2020 Community Hydration Station Competitive Grant Program

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

All questions regarding this RFP were submitted by 2:00 p.m. Central Time on Wednesday, September 16, 2020.

1. **Question:** How much can an organization apply for?
   
   **Answer:** $2,000 total request for each applicant.

2. **Question:** Is there a total of $10,000 being awarded for this grant statewide? I am just wondering if we should apply, it doesn’t seem that would go very far maybe?

   **Answer:** Yes, that is correct, $10,000 is being made available for statewide grants. However, because awards are given based on qualifications scoring, those who serve children, have documented lead test results and concerns, and/or are in a dental health professional shortage area have very good chances at being funded.

3. **Question:** I have just seen the info regarding hydration station grants and came up with an idea if possible? I want to help spread the word out there in communities, businesses, orgs, etc. I would even be open to learning how to purchase and install the hydration stations as an independent contractor this time around will help create such opportunities in this time of need. I just want to offer my assistance and be a part of this project in any way I can.

   **Answer:** Thank you for your interest. Yes, mentioning this opportunity to others is very welcome and would be helpful. While we are not seeking assistance with other activities such as installation at this time, those interested in applying for grants may be interested.

4. **Question:** I am a parent volunteer representing a 501(c) (3) elementary school. I have some questions regarding the eligibility of our school for Hydration Station grant. The water supply for the school comes from an in-ground well on school property (no connection to municipal water supply is available as the school is in a rural area). According to the grant requirements, our school would not be eligible because we aren't connected to a municipal water supply and our county isn't in a designated dental health professional shortage area. Yet our needs for a hydration station are very real due to COVID and due to the fact that we are sourced with well water. Are we indeed ineligible for the Hydration Station grant? Are there alternative funding sources that are available to us to meet our needs?

   **Answer:** Eligibility depends on being connected to a municipal community public water system, so your organization would not be eligible if this is not currently true. This is an oral health grant designed to increase availability of drinking water containing optimal fluoride levels and lower lead levels in order to improve oral and developmental health. A better description is located on page 3 of the Program Information and Materials document: “Properly certified hydration stations remove lead and other contaminants associated with plumbing materials. They also maintain optimal fluoride levels in drinking water.
Fluoridated drinking water helps prevent tooth decay through direct tooth contact and childhood consumption during tooth formation.”

5. **Question**: As a private Catholic school would we be eligible to apply?

   **Answer**: Yes, you would be eligible to apply if you also meet the other requirement of receiving water from a municipal community public water system (per page of 5 of the Materials and Information document: https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/com/hydstatgrntpginfo.pdf).

   Any Minnesota organization such as schools, Head Start centers, community centers, non-profits, clinics etc. receiving water from a municipal community public water system (PWS) is eligible to apply.

6. **Question**: I am wondering how much the bottled water would be or is it plumbed in?

   **Answer**: The hydration station units are plumbed in on premises.

7. **Question**: I wanted to clarify on the Hydration Station examples in Appendix E. Are those the ‘approved’ models that must be purchased? Or, are those examples of the types of models that are eligible for purchase under the grant?

   **Answer**: The two hydration stations shown in Appendix E are approved hydration stations. They were reviewed by the MDH Oral Health Program previously, and determined to not remove fluoride from water, yet remove particulate matter (including lead) from water, and to be ADA-compliant designs. While it would make the process much smoother to choose one of the approved hydration stations, I understand it might not always be possible. If that is the case, please send us information about the proposed model, including as much information about filters and contaminant removal as possible (see www.nsf.org or www.wqa.org for listings of certified products to NSF/ANSI standards 42 and 53 for lead).

8. **Question**: Do counties qualify for this grant? If so, how many grants are available?

   **Answer**: Counties qualify for the Hydration Station Grant Program. At this time $10,000 is available for grants, depending on the dollar amount being requested will determine how many grants will be given.

9. **Question**: Can churches qualify for the grant?

   **Answer**: Any Minnesota organization such as schools, Head Start centers, community centers, nonprofits, clinics etc. receiving water from a municipal community public water system (PWS) is eligible to apply. Yes, religious organizations can apply for these grants.

10. **Question**: My County is not a designed Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA). Will this significantly reduce our chances of eligibility? If approved for the grant, we would be able to purchase the hydration station by that date, but if construction were pushed out until after March 31, what would that mean? Would the grant be revoked? We want to make sure we are complying as best we can with the RFP in terms of our application and timing. 3. Per the RFP, each grant can request up to $2,000 for a hydration station; however, the RFP also
states there is $10,000 in grant funds to be awarded. Does this mean we can request a grant for more than one (1) grant station that costs up to $2,000?

**Answer:** 1) Per “Project Need” (page 8), 10 points are available for the criteria “Is the installation site located within either a geographic or low-income Dental Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA)? (Appendix D).” Applications require scores of 60 (page 8) out of 100 to be awarded, so not being present in a Dental HPSA would not prevent you from an award, but would reduce your maximum potential score. 2) Because 30 points of the 100 evaluation points are based on risks of lead exposure at the installed location, your chances of satisfying the criteria for those points would be low if the installation building and premise plumbing are not complete at the time of application. If awarded a grant, a request to extend the grant term dates would be considered. However, I recommend also planning to apply for this grant, if available in the future, once you are able to document information about the installation location. 3) Yes. The application materials do not prohibit this, so it’s possible. Please note that several items under “Project Need” award points for served population and reliance on drinking water, so those would need to be adjusted depending on the applications (which would need to be separate…one per desired hydration station).

11. **Question:** I was wondering if my organization would qualify.

**Answer:** If your organization receives water from a municipal community public water system.

12. **Question:** The question that I have run into is around the water testing. My understanding is that our water has not been tested before? Is this something I should have done before we apply for the grant?

**Answer:** Points are awarded in the grant scoring process for lead test results for the installation location. While the testing is not always a requirement, it has been done much more often in the last couple years due to requirements for handling lead in schools: Since the major reasons for these awards include:

- Remove lead, when present, from drinking water
- Provide an additional safeguard to reduce potential lead exposure from drinking water

It would be difficult to determine whether an awarded hydration station will provide any benefits without some prior test result(s) for lead concentrations in the water at the installation site. Test results, if applicable, should be included in the grant application in order to be considered.

13. **Question:** Can cities apply?

**Answer:** Yes

14. **Question:** Just to be clear, there is $10,000 available for the whole state. Correct?

**Answer:** Yes, although that was revised to $14,000 in a recent addendum to the grant Request for Proposals. We anticipate funding to be possible for seven hydration stations statewide.
15. **Question:** Looking through the materials it appears that in order to be able to be considered we have to ensure we could get 60 points per the Community Fluoridation Grant system. Is this correct? Or is this just an example of how the system has worked? I want to ensure that we could even qualify since we aren’t in a Dental Health Professional Shortage area.

**Answer:** 1) Yes, you are correct – the grant application must have a minimum score of 60 points to qualify. Applicants that receive 60 points will be awarded funds based upon the 1) score, 2) date placed upon the list, and 3) availability of grant funds.

16. **Question:** I am looking at the Hydration Station Competitive Grant information and have a quick question. I understand that we can only request up to $2,000 for a hydration station. Can we make a request for funds for a hydration station for multiple clinics? I currently have three clinics that I would like to apply for.

**Answer:** Any Minnesota organization that receives water from a municipal community public water system is eligible to apply. An organization may apply for one competitive grant.

17. **Question:** Do I have to have my water tested for lead to apply?

**Answer:** Points are awarded in the grant scoring process for lead test results for the installation location. While the testing is not always a requirement, it has been done much more often in the last couple years due to requirements for handling lead in schools: Since the major reasons for these awards include:

- Remove lead, when present, from drinking water
- Provide an additional safeguard to reduce potential lead exposure from drinking water

It would be difficult to determine whether an awarded hydration station will provide any benefits without some prior test result(s) for lead concentrations in the water at the installation site. Test results, if applicable, should be included in the grant application in order to be considered.