

ACOUSTICAL TESTING PILOT PROGRAM FAQ



The Acoustical Testing Pilot Program is a new \$1.5 million grant program for water utilities to install state-of-the-art leak detection technology to aid in identifying water leaks in their infrastructure. Below are some Frequently Asked Questions about the program.

Can a municipal water utility apply?

Yes. All water utilities are eligible to apply.

Are schools or school districts eligible for the program?

No. The pilot is restricted to water utilities.

Does having a Department of Environmental Protection Public Water System ID (PWSID) number make an entity eligible for this grant program?

No. Having a PWSID number does not qualify an entity for the program.

What timeframe applies for the eligibility criteria of a water system having greater than 15% unaccounted for water (UAW) or non-revenue water (NRW)? Is this requirement only for the last year, or can it be the average of several years?

Water systems that are eligible to apply are those with greater than 15% UAW or NRW during the most recent reporting period. System history for these metrics will be incorporated into the evaluation of applications.

If a water authority service area is split into multiple pressure zones, some of which contain overburdened communities, can an application include a project scope for the entire authority service area if it meets the NRW requirement?

Yes. While the program evaluation criteria prioritize projects that benefit overburdened communities, the eligibility criteria only require that the water system has a NRW or UAW level greater than 15%.

Can the grant funds reimburse the costs associated with drafting the application for the program?

No. Only administrative overhead that is associated with the implementation of the project can be charged to the grant, and those charges must be no more than 10% of the project budget (Section 5.4.3).

How long of a lease period will the grant cover? Could a lease period extend past the 18-month program timeline and still be covered by the grant, if a 4- or 5-year lease period is established with the vendor?

It is at the awardee's discretion to decide whether to pursue a purchase or lease arrangement with a vendor. Should the awardee decide to do so, the terms of the contract, including its duration, are to be arranged between the awardee and the vendor.

Are data acquisition and analysis costs (e.g., investigation, verification, and pinpointing noise areas identified) associated with administering the program covered under the grant? Could these costs be categorized under administrative costs noted in Section 5.4.2 or 5.4.3?

Yes. Data acquisition and analysis are an appropriate use of grant funds under Section 5.4.3, but these activities are subject to the cap of expenditures for that section (i.e., no more than 10% of project budget).

Does the program consist of a year-long testing period with four quarterly reports, followed by a six-month period for compiling the final report for submittal 18 months after the pilot start date?

No. Progress reports must be submitted quarterly by 5 p.m. on the final day of the quarter starting with the first full quarter after the initiation of the project and every 3 months after that. The timing of when awards are initially disbursed will dictate the length of time in between the fourth quarterly report and the final report, which should be no more than a three-month interval.

If a utility receives its supply from a wholesale supplier, can the applicant include the cost of wholesale supply, especially the cost of pumping from the wholesale supplier as an additional metric for a baseline to aid in understanding energy costs and additional costs from losses?

Yes, a utility may include the cost of wholesale supply, specifically the cost of pumping from the wholesale supplier, in its baseline data.

Do applicants need to have a request for proposals or bid already advertised to support the budget section of their application, or is it sufficient to get pricing information from vendors to support the proposed project budget?

Pricing information from vendors is sufficient to support the proposed budget Section (5.4) of the application.

For more information about the Acoustic Testing Pilot Program, visit <https://www.njcleanenergy.com/acoustic>.