



## Fact Sheet

# Onsite Septic Financial Aid Program

The 2021 Oregon Legislature allocated \$15 million in federal American Rescue Plan Act, or ARPA, funds to the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. ARPA funds are intended to address water quality and public health concerns and economic hardships that were caused or worsened by the Covid-19 pandemic. A key priority from the legislature is assisting victims of the 2020 Oregon wildfires with recovery efforts.

DEQ will issue pass-through grants to eligible public agencies, tribes, local governments, and community development financial institutions. These partners will in turn administer and disperse grants and loans locally for septic system evaluations, upgrades, repairs and replacements. Connecting failing onsite systems to sewer systems will also be considered. For more information and timelines, see the Onsite Septic Financial Aid Program [Residential Resources Page](#).

## Project priorities

The Onsite Septic Financial Aid Program presents an opportunity to simultaneously address water quality concerns, improve public health and expand outreach to underserved Oregonians. We also are interested in projects with the ability to use this short-term funding to provide long-term environmental and public health benefits.

The following priorities have been identified thus far, and we will be refining and potentially expanding these through dialog with interested parties:

1. Properties affected by the 2020 Oregon wildfires.
2. Projects targeting low- and moderate-income property owners who do not otherwise have access to funding for repair and replacement of failing systems.
3. Projects in which improving substandard or failing systems could demonstrably improve ground or surface water quality.
4. Financial aid to disadvantaged communities, including rural areas and other communities that have been highly impacted by the economic impacts of the pandemic and historic lack of local investment.
5. Project partners that demonstrate good stewardship of funds for issuing grants and affordable or zero interest loans.
6. Potential for leveraging additional state or federal funds such as Clean Water State Revolving Funds.

## Process

In January 2022, DEQ reached out to community leaders, agencies and organizations to gather more information on potential projects, partners and mechanisms for distributing the funds. DEQ received over 30 responses, demonstrating a statewide need for financial assistance for septic systems. Interested eligible organizations can apply for funding through a competitive process starting in June 2022. DEQ will award grants by fall 2022. DEQ anticipates a second round of proposals in fall 2022 to disperse any remaining funding to unmet fire recovery project or other priority projects around the State.

## Contact

Megan Hendrickson, Onsite Septic Program Analyst

Email: [onsiteseptic.info@deq.oregon.gov](mailto:onsiteseptic.info@deq.oregon.gov)

Phone: 503-539-3295

## Alternate formats

DEQ can provide documents in an alternate format or in a language other than English upon request. Call DEQ at 800-452-4011 or email [deqinfo@deq.state.or.us](mailto:deqinfo@deq.state.or.us).