

Required Ohio RCAP Training for Drinking Water Assistance Fund Principal Forgiveness

Why is this training being required?

The Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996 only allow Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWAFF) assistance to public or private water systems that have the technical, managerial and financial capability to comply with the Act's requirements. This is demonstrated through submission of a Capability Assurance Plan (CAP) to Ohio EPA.

For water systems which are eligible for principal forgiveness, Ohio EPA is requiring the Ohio RCAP training in an effort to improve the level of capability of these water systems. Water systems that qualify for principal forgiveness are often experiencing the effects of having inadequate technical, managerial or financial capability. Ohio EPA believes by requiring this training, the decision makers for the water system will be given the tools and methods to improve the short-term and long-term capability of the water system.

Who is required to complete the training?

A minimum of 50 percent of the council members or governing board members for the water system must complete the training prior to the loan award.

If any council or board members have completed the required courses within the last five years, the Certificates of Completion will be accepted toward the 50 percent.

Which Ohio RCAP courses are required?

Utility Management for Local Officials (#101). In this course participants will be able to manage a water or sewer utility and develop their technical, managerial, and financial capability. Participants will be able to identify their responsibilities regarding operations, rules, open meeting laws and other laws impacting small water and wastewater systems, staffing, hiring consultants, project financing with loans, grants, rate setting, records keeping, income and expenses, budgeting, planning, and all aspects of utility operation. Participants will be able to develop capability for maintaining or achieving compliance with laws and regulations to provide a quality safe product at reasonable rates.

Financial Management for Local Officials (#201). This course builds on the information provided by the Ohio RCAP 101 course, participants will be able to evaluate financial policies and procedures; develop record systems to make sound decisions on budgets, rates, and capital purchases; manage assets, income, expenses, debt, and reserves. Participants will be able to develop short and long-range plans for providing safe and quality services at a reasonable cost. Participants will be introduced to asset management as a mechanism of good stewardship of their utility. Participants will be able to implement sound financial processes, plans, and strategies for their utility.

What happens if the minimum of 50 percent is not met prior to the loan award?

If all other program requirements are met, the loan can be awarded but the principal forgiveness will not be applied.

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What happens if one or more of the council or board members resign or are otherwise no longer a member prior to the loan award?

Fifty percent of the council or board members in place at the time of award must have completed the training prior to the loan award. If the position is vacant and they still meet the 50 percent, then the requirement is met. If as a result of a council or board member being replaced they no longer meet the 50 percent, the new member(s) will have to complete the training prior to loan award.

What happens if a Certificate of Completion is lost or destroyed?

If the training course is taken in a classroom, a duplicate certificate can be provided by the Ohio RCAP training staff. If the course is taken online, the individual who needs a duplicate certificate must logon to the online course website. The website allows the user to print another certificate.

What happens after 50 percent of the council or board completes the training?

Upon completion of the training, the board/council will receive a letter from DDAGW Central Office confirming the requirement has been met.

After Ohio EPA verifies all the Certificates of Completion and the current roster, the loan can proceed with the principal forgiveness.

Additional training information

Ohio RCAP is under contract by Ohio EPA to conduct these free training courses. The classroom trainings sessions have three parts to each course. The courses are given throughout the year in various areas across the state. These seminars are open to anyone, but space is limited. These courses are approved for Ohio EPA operator contact hours.

To sign up for classroom training sessions, please go to the online sign up form at: www.ohiorcap.org.

If you need help with signing up for the classroom training sessions, please contact Nadine Thompson at (800) 775-9767. Registrations must be received no later than one week prior to the training session date.

As with the classroom courses, the online courses include three parts. They are self-paced and interactive. The online courses are available anytime and may be started, stopped and restarted where the trainee left off. These courses are also approved for Ohio EPA operator contact hours.

If you need help with the online course website please contact Tom Fishbaugh, Ohio RCAP at (800) 775-9767 or (419) 332-2032.

If you have questions about the Ohio EPA training requirement, please contact Susan Schell, Division of Drinking and Ground Waters at (614) 644-2752.