



Public Interest Center | P.O. Box 1049 | Columbus, OH | 43216-1049

**FOR RELEASE:** August 26, 2011  
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### **Ohio EPA Seeks Comments on Intended Uses for The Drinking Water Assistance Fund**

Ohio EPA is accepting comments on its plan for distributing \$130 million in drinking water assistance funds in 2012 to communities for drinking water infrastructure projects. Comments will be accepted through Monday, August 29, 2011.

Two public meetings will be held to address questions about the plan, and to accept comments about the Management and Intended Use Plan for the Drinking Water Assistance Fund. The meetings will be held at 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. on Monday, August 29, at the Lazarus Government Center, 50 West Town Street, Suite 700, Conference Room A, Columbus.

The changes made to the plan for 2012 include:

- Updates to the point system to more accurately reflect program priorities, specifically emphasizing protection of public health;
- Water treatment plant construction project planning deadlines for submission would be changed to September 1<sup>st</sup> to remove the risk of a project being bypassed until the next program year;
- Principal forgiveness (no requirement to pay back the loan's principal) amounts would be decreased by 10 percent in all disadvantaged community tiers and removed as a benefit for non-disadvantaged applicants, in order to stabilize the fund's future availability; and
- The proportionate share of assistance a community is eligible to obtain would be increased to \$15 million.

The main purpose of the drinking water assistance fund is to protect public health by providing financial assistance to eligible public water systems so they can comply with requirements of Ohio statutes and regulations. Ohio's ranking system, in accordance with the Safe Drinking Water Act, places the highest priority on helping communities correct public health issues, financing financially distressed communities and meeting or maintaining federal and state requirements.

Loan fund monies come from funds remaining from previous capitalization grants, bonds, repayments, and the 2011 capitalization grant, along with funds generated from the state match revenue bond from 2010. Communities interested in submitting a project for 2013 funding should begin checking the [website](#) this fall.

Comments on the 2012 plan can be submitted to the attention of Sam MacDonald, Division of Drinking and Ground Waters, P.O. Box 1049, Columbus, Ohio 43216-1049, or emailed to [sam.macdonald@epa.state.oh.us](mailto:sam.macdonald@epa.state.oh.us). To review the draft plan online, go to <http://www.epa.ohio.gov/ddagw/financialassistance.aspx>, or write or email the addresses above.

To learn more and view the draft plan, visit the [website](#) or contact Ohio EPA, Lazarus Government Center, Attention: Christine Brock, DDAGW, P.O. Box 1049, Columbus, Ohio 43216-1049, or email [christine.brock@epa.state.oh.us](mailto:christine.brock@epa.state.oh.us).