Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
Drinking Water Emerging Contaminants Small or Disadvantaged Communities
Letter of Interest and Rating Form
Fiscal Year 2028

Section I. Project Information

This letter of interest is for Emerging Contaminants for Small or Disadvantages Communities (EC-SDC) grant funding and is intended to address emerging containants in drinking water. To be eligible for this grant funding, applicants must serve less than 10,000 in population or be identified as a disadvantaged community in accordance with *IDAPA 58.01.12.021*.

Eligible projects include background sampling for emerging contaminants, planning, design, and construction of or upgrades to treatment facilities; new source development; consolidation with another system; infrastructure for pilot testing treatment alternatives; and development of new public water systems for individuals with private wells or surface water intakes.

Provide complete and accurate answers to receive the highest possible rating for your project. When possible, DEQ recommends that you work closely with your engineering consultant to complete this form. If you would like help completing this form, please contact DEQ at *grants.loans@deq.idaho.gov* to discuss technical assistance opportunities.

A. System Identification

Public Water System Number:		
System Name:		
System Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Is the system located wholly within incorporated city limits? ☐ Yes ☐ No		
What City?	County:	
System Phone:	System Email:	
Population Served:	Owner's Name:	
Owner's Phone:	System Ownership: ☐ For Profit ☐ Not-for-Profit	

Name/Title of System Contact (if different from owner):		
Contact's Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Contact's Phone:	Contact's Email:	

Do you have a licensed and designated responsible charge operator for your system as described in the "Idaho Rules for Public Drinking Water Systems" (*IDAPA 58.01.08.050*)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Name: _____ License Number: _____

B. Project Readiness

Determine your community's readiness for EC-SDC funding assistance by answering the following questions:

Select all that apply:

1.	Your system is current with all payments of fines, SRF loans, penalties or fee assessments due to DEQ.
2.	Your system has completed a DEQ-approved drinking water facility plan in the last five years. Date of approval: _____ **OR** Your system is already in the process of developing a new planning document that will be completed and submitted to DEQ for approval by December 31, 2027. **OR** You are proposing this grant to finance a planning document. **OR** You are applying for funding to purchase lab equipment, conduct testing, or for some other project not including design or construction.
3.	The primary purpose (greater than 50% by cost) of the project is to address emerging contaminants.
4.	The system serves fewer than 10,000 in population. **OR** The system is a disadvantaged community in accordance with *IDAPA 58.01.12.021* described in further detail in Section II.C below. (If you serve more than 10,000 in population, please contact DEQ at *grants.loans@deq.idaho.gov* to determine your disadvantaged status prior to submitting this LOI)

If you did not select questions 1, 2, 3, and 4, do not complete or submit this form to DEQ.

If you selected questions 1, 2, 3, and 4, complete all applicable sections of this form.

5.	When will your project be ready to begin design?	Date: _____
6.	When will your project be ready to begin construction?	Date: _____
	Provide a brief description of the project including how the project will address one or more emerging contaminants:	

7.	The planning document was funded by the system or by an agency other than DEQ.		
	Provide a brief explanation:		
	If you selected question 7, the planning document may need modifications to meet SRF Program requirements. See the *Outline and Checklist for Planning Document* found in the *Grants and Loans Program Customer Handbook*.		
C. Project Readiness			
1.	Project funding requested from DEQ's Emerging Contaminant Funds: $_____ Project funding from other sources: $_____ Estimated total project cost: $_____		
2.	Estimate percentage of total project costs to specifically address the emerging contaminants: _____%		
3.	Briefly describe or attach indicators or actions reflecting the community's interest or readiness to proceed on this project (e.g., minutes from public hearings):		
4.	If you have already contacted an engineer licensed in the State of Idaho about your project, indicate your status and provide contact information for the engineer (or firm): Discussed with engineer Obtained quote from engineer Signed contract with engineer		
	Engineer:		
	Address:		
	City:	State:	Zip:
	Phone:	Fax:	
	Email:		

Continue to Section II. Integrated Priority Rating System

Section II. Integrated Priority Rating System

Answer the questions below and provide the requested documentation. Applicants or their consultants are encouraged to contact DEQ before the submittal deadline for assistance in answering the questions. Rating will be determined by the answers and documentation provided.

A. Project Description

Select all that apply:

1.	The project will:	
	a.	Include sampling, testing and data collection of the emerging contaminant(s) (including compliance sampling of PFAS). *10 points*
	b.	Purchase testing equipment specifically to identify the emerging contaminant(s). *10 points*
	Description:	
2.	Project will include an engineering alternative analysis (preliminary engineering report) specifically to develop capital improvement alternatives to address the emerging contaminant(s). *10 points*	
3.	The selected project alternative in the approved engineering analysis includes one of the following capital improvement projects with the primary purpose of addressing emerging contaminants:	
	a.	Consolidation or new source development *25 points*
	b.	Centralized treatment. *10 points*
	c.	Other. *5 points*
	Description:	
4.	The project has documented sample results of:	
	a.	Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) present in one or more drinking water sources that will be addressed by the project. *35 points*
		Provide documentation of the sample results for your water system using EPA-certified laboratory methods.
	b.	PFAS sample results exceed one or more of the individual maximum contaminant levels (MCL). *30 points*

	c.	PFAS sample results exceed one or more of the maximum contaminant level goals (MCLG) described in *EPA's FAQ*. *15 points*
	d.	The project will provide ultimate disposal of PFAS by means of destruction or contained long term storage. *10 points*
	Description:	
5.	The system has documented sample results of cyanotoxins in the drinking water source and the project will address the cyanotoxins. See more information at *EPA fact sheet*. *20 points*	
	Description:	
	Provide documentation of the sample results for your water system using EPA-certified laboratory methods.	
6.	The project will address a contaminant or contaminants on any of the *EPA Contaminant Candidate Lists* other than PFAS or cyanotoxins listed above. *5 points*[1] Identify the contaminant(s): _____	
	Provide documentation of the sample results for your water system using EPA-certified laboratory methods.	
7.	The contaminant(s) listed above is/are exceeding a published EPA health advisory. *10 points*	
	Provide documentation of the sample results for your water system using EPA-certified laboratory methods.	
8.	Your production sources are impacted by emerging contaminants listed above such that the system is unable to meet maximum day demands with the contaminated source(s) offline. *10 points*	
	Description:	

[1] Applicants with equal rating score will be prioritized based on highest level of contaminant.

B. Sustainability (Green) Infrastructure Efforts		
IDAPA 58.01.12.020.02.c. Sustainability Efforts (e.g., prospective efforts at energy conservation, water conservation, extending the life of capital assets, green building practices, and other environmentally innovative approaches to infrastructure repair, replacement, and improvement). Up to 50 points.		
Although only 50 points can be awarded under Section II.B, DEQ will incorporate all sustainability items selected below into the scope of the grant agreement for inclusion in the construction grant. All the items selected shall be incorporated into the project design and completed during construction.		
Select all that apply – 5 points each (unless otherwise noted), up to a maximum of 50 points.		
1.	**Management-Based/Innovative Efforts:** These efforts could include the following:	
	a.	Project design will implement cyber-informed engineering (CIE) analysis and incorporate recommended security measures into the project. The CIE analysis must be incorporated into the plan and specifications submitted to DEQ for review and approval. CIE resources are found in the *Grants and Loans Program Customer Handbook* or at the *Idaho National Laboratory page for Cyber-Informed Engineering*. *20 points*
	b.	System is consolidating with an existing system as part of the proposed project. This must be addressed in the facility plan environmental determination, and subsequent public participation. Identify which system(s): _____
	c.	System will implement the recommendations of a professional energy audit. Identify the auditor: _____
	d.	Proposed project will aid in preparing for adaptation to the long-term effects of climate variation, extreme weather, or drought.
		Provide description:
	e.	Project will significantly reduce or eliminate the use of chemicals in treatment.
	f.	Project will significantly reduce or minimize the volume or toxicity of treatment residuals.
	g.	Project has capital improvements that provide significant source water protection benefits, such as fencing around existing unprotected well or spring sources.
Budget estimate allocated to management based-innovative efforts*:		$_____

2.	**Green Efforts:** Green efforts could include, but are not limited to, the following**:**	
	a.	Use of recycled materials for facility construction (not including standard construction practices, such as reusing fill from excavations).
		Provide description:
	b.	Trenchless or low impact construction technology.
Budget estimate allocated to green efforts*:		$_____
3.	**Water Conservation Efforts:** Water conservation efforts could include, but are not limited to, the following:	
	a.	Install water meters in unmetered areas if rates will be based on metered use.
	b.	Replace existing broken water meters, upgrade to smart meters, or install leak detection equipment if rates will be based on metered use.
	c.	Install water-efficient fixtures that would provide a savings in water or energy consumption.
	d.	Retrofit or replace existing irrigation systems with more efficient irrigation systems.
Budget estimate allocated to water conservation efforts*:		$_____
4.	**Energy Conservation Efforts:** Energy conservation efforts could include, but are not limited to, the following:	
	a.	Variable frequency drive (VFD) pumps.
	b.	Energy-efficient motors that meet National Electrical Manufacturers Association premium specifications.
	c.	High-efficiency lighting/lighting controls.
	d.	On-site energy generation, such as methane clean combustion, fuel cells, solar, or wind.
	e.	Supervisory control and data acquisition system installation.
Budget estimate allocated to energy conservation efforts*:		$_____
***Note:** *Points may not be awarded if an estimated budget allocation is not provided. Planning level estimates are acceptable for this purpose. Contact DEQ if further guidance is needed.*		
Examples that have been accepted for Idaho projects are found in the *Grants and Loans Program Customer Handbook*.		

C. Affordability / Disadvantaged Status			
IDAPA 58.01.12.020.02.f. Affordability. Systems that meet the state affordability criteria and are defined as a disadvantaged community. Up to fifty (50) points.			
Provide information for Section II.C. If you qualify as a disadvantaged community, you will receive 10 points.			
1.	How many equivalent dwelling unit (EDU) connections does your system serve? _____		
2.	What is the current average user rate? $/month/EDU_____ Type of rate structure: Flat Fee - Fee amount: $_____ Consumptive Use - Description: _____ Other: _____		
3.	What is the most recent date that user rates have been increased: _____		
4.	Expected change in operation and maintenance costs upon completion: (not including debt service) $/month/EDU_____		
5.	Does the current average user rate include charges to retire the SRF debt for which you are applying? Yes No		
	a.	**If YES,** how much of the rate is devoted to debt retirement? $/month/EDU_____	
	b.	**If NO,** how much will rates be increased to cover debt retirement? $/month/EDU_____	
6.	**Disadvantaged Community:**		
	This section is intended to assist lower-income communities. Grants are available to communities that demonstrate that they are disadvantaged according to *IDAPA 58.01.12.021.01*. Contact the DEQ's Grants and Loans staff if you have any questions.		
	a.	Median household income calculation instructions:	
		i.	Go to the *Census Reporter website*.
		ii.	Either select "Use your current location" or enter an address for any residence or location in your community and select the choice provided by the application.
		iii.	Hover your cursor over each item in the list on the left of the screen and view the corresponding green area represented on the map.
		iv.	Click on the smallest and most representative area for your community either on the map or in the list for the data.

		v.	Scroll down to economics and enter the MHI: $_____ **If there was N/A for median income, choose the next largest area from the list.**
		vi.	Provide the data to DEQ. Either take a screenshot of the data (label attached documents as "Section II.C, part number(s)") and include it with your application or provide the citation (scroll to the bottom of the page and copy/paste the information after "Citation") here:
	b.	Income Survey Results: If the MHI listed above in Section C.6.a.v does not reflect your community's income, provide alternative MHI based on DEQ approved income survey. Income Survey MHI: $_____	
		Note: *To conduct an income survey, contact the DEQ Grants and Loans Bureau (*grants.loans@deq.idaho.gov*) for additional information prior to submitting this LOI.*	
	c.	If the system's MHI is at or below the state MHI listed on *census reporter.org/ profiles/04000US16-idaho* as of January 8, 2027, the system will qualify as disadvantaged. **Or** if the system's MHI is equal to or less than 125% of the state MHI it may still be deemed disadvantaged if at least one of the following also apply: • System's poverty rate is higher than state average • Unemployment rate is above state average • Has stagnant or declining population • User rates exceed 1.5% of MHI	
Label attached documents as "Section II.C, part number(s)".			

Continue to Section III. Authorized Submitter

Section III. Authorized Submitter	
Are you willing to allow us to share your LOI with other federal funding agencies? Yes No	
	I understand that if awarded funding, costs incurred prior to the award are not eligible for reimbursement unless a written request and justification are submitted to and approved by DEQ.
I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, all information provided here is valid and correct: Submitter Name: _____ Title: _____ Company: _____ Date: _____	
If the submitter is different from the system contact, does the submitter have the authority to submit this LOI on behalf of the system contact? N/A Yes No	

Return completed form by January 8, 2027, to:

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
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