

# EPA Water Technical Assistance (WaterTA): Helping Communities Access Funding

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December 2023



# Agenda

- Speaker introductions
- Background
- WaterTA examples
- How to access WaterTA



# Housekeeping



All attendees are in listen-only mode.



Please use the Zoom Q&A function to submit your questions. Questions will be answered at the end of the presentation.



We will be sharing relevant links via the chat throughout the presentation.

# Speakers

- **Kara Goodwin**, EPA Office of Ground Water & Drinking Water, Senior Technical Assistance Expert
- **Danusha Chandy**, P.E., EPA Office of Wastewater Management, Technical Assistance Senior Engineer
- **Sequoia Bua-lam**, EPA Office of Ground Water & Drinking Water, Communications & Outreach Coordinator



# Many Communities Face Water Infrastructure Challenges

# EPA Supports Infrastructure Improvements via:

## Funding

+

## Technical Assistance (TA)

Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (SRF)

Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA)

Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act Grants

Drinking Water Infrastructure Grants

Tribal Set-Aside (DWIG-TSA)

Clean Water Indian Set Aside (CWISA)

EPA WaterTA Programs

TA providers (funded by EPA grants)

External TA Program Partnerships

# Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

- **\$50 billion** investment in water infrastructure – the largest ever!
- Large amount of funding will be grants/forgivable loans for **disadvantaged communities**
- Loans at **below market rates**
- **5-year** appropriation timeline



# Bipartisan Infrastructure Law: Water Goals

- **Target resources** to disadvantaged and underserved communities
- **Make rapid progress** on lead service line replacement and lead-free water for all
- **Tackle** forever chemicals
- **Support** resilience (including climate resilience & cybersecurity) & One Water Innovation
- **Create** good jobs



# EPA WaterTA Supports Communities to:



Identify water challenges



Plan for solutions



Increase community engagement



Improve compliance and access to safe and clean water services



Build technical, financial, managerial capacity



Develop application materials to access water infrastructure funding

# EPA WaterTA Approach

- **Targeted:** focused on disadvantaged and underserved communities as well as those that may struggle to access funding to improve their water infrastructure
- **Proactive:** directly assist disadvantaged and underserved communities – we go to them!
- **Community-centered:** meet communities where they are by building trust, adjusting to their needs, and being culturally competent

The logo features the EPA circular emblem on the left, which contains a stylized sun, water waves, and two leaves. To the right of the emblem, the text "EPA WATER TA" is written in a large, bold, blue, sans-serif font.

*Environmental Finance Centers*

*Closing America's Wastewater Access Gap*

*Lead Service Line Replacement Accelerators Pilot*

*Direct Technical Assistance*

*Clean Water Rural, Small & Tribal Assistance*

*Get the Lead Out (GLO) Initiative*

*Preliminary Engineering Support*

*Community Solutions Team Pilot*

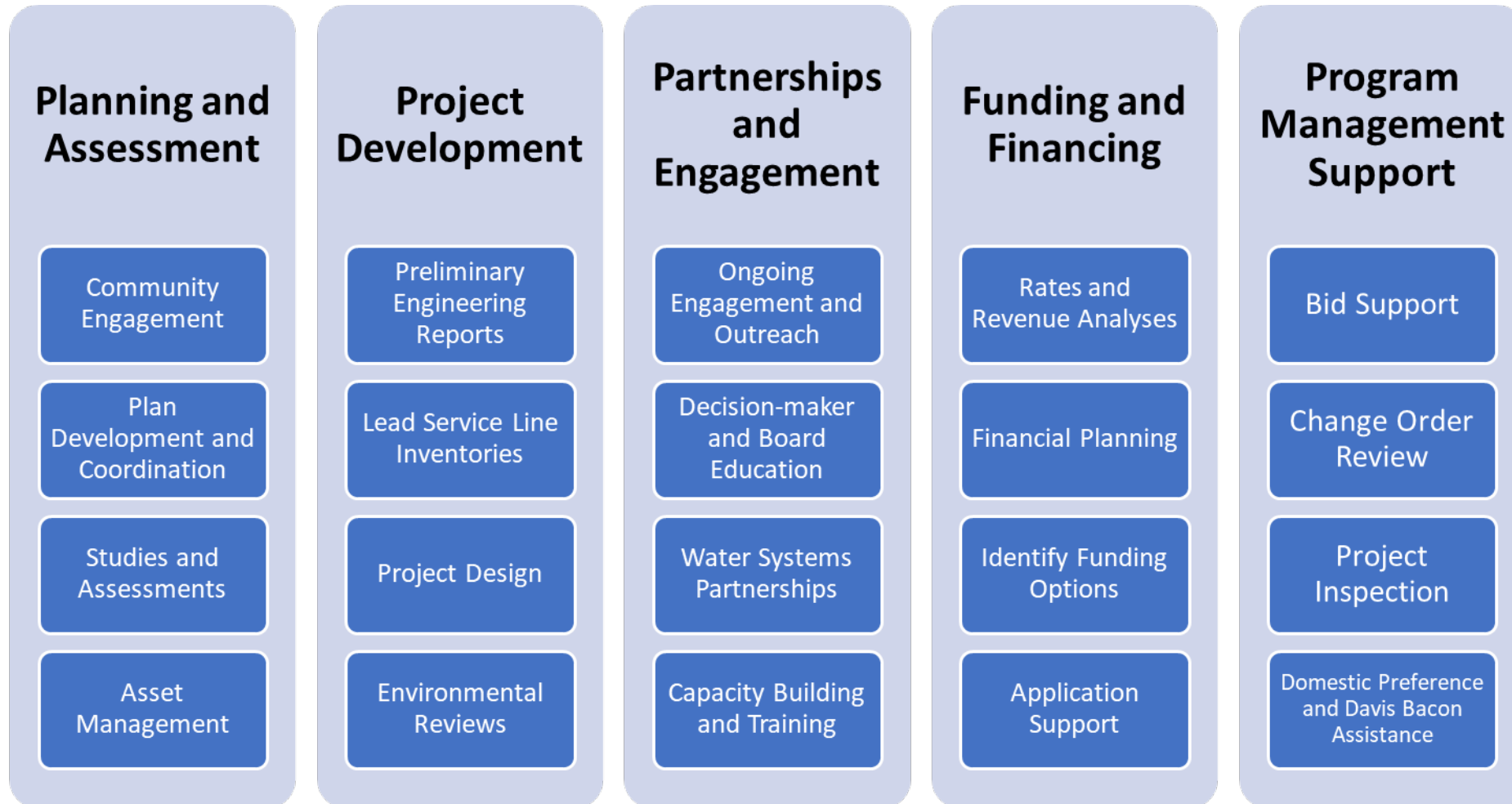
*Training and Technical Assistance for Small Systems*

*Cybersecurity Technical Assistance*

*Creating Resilient Water Utilities*

*and more!*

# WaterTA Services





# Who is eligible to receive EPA WaterTA Services?

- Local governments/communities
- Drinking water utilities/systems
- Wastewater utilities/systems
- Stormwater utilities/systems
- States, Tribes, territories
- Non-governmental organizations
- **Questions? Contact [WaterTA@epa.gov](mailto:WaterTA@epa.gov)**

# Technical Assistance (TA) Providers

EPA works with national and regional providers that are experts in water and supporting communities.





# WaterTA Connection

*There are multiple pathways for communities to access WaterTA:*

- Recommended by a State or EPA Region
- Directly contacted/referred by a WaterTA provider
- Submit a WaterTA Request Form



# WaterTA in Action: Community Spotlights



# New Jersey: Lead Service Line (LSL) Replacement

## Community:

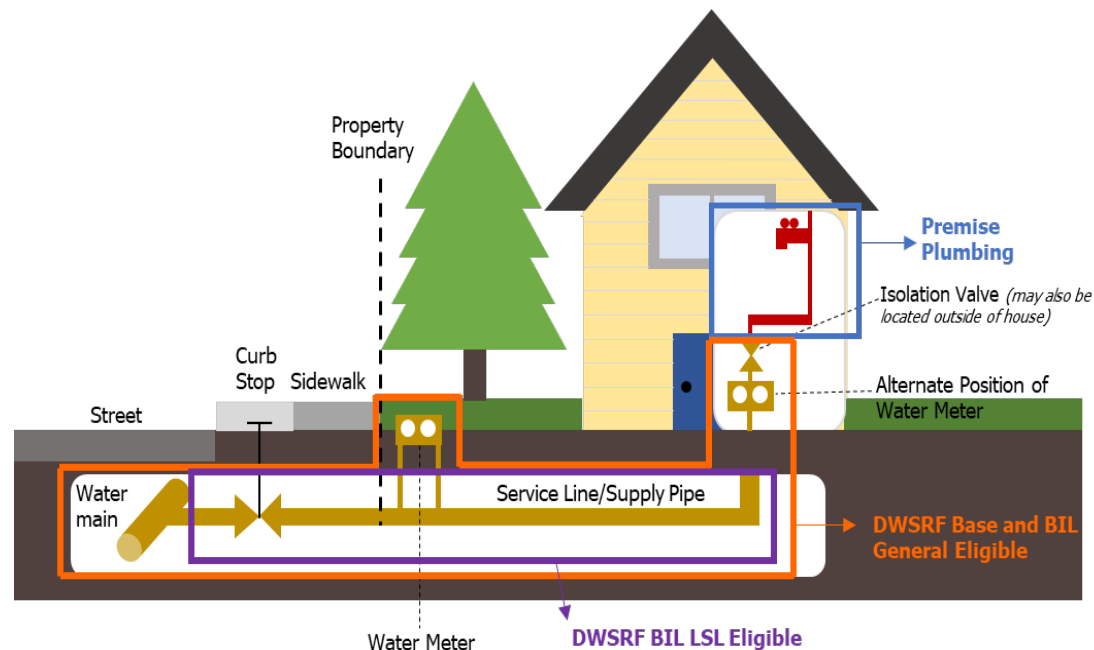
Small drinking water system (pop. 5,000)

## Challenge:

Barriers to LSL identification and replacement

## WaterTA support:

- Prepare outreach materials in Spanish and Bengali to increase accessibility and engage community members
- Update map with service line material information collected during meter replacements
- Develop a strategy to combine LSL identification and replacement with other infrastructure projects



# Colorado: Drinking Water Support for Homeowners' Association

## Community:

Small, rural Homeowners' Association community  
(~250 connections)

## Challenges:

- Aging infrastructure, lack of distribution system storage, need for backup power, well rehabilitation, fire protection
- State does not provide Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) grants or principal forgiveness to private systems

## WaterTA support:

- Help community become a public water district so that its eligible for more SRF funds
- Assist with development of the project needs assessment and other engineering documents required for SRF application



# McDowell County, West Virginia: Decentralized Wastewater

## Community:

- Small communities (~200 households) with declining populations
- Homes built on mountain slopes where raw sewage is discharged directly into waterways

## Challenges:

- Permitting process and navigating stringent permit limits
- Affordability – high financial impact to ~80% of households

## WaterTA support:

- Received \$75,000 SEARCH grant from U.S. Dept. of Agriculture to develop the Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) and Environmental Information Document (EID) to apply for CWSRF funding early next year
- Engineer selected to develop the PER and EID; project underway



# Big Valley Band of Pomo Indian Tribe, Lake County, California: Wastewater Treatment Facility Improvements

## Community:

Onsite Wastewater Treatment Facility  
(serving ~400)

## Challenges:

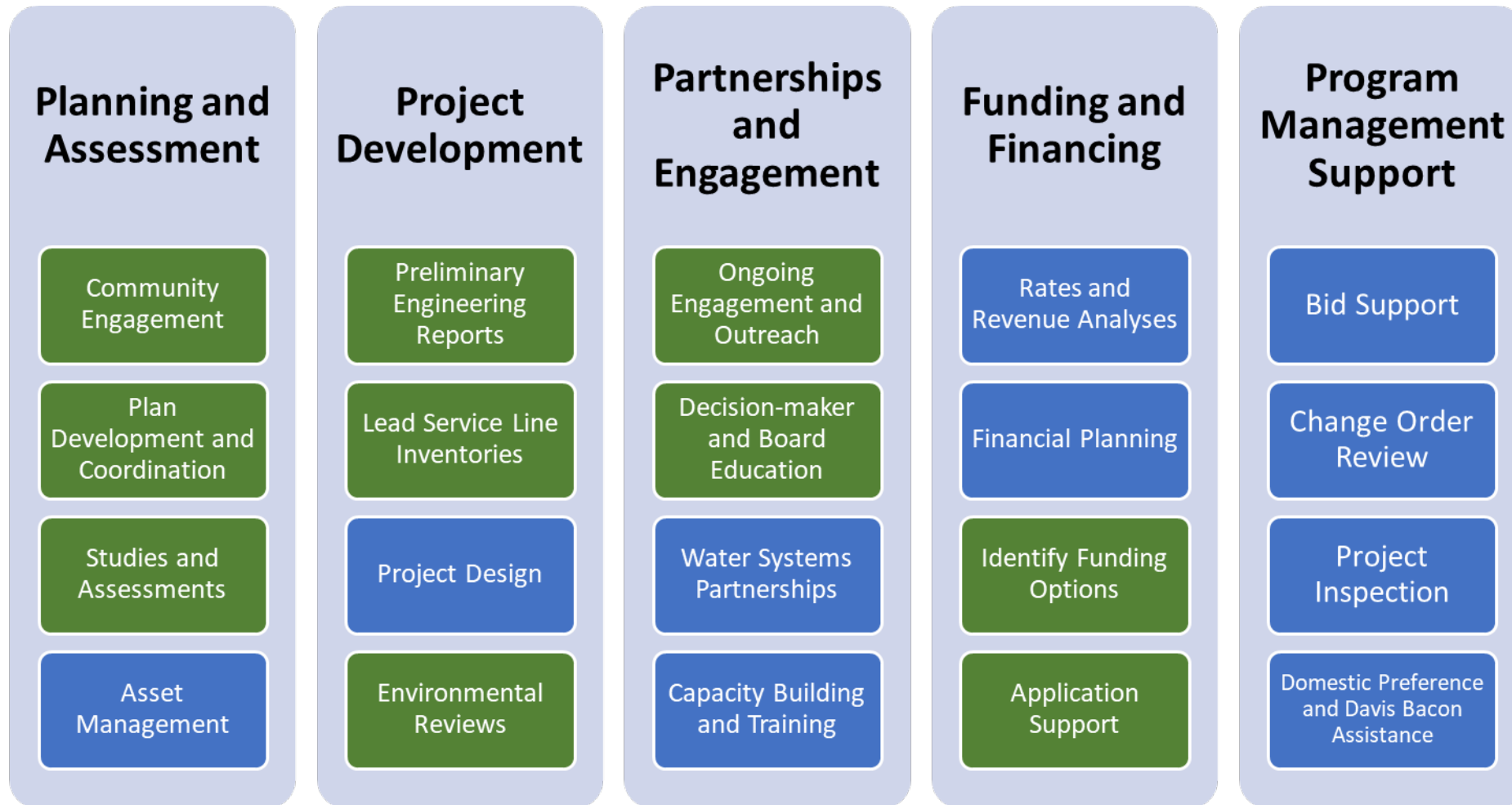
- Structural integrity of the packaged wastewater treatment plant
- Treatment facilities lacking influent screening and waste activated sludge wasting capabilities
- Low quality effluent

## WaterTA support:

- Structural evaluation of existing treatment facility
- Environmental review
- Preliminary Engineering Report development



# WaterTA Services in Example Communities

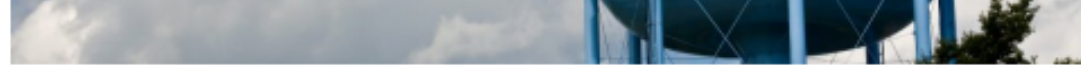


# Additional Project Examples

- Drinking/wastewater treatment plant and pipe upgrades or building new water infrastructure
- Connecting households or small drinking water/wastewater systems to larger systems
- Stormwater, flood control, and green infrastructure projects
- Water conservation projects
- Addressing Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) and other emerging contaminant challenges
- Addressing nonpoint source pollution of waterbodies
- **Many more possibilities...**

# How can I request WaterTA?

Submit a WaterTA Request Form at [epa.gov/WaterTA](https://epa.gov/WaterTA)



All communities deserve access to clean, reliable water. Yet, too many communities in America face challenges in providing safe drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater services to their residents. The [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#) presents an unprecedented opportunity to address water infrastructure needs by providing \$50 billion in new funding. [Investment in water in the history of our nation](#). New and existing [EPA Water Technical Assistance \(WaterTA\) programs](#) will be utilized to support effective implementation of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.



## What is WaterTA?

EPA's free Water Technical Assistance (WaterTA) helps communities to identify water challenges, develop solutions, and develop application materials to request federal funding. To implement WaterTA, EPA collaborates with states, local governments, community partners, and other key stakeholders. [Learn more about WaterTA programs.](#)



## Help for Your Community

EPA WaterTA aims to assist communities with applications for federal funding, quality infrastructure, and reliable water services. If your community is facing water infrastructure challenges and you would benefit from support, we encourage you to learn more about [who can receive WaterTA services and the challenges WaterTA can help your community address](#) then complete and submit a webform request via the following button:

[Click Here to Request Water Technical Assistance for Your Community](#)



## Resources for WaterTA Providers



Search EPA.gov

Environmental Topics ▾ Laws & Regulations ▾ Report a Violation ▾ About EPA ▾

## Water Infrastructure

[CONTACT US](#)

# Water Technical Assistance Request Form

OMB Control Number: 2030-0051



Expiration Date: 5/31/24

**Complete the following form to request Water Technical Assistance (WaterTA).**

EPA WaterTA aims to assist communities with applications for federal funding, quality water infrastructure, and reliable water services in partnership with drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater utilities and local government. WaterTA cannot provide direct assistance to federal facilities. Before submitting a request, we encourage you to learn more about [who can receive WaterTA and the challenges WaterTA can help your community address](#). Contact [WaterTA@epa.gov](mailto:WaterTA@epa.gov) if you have any questions regarding your organization's eligibility.

If you include your email address in your submitted form, you will receive a confirmation email. After reviewing your submission, EPA or a technical assistance provider will respond with potential next steps. Response times may vary depending on the volume and types of requests we receive. Many states also offer WaterTA programs. Thus, EPA may share your request with the appropriate state agency in an effort to provide the best, most timely assistance.

Please note not every request may be offered WaterTA, and participation in this or other EPA technical assistance programs does not guarantee funding through the State Revolving Funds (SRFs) or other programs.

To receive updates on EPA programs, helpful resources, and notifications of upcoming webinars and training events, sign up for EPA's [Water Infrastructure and Resiliency Finance Center email list](#). If you have any questions or concerns about the WaterTA Request Form, please contact [WaterTA@epa.gov](mailto:WaterTA@epa.gov).

- [WaterTA Informational Webinar](#) (September 29, 2023)
- [WaterTA Informational Webinar](#) (July 31, 2023)
- [WaterTA Community Fact Sheet \(pdf\)](#) (175.56 KB, May 2023, 830-F-23-006) – General information for the public on WaterTA.

# WaterTA Request Form Walkthrough



- Environmental Topics ▾
- Laws & Regulations ▾
- Report a Violation ▾
- About EPA ▾

Water Infrastructure

[CONTACT US](#)

## Water Technical Assistance Request Form

**First name**

**Last name**

If you would like a response, please include your email address and/or phone number.

**Email**

**Phone number**

*Please format your phone number as (XXX) XXX-XXXX*



# WaterTA Request Form Walkthrough

**How are you affiliated with the community or water system of interest?**

- City/town administrator or staff
- Community-based organization
- Community member/customer/resident
- Elected official
- Engineer for utility (staff/consultant)
- Tribal utility administrator or staff
- Tribal elected official
- Utility administrator/staff
- Utility board/committee member
- Other

# WaterTA Request Form Walkthrough

**City/Town \***

*City where the community or water system of interest is located.*

**County \***

*County where the community or water system of interest is located.*

*You may type "N/A" if not applicable.*

**State/Territory/Tribe \***

**PWSID or NPDES permit number (if applicable/known)**

*Please format your permit number to include the state abbreviation (e.g., "TX0000000").*

**Population size served \***

# WaterTA Request Form Walkthrough

**Type of system or project (select the best fit) \***

*This information will be used to direct your request to the best fit program. If you have additional needs, you can describe them in the text box below.*

- Drinking water
- Wastewater
- Stormwater
- Source water protection
- ~~Nonpoint sources~~
- ~~Decentralized wastewater (e.g., septic systems)~~
- Other

**Briefly describe your water quality or infrastructure concerns.  
Please be as specific as possible and include what assistance you  
are hoping to receive. \***

*(750-character maximum limit; NO bullets or numbered lists)*

# WaterTA Request Form Walkthrough

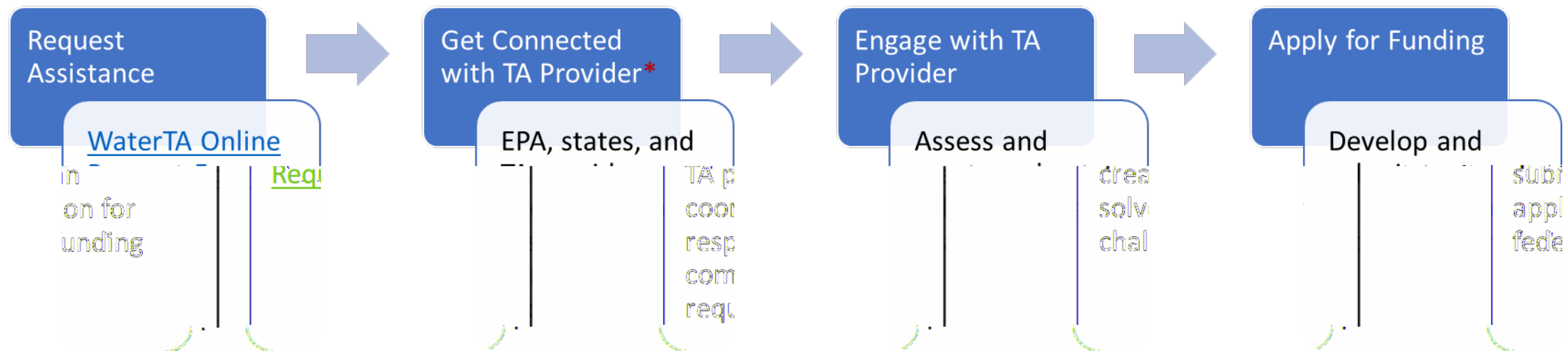
Is your community currently working with a TA provider? \*

Does your community qualify as a “disadvantaged community” within your state or meet your state's affordability criteria?

*As defined by your state's Drinking Water or Clean Water State Revolving Fund program.*

**Submit form**

# What Happens Next?



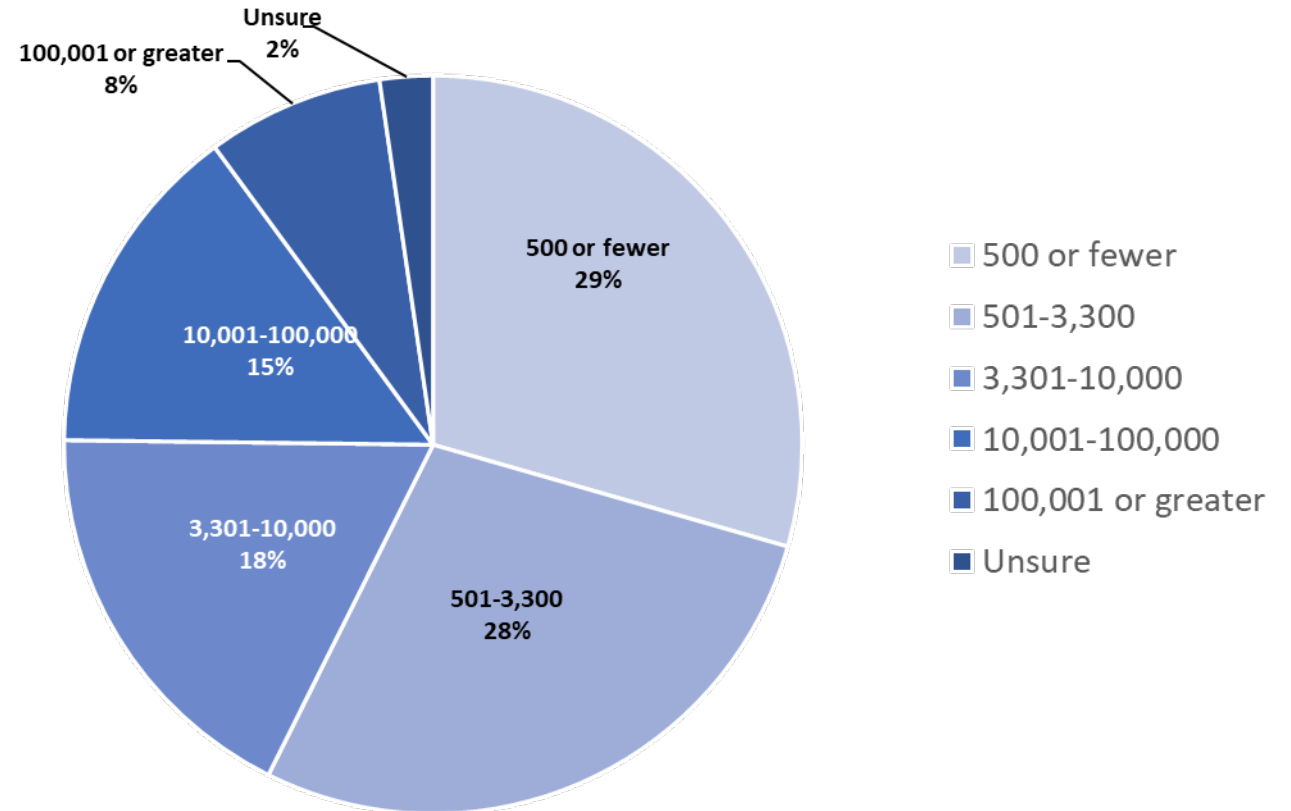
**The end result:** *more communities with applications for federal funding, quality water infrastructure, and reliable water services!*

\*Not every request may be offered WaterTA, and participation in this or other EPA technical assistance programs does not guarantee funding through the State Revolving Funds or other programs.

# Status of WaterTA Request Connections

- As of December 5<sup>th</sup>, **129** WaterTA requests have been **connected** through the webform
- Connections have been made to address a variety of needs, such as:
  - needs assessments
  - lead service line inventories,
  - facility upgrades,
  - rehabilitation,
  - **and more!**

Population Distribution of Connected Communities



# Additional Technical Assistance (TA) Programs

- In addition to assistance provided by EPA Office of Water, multiple TA programs are available from:
  - [EPA Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights \(OEJECR\)](#)
  - [EPA Office of Land and Emergency Management \(OLEM\)](#)
  - [EPA Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations \(OCIR\)](#)
  - [EPA Office of Research and Development \(ORD\)](#)
  - The [US Department of Agriculture \(USDA\)](#) and the [Indian Health Service \(IHS\)](#) also offer robust TA programs.

# Questions about WaterTA?

- Email your questions to [WaterTA@epa.gov](mailto:WaterTA@epa.gov)
- Visit [www.epa.gov/waterta](http://www.epa.gov/waterta) for more information
- Visit <https://www.epa.gov/water-infrastructure/forms/water-technical-assistance-request-form> to submit a WaterTA request



Learn more or request assistance at  
[www.epa.gov/WaterTA](http://www.epa.gov/WaterTA)

