report on sewer use charges across the state.

The final report will show comparative sewer rates for different sizes and types of systems and will show trends over the last 17 years. This information is also used by Wisconsin DNR, USDA Rural Development, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation and other agencies that rely on utility cost data for making funding and grant decisions. Participating systems will receive a free download of the report upon completion.

Please take a few minutes to complete the one-page survey that can be found at [www.wrwa.org](http://www.wrwa.org) and return it by email to [ratesurvey@msa-ps.com](mailto:ratesurvey@msa-ps.com), mail to 1230 South Blvd., Baraboo WI, 53913-2791, or fax to (608) 356-2770. If you have questions, contact Tom Fitzwilliams, [tfitzwilliams@msa-ps.com](mailto:tfitzwilliams@msa-ps.com) or 608-355-8864.

## REMEMBER TO CONTACT YOUR REGIONAL CME PRIOR TO YOUR PRE-CONSTRUCTION MEETING!

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## Status Update for SFY 14 Priority Lists

Staff in the EL Section are processing the ITA and PERF submittals for SFY 2014. We are seeing a consistent number of submittals over the past few years, with 222 CWFP ITAs and 219 SDWLP ITAs submitted for SFY 14.

To establish the CWFP SFY 14 Project Priority List, the regional Construction Management Engineers must complete the PERF scoring process. Typically, they complete that process by early March and the draft list follows shortly after.

For the SDWLP SFY 14 priority list, both project scopes and PERF scores are reviewed to ensure consistency with program requirements. Often additional information is needed to complete the process, and communities are provided time to respond to inquiries. It is our goal to have the SDWLP project priority list completed as soon as possible so that communities may know where they are on the list in time to submit a SFY 14 SDWLP application (the deadline for which is June 30, 2013).

**Our goal is to have both the CWFP and the SDWLP SFY 2014 Project Priority lists completed by the end of March.**

## EL Reference Guide: on-line and updated!

Have a question about an aspect of our program but you're working in the evening or on a weekend? No need to worry – most of your questions can be answered by simply looking up the information on our on-line reference guide. In fact, when you call your project manager with questions, they will most likely walk you through how to access our guide and read with you the information in the guide. If it is not clear to you or if you think the information is outdated, please let us know so that we can be sure that the information is presented in a clear and understandable way and is as up-to-date as possible!

See the sidebar for information on how to find the Reference Guide!

To find the **Reference Guide** on our web page, go to:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/Aid/EIF.html>

Then look at the right side-bar with the heading:

### EIF resources

- [EIF news](#)
- [Project lists](#)
- [Reference guide](#)
- [Small loan program](#)
- [Hardship assistance](#)
- [Forms and publications](#)
- [Statutes and codes](#)
- [DOA EIF web reports \[exit DNR\]](#)

Click on the **Reference guide** and you will find an alphabetical listing of information on topics associated with the Environmental Improvement Fund programs – including information on Davis-Bacon, eligibility, DBE requirements, reimbursement resolutions, and many, many more.