



Water Pollution Control Loan Fund Program Success Story 2016 Year in Review

The Ohio legislature created the Ohio Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) in 1989 to help communities finance water pollution control projects. Since its inception, the WPCLF program has grown and expanded its services beyond traditional wastewater infrastructure. Financing is now provided for non-point source projects that protect or restore Ohio's water resources through the Water Resource Restoration Sponsor Program (WRRSP). By the end of 2016, the WPCLF program had financed more than \$7.7 billion for completion of more than 1,900 projects, making it the state's largest source of funding for wastewater infrastructure.

Challenge

In 2016, U.S. EPA released the results of a nationwide survey showing that about \$271 billion would be needed in the next five years to maintain and improve the nation's wastewater infrastructure systems. This mostly includes wastewater treatment plant upgrades, management of storm water runoff and replacement and upgrades to aging sewer systems. While these are national figures, they illustrated the scale of the problem. The same report estimates that Ohio's portion of the total need identified is about \$14.5 billion, half of which is directly related to combined sewer overflows (CSOs).

Solution

To help Ohio's communities address the challenges of aging wastewater infrastructure systems, Ohio EPA's Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance provides a combination of low interest rate loans and principal forgiveness funding. In 2016 alone, Ohio EPA provided more than \$628 million in financing for six planning, 14 design and 124 construction project loans. The construction projects included \$13.2 million of principal forgiveness financing dedicated to repairing or replacing failing home sewage treatment systems. Another \$10.2 million of principal forgiveness financing was targeted for disadvantaged communities to address unsewered areas and improve municipal wastewater treatment systems. The program also offered \$100 million in loans at zero percent interest rate to communities to specifically address projects that result in a reduced nutrient loading to Ohio's waterways. In all, these initiatives have saved Ohio communities more than \$95 million.

To offset the historic loss of ecological function and biological diversity that adversely impacts Ohio's water resources and help restore water quality, we also provided \$10 million through the WRRSP.

Beginning in early 2017, we will commit \$300 million at zero percent interest rate for CSO projects implemented within the next three years. This will address a critical need for assistance identified during a special "call for nominations" where we received about \$1.7 billion in requests for infrastructure needs related to CSOs.

Resources

The WPCLF is committed to a flexible and responsive approach to program management to continue helping Ohio communities meet their wastewater infrastructure challenges. For more information, visit epa.ohio.gov/defa/ofa.aspx.

