

# Capacity Development Implementation Report to the US Environmental Protection Agency

State Fiscal Year 2020



State of Idaho  
Department of Environmental Quality  
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## **Acronyms**

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| CCR   | Consumer Confidence Report                |
| DEQ   | Idaho Department of Environmental Quality |
| DWSRF | Drinking Water State Revolving Fund       |
| EPA   | US Environmental Protection Agency        |
| MCL   | Maximum Contaminant Level                 |
| PWS   | Public Water System                       |
| RTCR  | Revised Total Coliform Rule               |
| TFM   | Technical, Financial, and Managerial      |

# 1 Introduction

The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ's) Drinking Water Bureau implements the state's capacity development program. The following annual capacity development implementation report describes capacity development efforts during state fiscal year 2020 (July 1, 2019–June 30, 2020). This report contains all of the required United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reporting elements for the annual state capacity development program implementation report.

Capacity development program accomplishments are funded with set-aside monies from the EPA Capitalization Grant of the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund.

## 2 Capacity Development Strategy

Infrastructure assets, reliability in operation and management, and cost-effective long term sustainability require a sustained and collaborative technical assistance effort. DEQ is responsible for implementing the state's drinking water capacity development strategy. In 1989, the DEQ Director appointed the Drinking Water Advisory Committee to determine the status of Idaho's public water systems (PWSs) and to make recommendations for improving system capacity to deliver safe drinking water to Idaho citizens. In September 1998, the Drinking Water Advisory Committee issued a report listing its findings and recommendations, which helped to establish the state's capacity development strategy.<sup>1</sup> The report of findings is available on request. As a result of the Drinking Water Advisory Committee findings, DEQ published *A Strategy for Improving the Financial, Technical, and Managerial Capacity of Idaho's Public Drinking Water Systems* in July 2000, which guides the state's capacity development program. This report can be found at: <http://www.deq.idaho.gov/media/60179907/capacity-development-strategy.pdf>

Capacity development is recognized as being a key component of the State's core drinking water program and assistance is available to any water system that has a need and is willing to work with DEQ or its partners in achieving compliance.

Idaho's Capacity Development Strategy is in the process of being revised and updated to include a description of how asset management will be promoted as per the requirements of America's Water Infrastructure Act. The strategy is intended to meet regulatory requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act while providing a flexible framework to enhance public health protection, provide accountability, and assist water systems with targeted assistance.

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<sup>1</sup> *Report of Findings: On Improving the Technical, Financial, and Managerial Capacity of Idaho's Public Water Systems*, Drinking Water Citizens Advisory Committee to the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, September 1998.

### 3 Technical, Financial, and Managerial Capacity for New Public Water Systems

States participating in the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund loan program are required by the 1996 amendments to the federal Safe Drinking Water Act to ensure that all new and substantially modified community and non-transient, non-community water systems demonstrate adequate technical, financial and managerial capacity (i.e., capabilities) before the system delivers water to begin operation. To fulfill the federal Safe Drinking Water Act requirements, the “Idaho Rules for Public Drinking Water Systems,” IDAPA 58.01.08.500 require demonstration of technical, financial, and managerial (TFM) capacity as part of the engineering facility and design standards.

There were 13 newly regulated public water systems identified in SFY2020. Of those 13 systems, four were classified as transient water systems, six were non-community non-transient public water systems, and three were community water systems. The new community and non-transient non-community systems are listed in Table 1. The systems on this list were newly discovered or existing systems whose population in 2020 met the criteria to be regulated. The systems received various levels of capacity development assistance, such as evaluating their current system, helping develop sampling plans, finding qualified operators, and providing monitoring requirements, etc.

**Table 1. New Community and Non-Transient Non-Community public water systems for SFY 2020.**

| ID        | NAME                           | System Type | Active Date |
|-----------|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| ID1090291 | Northern Sky Water Assn.       | C           | 7/3/2019    |
| ID1280308 | Mountain View At Farragut Park | C           | 1/29/2020   |
| ID3370044 | DeRuyters Dairy Housing        | NTNC        | 8/29/2019   |
| ID4010266 | Dry Creek Ranch Subdivision    | C           | 8/25/2019   |
| ID4010267 | Franklin Sensors               | NTNC        | 8/8/ 2019   |
| ID4430114 | Elk Creek Church               | NTNC        | 9/4/2019    |
| ID5270035 | Office Warehouse Complex       | NTNC        | 10/24/2019  |
| ID5270036 | Christinas Daycare             | NTNC        | 11/12/2019  |
| ID5420110 | Chobani                        | NTNC        | 12/20/2019  |

Note: C – community, NTNC – non-transient non-community.

None of the above systems were on the Enforcement Targeting Tool list as an enforcement priority during SFY2020.

#### Engineering Assistance

DEQ reviews the TFM aspects of new or substantially modified PWS plans and specifications. A portion of this review is funded by the State Revolving Fund 2% Technical Assistance Set-Aside Grant for systems serving fewer than 10,000 in population. Engineering documents that are reviewed include:

- Facility Plans
- Preliminary Engineering Report

- Operation & Maintenance (O&M) Manual
- Well Site Evaluation
- Well Completion Report
- Technical, Financial and Managerial Capacity Documentation

## Technical Assistance

Field staff provide technical assistance to new water systems. Assistance includes performing a site visit and a baseline sanitary survey, preparing and providing monitoring schedules, outlining system classification requirements and corresponding licensing information, and demonstrating the various tools provided on the public water system switchboard.

## 4 Technical, Financial, and Managerial Capacity for Existing Public Water Systems

DEQ continues to provide ongoing TFM training and assistance to owners and operators of the state's small public water systems. For the reporting period ending June 30, 2020, The State of Idaho had 1,991 active public water systems. Based on EPA's classification of drinking water systems<sup>2</sup>, 97% of Idaho's 1,991 PWSs are classified as "small" or "very small." Of the 1,991 systems, 1,759 are classified as very small, 49 are small, 30 are medium, 21 are large, and two are very large.

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<sup>2</sup>EPA size classifications for public water systems:

- Very small water systems serve 25–500 people.
- Small water systems serve 501–3,300 people.
- Medium water systems serve 3,301–10,000 people.
- Large water systems serve 10,001–100,000 people.
- Very large water systems serve 100,001+ people.

## Identifying Systems that Need Assistance

Compliance data, complaints, sanitary survey information, and the Enforcement Tracking Tool are utilized to identify systems in greatest need of technical assistance. DEQ also conducts Level 2 Site Assessments following an *E. coli* maximum contaminate level (MCL) violation. These assessments are used to identify sanitary defects or issues that led to the violation and recommend corrective actions to resolve the issue. Nine water systems required Level 2 Assessments for MCL violations during the reporting period. An additional 54 water systems required Level 2 Assessments for multiple total coliform positive samples in a 12 month period or insufficient repeats. Of those 54 different systems, 11 required two or more assessments over the review period.

## Enforcement Tracking Tool

As of June 30, 2020, the Enforcement Tracking Tool list had 82 existing systems on the list. All required and received various assistance actions. The technical assistance provided included one or more of the following:

- Contacting the owner/operator by phone for technical assistance.
- Providing the owner/operator a tutorial of our Public Switchboard: [www.deq.idaho.gov/pws-switchboard](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/pws-switchboard) (*Idaho DEQ's hub of all Drinking Water Information: Rules, Monitoring Schedules, Lab Forms, Drinking Water Watch, Training Calendar, etc.*). This allows the operator to obtain information about various DEQ programs, access to state and federal regulations and policies, and downloads of instructional aids.
- Performing a site visit to evaluate system operations or to conduct Revised Total Coliform Rule (RTCR) assessments.
- Providing the operator with technical assistance through referral to a third party service provider.
- Providing Auto Dialer reminder calls and emails.
- Providing written correspondence such as failure to monitor letters, e-mail, etc.
- If a system continues to remain out of compliance, enforcement actions are taken.

The number of water systems on the Enforcement Tracking Tool list each quarter varies based on unplanned health-based violations such as MCL's or *E. coli* events, in addition to RTCR violations, significant deficiencies, and monitoring violations. Each violation is responded to by field staff and reported during quarterly meetings. Public water systems with a systemic pattern of violations are placed under an enforceable action to return it to compliance. The number of water systems with health based violations and a score of 11 or greater on the April 2020 list was 36. Thirteen of the 36 water systems were community water systems.

## Technical and Compliance Assistance

**DEQ Regional Office and District Health Department Drinking Water Staff** — One avenue of disseminating information is through drinking water staff in DEQ's six regional offices and seven district health departments. One-on-one contacts are an effective method of assisting system operators. DEQ regional offices are located in the following cities throughout the state:

- Boise
- Coeur d'Alene
- Idaho Falls
- Lewiston
- Pocatello
- Twin Falls

Idaho's seven district health departments, listed below, are under contract with DEQ to provide technical assistance to the states small PWS owners and operators. Very small system owners are most challenged by Safe Drinking Water Act requirements because they typically depend on volunteer or part-time operators and have limited financial resources.

- Panhandle Health District
- Public Health–Idaho North Central District
- Southwest District Health
- Central District Health
- South Central Public Health District

- Southeastern Idaho Public Health
- Eastern Idaho Public Health District

**Public Water System Switchboard** — The Switchboard provides system owners and operators with links to rules and checklists to assist in the preparation of plans and specifications, public notification templates, sanitary survey forms, drinking water system classification requirements, operator licensing, and more. The Switchboard can be accessed at [www.deq.idaho.gov/pws-switchboard](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/pws-switchboard). This location is intended to be a “one-stop shop” for information owners and operators need. Due to COVID-19, the switchboard was enhanced to highlight information on emergency preparedness and a link to information on COVID-19 and drinking water.

- **Consumer Confidence Reports (CCR)** — The CCR reporting tool links owners and operators to water system sample results and violation history report to assist in preparation of their CCR. Information is provided regarding electronic report delivery and a link to EPA’s CCR iwriter at: <http://www2.deq.idaho.gov/water/ccrtool/MainPage>. The CCR report tool includes reporting requirements under the RTCR. System owners who do not have access to a computer or the Internet can contact DEQ to receive hard copies of the CCR templates, instructions, and a listing of the system’s violations and detections by mail.
- **Cyanotoxins** — Approximately 5% of public drinking water systems in Idaho draw from surface water and may be at risk for cyanobacteria, commonly referred to as harmful algae blooms. This link provides water systems with public health advisory information and resources for managing cyanotoxins in drinking water: <http://www.deq.idaho.gov/water-quality/drinking-water/drinking-water-health-advisories/cyanotoxins/>
- **Disinfection Byproducts** — This link provides direct access to information for the Stage 1 and Stage 2 DBP rule: <http://www.deq.idaho.gov/water-quality/drinking-water/pws-tips-guidance/disinfection-byproducts/>
- **Lead in Drinking Water** — Resources for the lead and copper rule are available on this site: <http://www.deq.idaho.gov/water-quality/drinking-water/pws-monitoring-reporting/contaminants/lead/>. The link includes rule information, templates regarding lead and copper sampling protocols, sample site selection, and consumer notifications of lead tap results and public education templates. There is also a link regarding lead in school drinking water, which contains health risk information, free testing information for public schools, and EPA’s 3Ts guidance.
- **Monitoring Schedules** — Water system operators and owners can easily review their current year monitoring requirements with this application. The report also identifies if the monitoring requirement has been satisfied once the sample has been entered into the Safe Drinking Water Information System. See <http://www2.deq.idaho.gov/water/monitoringschedulereport>
- **Lab Forms** — This application can be used by system operators or owners to produce laboratory request forms. The application uses data in the state drinking water database to identify samples that are due during the current year. See [www2.deq.idaho.gov/water/DWLabForms](http://www2.deq.idaho.gov/water/DWLabForms).
- **Public Notification Templates** — Templates are available for required RTCR tier 1 and 2 notifications, lead and copper, loss of pressure and non-RTCR tier 1, 2 and 3 notifications. In SFY2020, links to templates for cyanotoxins in finished drinking water

above the health advisory and manganese were added. The loss of pressure public notification was updated to include an informational advisory (no boil water requirement) and a do not drink advisory. These can be found at

<http://www2.deq.idaho.gov/water/PublicNotificationTemplates/>.

- **Record Retention Schedule** — This application provides water system operators and owners with the required retention schedule for all monitoring and reporting records. This document can be found at <http://www.deq.idaho.gov/media/60178277/drinking-water-record-retention-schedule.pdf>.
- **Revised Total Coliform Rule** — This link provides water system operators and owners access to assessment forms to evaluate potential sanitary defects following a total coliform positive triggering event, seasonal start-up procedures, and sample siting plans. See <http://www.deq.idaho.gov/water-quality/drinking-water/revised-total-coliform-rule/>
- **Sample Results** — Monitoring results are available online through DEQ’s Safe Drinking Water Information System database by using the Sample Results tool at <http://dww.deq.idaho.gov/IDPDWW/>.
- **Sample Site Plan Templates** — Water systems are required to have sample site plans for coliform sampling, lead and copper and disinfection byproducts. In SFY2020, a link was added that takes water systems directly to templates and instructions for completion of these required sample plans. See <https://www.deq.idaho.gov/water-quality/drinking-water/sample-site-plan-templates/>.
- **SMART Management Financial Tool** — This tool is designed to assist water systems with assessing their overall financial health. The tool prompts systems to enter information regarding their revenues, expenses, assets, liabilities, debt and reserves. Once the information is entered, the final screen has a set of dials which move to reflect the “financial health” of the water system. The application can be used to demonstrate the technical, financial and managerial requirement of revenue sufficiency, satisfy the financial capacity checklist question in the sanitary survey and assist with SRF Loan Underwriting. See <http://www2.deq.idaho.gov/water/SMSWS/>.
- **System Classification Requirements** — In SFY 2020, the Drinking Water Bureau built an application that produces real time system classifications based on DEQ’s Safe Drinking Water Information System database. Once a public water system’s information has been placed into the drinking water database, system classifications will automatically be generated through this “System Classification Worksheet” application. The System Classification Worksheet application can be found at: <http://www2.deq.idaho.gov/water/SystemClassificationWorksheet/>.
- **Drinking Water Monitoring Waivers** — In SFY 2020, the monitoring waiver application was updated to make it easier for PWSs to apply for waivers. The updated process now directs applicants to DEQ’s online Source Water Assessment database where much of the information required to complete the application can be found. Monitoring waiver information can be found at <http://www.deq.idaho.gov/water-quality/drinking-water/pws-monitoring-reporting/monitoring-waivers/>

**Autodialer** — DEQ has provided automated telephone and e-mail reminders to owners and operators of PWSs since 2010 to help inform them of upcoming sampling deadlines. This low-cost, high-impact activity has been well received by the operator community and has resulted in a significant reduction in monitoring violations over the past ten years. The calls have been

expanded to include reminders for RTCR seasonal start up procedures and lead consumer notification at homeowner's taps. The auto-dialer has also been used to notify water systems impacted by a regional power failure of the need to disinfect and flush the system.

**Health Advisories** — DEQ program staff have assembled and posted drinking water health advisories for Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) and Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS) in addition to Blue-Green Algae and Harmful Algae Blooms (HABs). In 2019, information on manganese was added as a contaminant of interest. Health advisories are non-enforceable technical guidelines to provide information on contaminants that can cause human health effects and are known (or anticipated) to occur in drinking water.

**Postcards** — Statewide, community and non-community non-transient water systems due for lead/copper monitoring received sampling reminders and a reminder to apply for monitoring waivers. Seasonal water systems were sent a postcard reminder regarding their seasonal start up procedures.

**COVID-19 Response** — DEQ enhanced the public water system switchboard with highlighted information on emergency preparedness, certified drinking water labs, how to search for an operator, and a link to the IdWARN (Idaho Water and Wastewater Agency Response Network). IdWARN is a mutual aid organization of communities helping communities by allowing owners of water and wastewater utilities to assist each other during emergencies. The program is administered by an IdWARN statewide committee through the Idaho Rural Water Association and is available to all public and private water and wastewater system owners in Idaho. More information on IdWARN is available at <https://www.idwarn.org/>.

Drinking water operators and owners were also sent a letter outlining how water systems should currently respond to COVID-19, what DEQ is doing, what to do about required sampling and reporting and steps water system can take if a sampling location is closed or not accessible for monitoring.

**Earthquake Response** – During the reporting period, an area of central Idaho experienced a 6.5 magnitude earthquake. DEQ and Health District staff contacted water systems that were in closer proximity to the earthquake epicenter advising them to take recommended actions due to possible water system infrastructure damage. These recommendations included:

- Inspect infrastructure to identify failures and susceptibility to contamination
- Ensure pressure is maintained in the distribution system
- If power was interrupted, check pumps, chlorinators or chemical feed systems and supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) controller
- Collect construction bacteriological samples
- Respond to customer complaints promptly

## **Engineering Review for Existing Systems**

In state fiscal year 2020, DEQ completed review of 1,162 projects related to drinking water capacity. These projects included review of:

- Facility Plan, Master Plans, Comprehensive Plan
- Operation and Maintenance Manual

- Plan and Specification Submittal
- Plans and Specifications approved by a Qualified Licensed Professional Engineer
- Record drawings
- TFM Capacity Documentation
- Request for waiver of IDAPA facility and design standard-related rules (IDAPA 58.01.08.500-548)
- Well completion report
- Public Drinking Water System Well Site Evaluation

## 5 Sanitary Survey

Comprehensive sanitary surveys continue to be a fundamental public health protective tool for assessing, evaluating, and documenting the TFM capacity of PWSs throughout the state. The surveys assist owners and operators in both short-term and long-term planning activities associated with their systems.

These surveys are also used to coordinate activities between DEQ and third-party service providers such as the Idaho Rural Water Association and Rural Community Assistance Corporation. These collaborative efforts have become increasingly important to leverage limited resources among organizations for the collective benefit of the public.

DEQ staff finalized a new version of the sanitary survey for use in SFY2020

### Sanitary Survey Procedures

In an effort to maintain consistency and ensure the sanitary survey process is backed by the enforceability of the rule requirements, a standardized sanitary survey form is utilized to evaluate the status of a public water system and to ensure the protection of public health. During the reporting period, 341 sanitary surveys were completed. Routine onsite inspections were suspended from mid-March through May and were conducted at a reduced rate in June during the reporting period due to COVID-19. During this time, a partial virtual inspection of a large water system's facilities was conducted using Microsoft Teams with a live camera feed.

Highlights of the sanitary survey form are listed below:

- The sanitary survey form incorporates a comprehensive review of a system's technical, financial, and managerial capacity.
- The sanitary survey form, which has been developed in Excel, utilizes conditional formatting to automatically identify "significant deficiencies" as red, "deficiencies" as gold, and "recommendations" as yellow. This helps the inspector to quickly identify issues that need to be corrected.
- Each question has an associated report statement that can be placed into a report template for more efficient report generation.
- Each report statement identifies the rule citation providing the authority for the requirement.

- All significant deficiency report statements have a “Potential Health Risk” statement for clarification.
- Deficiencies have a “Purpose” statement to further clarify the purpose of the deficiency.

### **Online Sanitary Survey Inspection Form**

To assist system owners and operators in preparing for their sanitary survey, the “State of Idaho Public Water System Sanitary Survey” form used by state inspectors is available on DEQ’s website at <http://www.deq.idaho.gov/media/60176938/sanitary-survey-form.xlsx>

Having this form available online provides increased transparency to the inspection process and enables system owners or operators to collect data in advance that they might not otherwise have available in their daily operations. The sanitary survey form also standardizes the nature of the inspection, thereby ensuring all systems are held to the same standard regardless of system location or inspector, and decreases the time necessary to complete the inspection for both the inspector and the water system representative.

Inspectors encourage system operators to conduct self-inspections of their systems with these forms. Using this form has allowed operators to correct deficiencies in advance of the inspector’s arrival at the system. This demonstrates the educational value of the self-inspection process.

### **Preliminary Inspection Findings Form**

The Preliminary Inspection Findings Form allows sanitary survey inspectors to leave a list of identified deficiencies with system operators so they can begin to make corrections immediately. At the bottom of the form, a section is provided where operators can request “Free Technical Assistance” from third party service providers. This allows the operator to get help in the following areas: financial management, specialized training, technical assistance, system operation, and source water protection. Twelve water systems requested assistance through this process and the Preliminary Inspection Findings Forms were provided to the following third party service providers:

- Idaho Rural Water Association (IRWA)
- Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC)

**Idaho Rural Water Association** — DEQ collaborates with Idaho Rural Water Association to identify water systems in need of on-site technical assistance. On a quarterly basis, Idaho Rural Water Association provides DEQ with a “Technical Assistance List and Tracker”. The tracker delivers updates as to the support Idaho Rural Water Association provided to Idaho public drinking water systems. For the reporting period, cross connection control plan information, rate studies, leak detection, and resources for funding were addressed.

**Rural Community Assistance Corporation** — Rural Community Assistance Corporation provided DEQ with an update on the assistance provided to PWSs through preliminary inspection finding form referrals in SFY2020. Rural Community Assistance Corporation was able to work virtually with a water system to develop a capital improvement/asset management plan. They also modified a budget template for the system to use. Other assistance included

review of a cross connection control plan and information on loans and grants available to small water systems.

## 6 Training Opportunities

Continuing education and training opportunities are offered to water systems by a number of different training providers.

The Idaho Drinking Water Bureau focuses on web-based resources and training materials to assist with training. The bureau continues to educate members of the water industry through DEQ's "Public Water System Switchboard," where water operators can obtain information about various DEQ programs, access state and federal regulations and policies, and download instructional aids. Some of the training information provided on the Switchboard is described below:

- **Training Calendar** — The Switchboard has a link to a comprehensive training calendar. The calendar is populated by trainers with class information as soon as it is available. This calendar provides timely information about training for owners and operators of PWSs and can be found at <http://www2.deq.idaho.gov/water/TrainingEventCalendar/DisplayEvents/InitEventCalendar>.
- **Cross-Connection Control** — A link provides answers to frequently asked questions about cross-connection control. It also explains what a cross-connection is and advises water purveyors on measures that must be taken to protect their water systems against contamination and pollution from cross-connections. Cross connection information can be accessed at <http://www.deq.idaho.gov/water-quality/drinking-water/pws-tips-guidance/guidance-fact-sheets/>.
- **Lead in Drinking Water** — This Switchboard button provides links to information and templates regarding lead and copper sampling protocols, lead and copper sample site selection, and consumer notice of lead tap results. Information is available on how to reduce exposure to lead in drinking water and can be found at <http://www.deq.idaho.gov/water-quality/drinking-water/pws-monitoring-reporting/contaminants/lead/>.
- **Revised Total Coliform Rule** — The Switchboard links to the DEQ website where fact sheets, detailed rule information, and seasonal start-up procedures for the revised total coliform rule can be found. See <http://www.deq.idaho.gov/water-quality/drinking-water/revised-total-coliform-rule/>.
- **Sanitary Survey Continuing Education Units** — Continuing Education Units are provided by DEQ to the operators of systems classified as "Very Small" water systems, "Distribution 1", and "Distribution 2" systems for successfully completing limited pre-inspection "homework", actively participating in the sanitary survey and follow-up corrective action planning associated with the sanitary survey. During the reporting period, DEQ issued 37 Continuing Education Unit certificates.
- **Sanitary Survey Form** — The "State of Idaho Public Water System Sanitary Survey" form used by DEQ drinking water inspectors is available to system owners and operators for use as a checklist to prepare for their next sanitary survey.

- **“How to Sample” Videos** — The American Water Works Association water sampling procedure videos (via YouTube) demonstrate sampling techniques for various contaminants.
- **Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Training Videos** — A link is provided to video modules to help operate and manage small water and wastewater facilities. These can be found under the section entitled, “Water & Wastewater Utility Operation and Management for Small Communities”.

## **Additional Training and Workshop Opportunities**

**DEQ Regional Operator Workshops** — DEQ’s six regional offices recognize the value of local, face-to-face training and hold drinking water workshops in their areas on an as-needed basis for system operators and owners. In 2020, a workshop was scheduled and approved for Continuing Education Units on topics including sampling basics and best practices, customer complaint response, and a table top exercise on identifying contamination, restoring the integrity of the water supply, and communicating with water users and media. Due to COVID-19, the workshop had to be canceled.

**Source Water Protection Workshops** — DEQ staff participated in a national Association of State Drinking Water Administrators webinar on May 13, 2020 to highlight how Idaho incorporates source water protection and asset management. The presentation featured the source water protection planning tool, source water protection grant projects, the SMART management financial tool and DWSRF loan priority questions related to source water protection.

**Water Quality Loan Program** — The water quality grant and loan program participated in several speaking engagements around the state promoting the program. These conferences included the DEQ Surface Water Workshops, Idaho Rural Water Association, Idaho Reuse Conference, Association of Idaho Cities, and the Idaho Environmental Health Association conference. These trainings provided an overview of the funding opportunities provided by DEQ and how to complete a construction project with SRF dollars. Staff also provided a funding booth at the Association of Idaho Cities and the Southern Idaho Operator Training events.

**Idaho Rural Water Statewide Training** — During the reporting period, DEQ staff in collaboration with the Idaho Rural Water Association, conducted training to operators during both the fall and spring Idaho Rural Water Association conference regarding emerging contaminants in drinking water, risk, and resilience assessments and emergency response plans, public water system switchboard and proposed lead/copper rule changes. Idaho Rural Water Association offers classes for operators. Available classes and schedules may be accessed at [www.idahoruralwater.com](http://www.idahoruralwater.com) and are displayed on the DEQ training calendar at [www.deq.idaho.gov/water/TrainingEventCalendar/DisplayEvents/InitEventCalendar](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/water/TrainingEventCalendar/DisplayEvents/InitEventCalendar).

**Environmental Finance Centers**—The ten national Environmental Finance Centers provide various webinars to help address the financial and managerial training needs of operators in Idaho. EFC was scheduled to conduct Water Loss training in the spring of 2020, but due to COVID-19 concerns it has been postponed until 2021. Available classes and schedules may be accessed on the EFC website at <http://efc.sog.unc.edu/event/table/allevnts> and are displayed on

the DEQ training calendar at [www.deq.idaho.gov/water/TrainingEventCalendar/DisplayEvents/InitEventCalendar](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/water/TrainingEventCalendar/DisplayEvents/InitEventCalendar).

**Idaho Division of Occupational and Professional Licenses (IDOPL)**—Additional information on operator training requirements is provided by IDOPL at its Idaho Training and Continuing Education Reference Guide website at

<http://ibol.idaho.gov/IBOL/BoardAdditional.aspx?Bureau=WWP&BureauLinkID=130>.

Approval letters provided to new training vendors include a request to populate their training events into the training calendar at

[www.deq.idaho.gov/water/TrainingEventCalendar/DisplayEvents/InitEventCalendar](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/water/TrainingEventCalendar/DisplayEvents/InitEventCalendar).

## 7 Grants and Loans

Information and solicitation for Letters of Interest are sent annually to PWSs and consulting engineers for planning grants or DWSRF loans with DEQ. Systems that submit Letters of Interest get on a priority list for the upcoming fiscal year.

The Planning Grant Program provides assistance to eligible public drinking water systems for facility planning projects designed to ensure safe and adequate supplies of drinking water. These planning grants are provided from the Capacity Development grant funds. Grants awarded under this program are used to develop engineering reports identifying the most cost effective, environmentally sound method of upgrading a public drinking water system to achieve and maintain compliance with state and federal standards. Grants cover up to 50% of eligible planning costs, with a matching share funded by local sources. In SFY 2020, DEQ approved 12 drinking water planning grants.

DEQ's DWSRF provides below-market-rate interest loans to help repair or build new drinking water facilities. The Safe Drinking Water Act allows states to establish a DWSRF program to assist public drinking water systems with financing infrastructure upgrades needed to protect public health and achieve and maintain compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act requirements. The DWSRF authorizes grants to states to capitalize revolving loan funds. A revolving loan is a self-replenishing pool of money, using annual Federal capitalization grants, investment earnings, and interest and principal payments on old loans to issue new loans. In SFY 2020, DEQ awarded 12 loans to drinking water systems.

Source Water Protection Grants – In SFY2020, DEQ awarded 12 drinking water systems source water protection grants. The grant money comes from the State Revolving Fund wellhead protection program and can be used for activities that lead to the reduction in risk of contamination of a drinking water source. Projects funded included fencing, well abandonment, watershed erosion planning, and assessment of threats to the aquifer.

## 8 Program Review

DEQ is continuing efforts to revise the guidance document titled *How to Demonstrate Financial, Technical, and Managerial Capacity in New Public Water Systems*, which describes the elements of water system infrastructure, financing, management, and operations that should be considered

to demonstrate to DEQ the TFM capability of new or substantially modified community or non-transient non-community PWSs. The guidance is intended to assist new or substantially modified PWSs in developing TFM capacity and thereby ensure the consistent delivery of safe drinking water.

DEQ will prioritize efforts to track capacity development through:

- Sanitary Surveys
- Compliance History and Trends
- DWSRF Program
- Third Party Provider Contact
- Engineering Reviews

## **9 Triennial Capacity Development Report to the Governor**

Every three years, DEQ submits a report on the state's capacity development program to the Governor of Idaho. The most recent triennial report was submitted in 2017 with a new report due to be submitted in 2020. Historic annual and triennial capacity development reports are available on-line at: <http://www.deq.idaho.gov/water-quality/drinking-water/capacity-development/>.