



"Try not to become a man of success, but rather try to become a man of value" -Albert Einstein

Stark County Board Chairman and Founder IASC—Mike Bigger

As the County Board Chairman of Stark County, and the founder of the Illinois Association of Small Counties (IASC), I know first hand the difficult challenges, and financial pressures, we all face as we go about our task of being local leaders in our small counties and towns. How do we meet the increasing need for public services for the citizens we serve with stagnant or reducing revenues coming into our counties? How do we make our voice heard by those that legislate public policy for the state of Illinois? How do we learn about state services and programs that can help us better serve our citizens?

The fifteen counties that make up IASC share a common characteristic in that our counties have populations of 10,000 or less. Individually we have little political significance. We are really on no ones radar screen. But collectively we represent over 100,000 Illinois citizens, and we are represented by 6 different State Senators and 8 different State Representatives. If we work together as a cohesive and organized group, our voice will be heard, and our needs more fully addressed.

I want to thank and applaud our friends at the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency for taking a leadership role in reaching out to the small counties in Illinois with information and resources. The IEPA understands the unique challenges small counties in Illinois, and nationwide, face in these uncertain times. Their proactive effort to reach out and work directly with us is a great example of what is good about Illinois State Government. They are reaching out to us, rather than expecting us to find them. I encourage everyone who receives this newsletter to read it from cover to cover. Take the time to send an e-mail or make a call thanking them for their effort and outreach. The IEPA, and other state agencies, want to reach out to us and work directly with us. It is up to us to step up and be leaders also, by responding and welcoming their initiative.

If you would like to visit with me personally to learn more about the Illinois Association of Small Counties (IASC) please feel free to call or e-mail me.

Sincerely,

Mike Bigger
Chairman Stark County Board of Supervisors
Founder Illinois Association of Small Counties (IASC)
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From the Director

The Illinois EPA has worked with local and county officials in all 102 counties of the state and is especially pleased to participate in this newsletter of the Illinois Association of Small Counties and to extend our recent outreach efforts to identify your concerns and needs. I know that local and county government officials are truly grass-roots leaders in our smallest counties and our goal is to better assist you in one-on-one partnerships to protect the environment and human health, the core mission of our agency.

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Schuyler county courthouse

Image courtesy
www.cyberdriveillinois.com

Newsletter Spotlight



Now in our 38th year, Illinois EPA was the first true state environmental agency in the nation and over that time we have taken on primary responsibility for administering the permit and inspection systems to protect drinking water supplies, and prevent water, land and air pollution through the permit and inspection programs established under federal and state laws.

While that regulatory role is still one of our core tasks, we are also a proactive agency, with programs to encourage pollution prevention and provide compliance assistance, as well as environmental education and stewardship. In many cases, we have worked with local and county officials and citizen groups in cleaning up open dump sites and safely disposing of waste tires, as well as sponsoring household hazardous waste collections. We have joined with local organizations in sponsoring lake festivals and provided small grants to teachers for field trips. We have also worked with local governments of all sizes to clean up "brownfield" sites as small as abandoned gas stations.

Through our infrastructure loan program, we have helped communities of all sizes improve or expand their drinking water supplies and wastewater treatment and sewage collection systems. We anticipate that funding from the new federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (stimulus) program will be making additional resources available in this area and others.

I particularly am sensitive to the often limited resources, both in staff and finances, that you have as small and not densely populated counties that are often still primarily rural in nature. I know that the regulations and bureaucracy can seem intimidating, but on behalf of Governor Pat Quinn, I want to pledge that Illinois EPA staff is here to assist you. Dick Breckenridge, my agricultural and rural affairs advisor, who has a particular affinity and background for the smaller counties of our state, is particularly available as a special ambassador from our agency. He and the rest of the staff at Illinois EPA look forward to hearing from you and working with you on protecting the environment and the citizens in your counties.

---- *Doug Scott*

Director, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

New News

Today Governor Quinn launched www.Recovery.Illinois.gov, a tool for every taxpayer interested in the \$787 billion federal stimulus package. This site allows us to quickly share state-focused information about the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, collect project ideas from the public, and direct people to relevant state and/or federal agencies and applications. We look forward to working with you to make the Illinois recovery effort a success.

-*Carolyn Brown Hodge*
Office of Governor Pat Quinn

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009

State of Illinois

Pat Quinn, Governor

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

Douglas P. Scott, Director

Impacts on Illinois EPA Programs and Communities in Illinois

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, the economic recovery package recently signed by President Obama, includes significant funding for several loan programs currently administered by the Illinois EPA. This fact sheet is intended to update potential loan applicants and other interested parties on the Illinois EPA's process for distribution of the funding base.

Wastewater Infrastructure Program

How much money will Illinois receive?

Illinois will receive \$180 million for wastewater infrastructure projects. "Stimulus" funding is limited to 50% of project or \$10 million cap, whichever is less. The remainder of the project is eligible for funding through the regular loan program (while stimulus funds last the regular loan program rate will be 0%). No single loan applicant can obtain more than \$10 million.

Who is eligible for funding?

Eligible applicants include local government units, primarily cities, villages and sanitary districts, with the following types of projects: construction of new wastewater collection and treatment facilities, or upgrade and expansion of existing facilities; replacement, rehabilitation or extension of collection systems and interceptors; and separation of combined sewers or upgrades to combined systems to eliminate overflows, surcharging or flooding.

How do I get a project on the funding list?

Applicants seeking financial assistance must first file a pre-application with the Illinois EPA no later than March 31, 2009. The pre-application is available at www.epa.state.il.us/water/financial-assistance/economic-stimulus/index.html. All projects included on the current FY09 Illinois EPA priority lists will be automatically included on the economic recovery program funding list; however a new pre-application should be filed to be included on the FY2010 priority list. The distribution of funds will be governed primarily by readiness to proceed. All projects included on the economic recovery program funding list must have a construction start date during calendar year 2009. Loan applicants should concentrate their efforts on projects that are "bid-ready", or projects that lend themselves to an accelerated schedule for planning and design. All loan applicants must fully complete all financial assistance application elements before the Agency can make an award. A pre-application is not sufficient to secure financial assistance under the program.

Contact Information

Geoff Andres, Bureau of Water at 217/782-2027

Drinking Water Infrastructure Program

How much money will Illinois receive?

Illinois will receive \$80 million for drinking water projects. "Stimulus" funding is limited to 50% of project or \$5 million cap, whichever is less. The remainder of the project eligible for funding through

the regular loan program (while stimulus funds last the regular loan program rate will be 0%). No single loan applicant can obtain more than \$5 million.

Who is eligible for funding?

Eligible applicants include local government units, primarily cities, villages and water districts, and certain classes of privately-owned community water supplies with the following types of projects: upgrade or replacement of existing facilities to bring them into compliance with the requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act and the State Environmental Protection Act; construction of new distribution and/or treatment systems; replacement of wells; and renovation of treatment and/or distribution facilities that have reached the end of their useful life, or have inadequate capacity.

How do I get a project on the funding list?

Applicants seeking financial assistance must first file a pre-application with the Illinois EPA no later than March 31, 2009. The pre-application is available at www.epa.state.il.us/water/financial-assistance/economic-stimulus/index.html. All projects included on the current FY09 Illinois EPA priority lists will be automatically included on the economic recovery program funding list; however a new pre-application should be filed to be included on the FY2010 priority list. The distribution of funds will be governed primarily by readiness to proceed. All projects included on the economic recovery program funding list must have a construction start date during calendar year 2009. Loan applicants should concentrate their efforts on projects that are "bid-ready", or projects that lend themselves to an accelerated schedule for planning and design. All loan applicants must fully complete all financial assistance application elements before the Agency can make an award. A pre-application is not sufficient to secure financial assistance under the program.

Contact Information

Geoff Andres, Bureau of Water at 217/782-2027

Brownfields Redevelopment Program

How much money will Illinois receive?

Illinois anticipates receiving \$4 million to fund cleanup activities and \$1 million for assessment grants.

Who is eligible for funding?

The Municipal Brownfields Redevelopment Grant Program provides funding to local municipalities to investigate and clean up brownfields properties. The Illinois Brownfields Redevelopment Loan Program is a revolving low-interest loan program that provides funds to municipalities and the private sector for the environmental cleanup of brownfields sites.

How do I get a project on the funding list?

Illinois will develop a priority funding list that identifies shovel-ready sites with potential for job development. Priority will be given to projects already working within state programs and services. Illinois has many brownfields projects that have completed the investigation phases under our brownfields municipal grant program and are waiting funding for remediation activities. Additional projects may be considered.

Contact Information

Steve Colantino, Bureau of Land at 217/785-3497

Leaking Underground Storage Tank Program

How much money will Illinois receive?

Illinois anticipates receiving \$8 million to address leaking underground storage tanks.

Who is eligible for funding?

Illinois EPA will use remediation contractors to investigate and perform clean-up at sites that have been identified by a municipality as potential for redevelopment where there is a known or suspected release and where there is no responsible party available to conduct the clean-up.

How do I get a project on the funding list?

Illinois EPA will start with the list of sites that have been included in the Municipal Brownfields Redevelopment Grant Program. Projects not currently identified in a brownfields grant may also be considered.

Contact Information

Steve Colantino, Bureau of Land at 217/785-3497

Diesel Emission Reduction Act

How much money will Illinois receive?

Illinois will receive between \$6 to \$12 million for clean diesel projects.

Who is eligible for funding?

State environmental agency, local government, or environmental organization are eligible to apply for clean diesel fleet projects that reduce diesel emissions, such as retrofitting school buses, replacing engines and vehicles, and anti-idling programs. Funding will be provided for diesel oxidation catalysts, particulate filters, auxiliary power units, direct fired heaters, closed crankcase ventilation systems, diesel multi-stage filters, engine replacements, and new diesel hybrid trucks and buses.

How do I get a project on the funding list?

The Illinois EPA will accept project applications for trucks and buses, and off-road equipment. The application is available at www.illinoisgreenfleets.org.

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