State of California

Draft FY 2025-26 Fund Expenditure Plan

Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund

Prepared by:

THE DIVISION OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

June 2025

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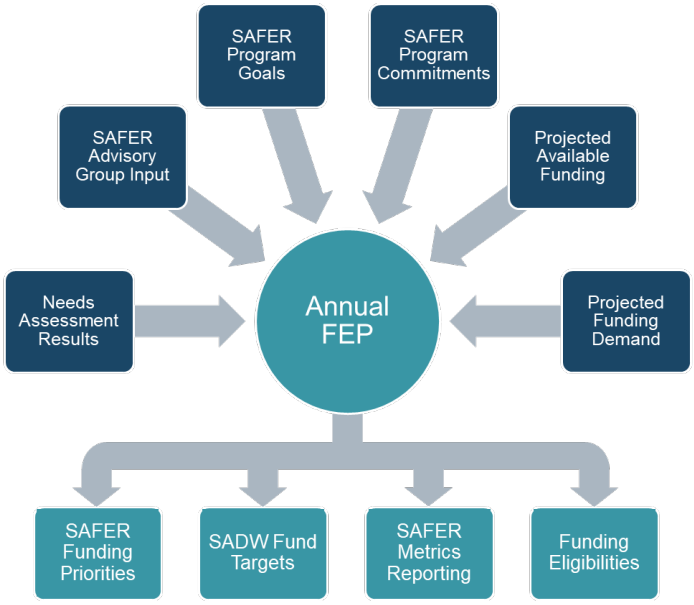
CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Senate Bill (SB) 200 (Ch. 120, Stats. 2019) established the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund (SADW Fund) and requires the annual adoption of a Fund Expenditure Plan (FEP)[1]. Expenditures from the Fund will complement other funding sources as part of the broader Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience Drinking Water Program (SAFER Program), administered by the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board), which includes General Fund (GF) appropriations, general obligation bond funds, and funding available through annual Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) capitalization grants. The SAFER Program is a set of tools, funding resources, and regulatory authorities coordinated to assist California communities as they work to develop local capacity to ensure reliable access to safe drinking water. The SAFER Program's goal is to provide safe and affordable drinking water in every California community, for every Californian.

Each annual FEP is developed as shown in Figure ES-1. Funding eligibilities established in the annual FEP for the SADW Fund are intended to be complementary to the DWSRF Intended Use Plan (IUP) and are broken out by system category (i.e., public water systems (PWSs) and domestic wells and state small water systems (DW/SSWSs) for each solution type (i.e., interim supplies and emergency repairs, technical assistance (TA), administrator, planning, construction, and operation and maintenance (O&M)).

Figure ES-1. Annual FEP Inputs and Outputs



[1] Key terms used within this FEP are defined either in Section IV of the Policy for Developing the Fund Expenditure Plan for the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund (SADW Fund Policy) or the Definitions section of this FEP.

NOTABLE CHANGES

Key updates to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-26 FEP compared to the prior FY's are presented in Figure ES-2.

Figure ES-2. FY 2025-26 FEP Notable Changes

General FEP Organization

Significant re-organization to establish SAFER Program goals and strategy, report back on SAFER Program performance, describe anticipated available funding, FY 2025-26 funding priorities and targets, as well as funding eligibilities by system category and solution type. Simplification by moving certain sections to appendices.

New Domestic Well/ State Small Water System Strategy

Addition of new DW/SSWS strategy to:

1) Share data to inform possible solutions
2) Fill funding gaps in local and regional programs
3) Promote and explore long-term solutions

SAFER Program Performance

Focus on progress related to SAFER Program goals established in prior FY 2024-25 FEP with previously reported on metrics available in Appendix C.

Comprehensive Funding Eligibilities

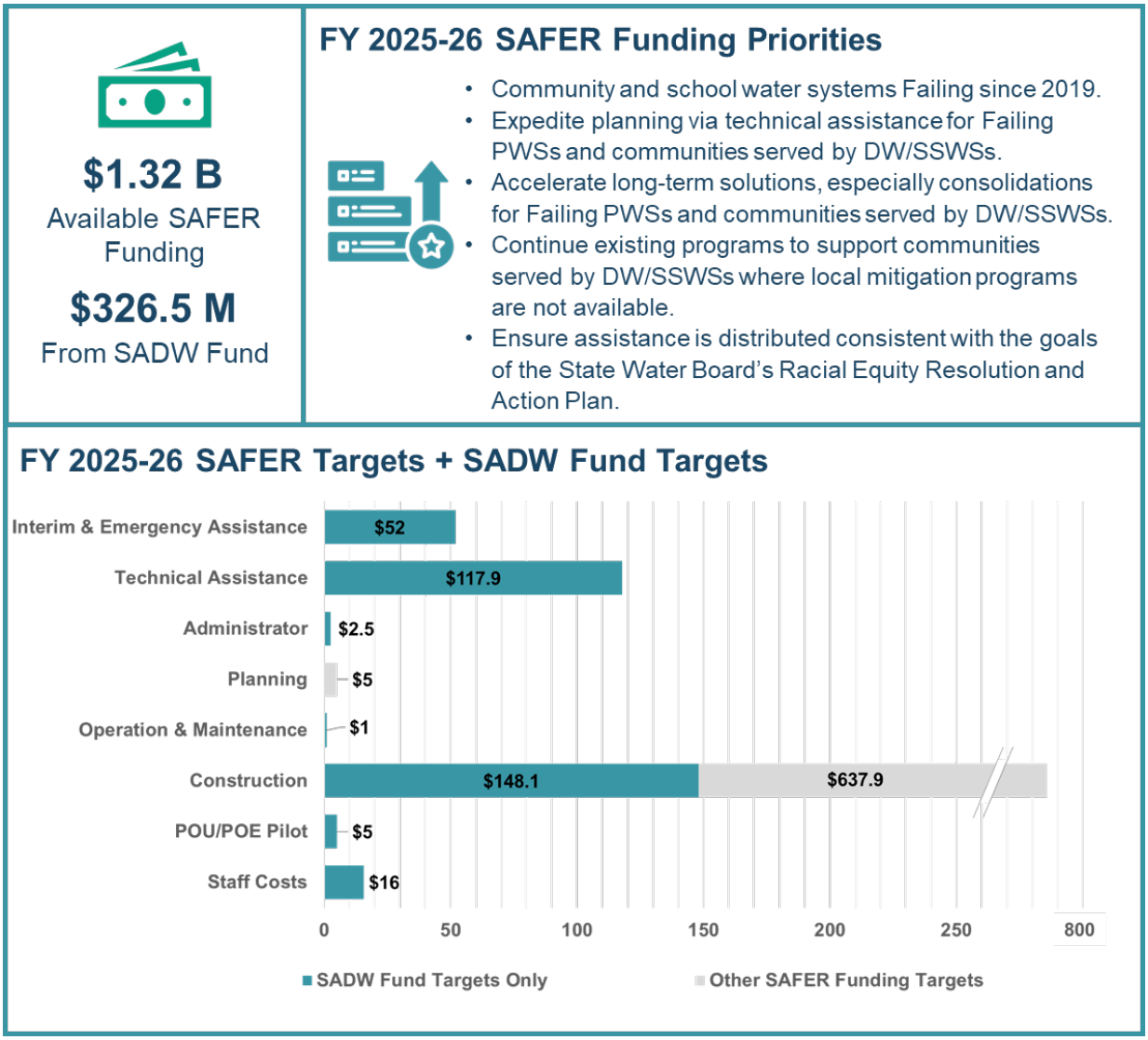
Information broken into two main sections by system category (i.e., PWS and DW/SSWS) and discusses eligibilities for each solution type. Key updates:

- **Interim Solutions**
  Clarifies durations of SAFER-funded interim solutions, especially in areas where existing local mitigation programs are being implemented.
- **Technical Assistance**
  Clarifies decision criteria for each step in moving projects through the planning process via TA.
- **Planning and Construction**
  Clearer alignment with DWSRF IUP eligibilities for planning and construction, including consolidations.
- **Long-term Solutions for DW/SSWS**
  Clarifies project eligibility for DW/SSWS communities such as consolidation or de-centralized solutions (e.g., point-of-use or point-of-entry treatment or tank installation in hard-rock areas).
- **Construction via Urgent Drinking Water Needs Process**
  Increased limit from $500,000 to $1 million for relatively simple construction projects meeting certain criteria (e.g., completed planning and environmental documents) that can utilize the Urgent Drinking Water Needs application process.

SAFER PROGRAM AVAILABLE FUNDING, PRIORITIES AND TARGETS

A summary of FY 2025-26's anticipated available funding, SAFER funding priorities, and SAFER plus SADW Fund targets are presented in Figure ES- 3.

Figure ES- 3. FY 2025-26 Available Funding, Priorities, and Targets



SAFER PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

Since the SADW Fund was established, the SAFER Program has benefitted California communities (including areas served by PWSs, SSWSs, and DWs communities) by providing:

(1) Interim supplies of safe drinking water;

(2) TA to support the planning of long-term solutions and help build local technical capacity;
(3) Direct planning grants to PWSs to support projects development; and
(4) Construction funding to implement sustainable long-term solutions.

Figure ES-4 shows progress for the above solution types cumulatively, from a start date of January 1, 2019, to show SAFER Program performance over time.

Figure ES-4. Cumulative SAFER Program Performance[2]
(SADW Fund plus complementary funding) (1/1/2019-3/31/2025)

[2] Data presented in the figure above includes loans. For interim assistance, amounts represent funding that has been committed. For TA, amounts represent funding that has been committed to work plans and does not include remaining capacity in TA master agreements. For planning and construction, amounts represent funding for executed agreements. Additionally, in the construction category, when considering just the projects benefiting small DACs, the total amount of assistance is approximately $998 million, for 204 water systems, benefiting 820,880 people.

I. BACKGROUND

I.A. SAFER PROGRAM

The State Water Board implements the SAFER Program, which is a set of tools, funding resources, and regulatory authorities coordinated to assist California communities as they work to develop local capacity to ensure reliable access to safe drinking water. The State Water Board administers the SAFER Program primarily through its Division of Drinking Water (DDW), Division of Financial Assistance (DFA), and Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs (OPEETA). The SAFER Program's goal is to provide safe and affordable drinking water in every California community, for every Californian.

Key events that have aided in establishing the SAFER Program as it is today include the 2016 State Water Board adoption of Resolution No. 2016-0010 which identifies the human right to water as a top priority and core value of the Water Boards and the July 2019 chaptering of SB 200 which established the SADW Fund. The SADW Fund provides up to $130 million per year through 2030 and is intended to address funding gaps and provide solutions to water systems, especially those serving DACs, to address both their short- and long-term drinking water needs. Further details about the SADW Fund, its purpose, as well as the purpose and goals of the broader SAFER Program are included in Section I of the SADW Fund Policy [3].

The SADW Fund complements the State Water Board's suite of drinking water funding sources, including DWSRF, which offers repayable, low-interest financing and loans with partial or complete principal forgiveness (PF, i.e., non-repayable loans), Propositions 1, 4, and 68 (Prop 1, 4and 68), and California Budget Act appropriations administered under the DWSRF IUP, and the State Water Pollution Cleanup and Abatement Account (CAA), most of which are generally limited to addressing capital infrastructure. The SADW Fund fills funding gaps as it allows for an expansion of entities and types of projects that are eligible for funding (see SADW Fund Policy Sections V, VI, and VII). Anticipated funding available for FY 2025-26 from the SADW Fund and the other complementary funding sources available for drinking water projects (further discussed in Section IV), constitute the broader SAFER Program.

DFA manages the SADW Fund in concert with the other complementary drinking water funding to provide grants, affordable financing, and other types of assistance to drinking water systems to achieve the long-term goals of the broader SAFER Program. The SADW Fund may be used to address funding gaps for capital and non-capital projects that otherwise cannot be funded with other funding sources. Capital projects will generally be funded per criteria established in the current DWSRF IUP and included in

[3] Policy for Developing the FEP for the SADW Fund
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/sustainable_water_solutions/docs/2024/final-policy-for-dev-fep-sadwf.pdf

this FEP for reference. Non-routine or controversial projects will be considered by the State Water Board at a State Water Board meeting.

I.B. SYSTEMS PRIORITIZED BY THE SAFER PROGRAM

Given that the SADW Fund was intended to fill funding gaps for drinking water projects that are otherwise not eligible for funding via the complementary funding sources, the SAFER Program generally focuses on the following, though each annual FEP further defines the funding priorities for that FY based on projected available funding and demand (see Section IV.C).

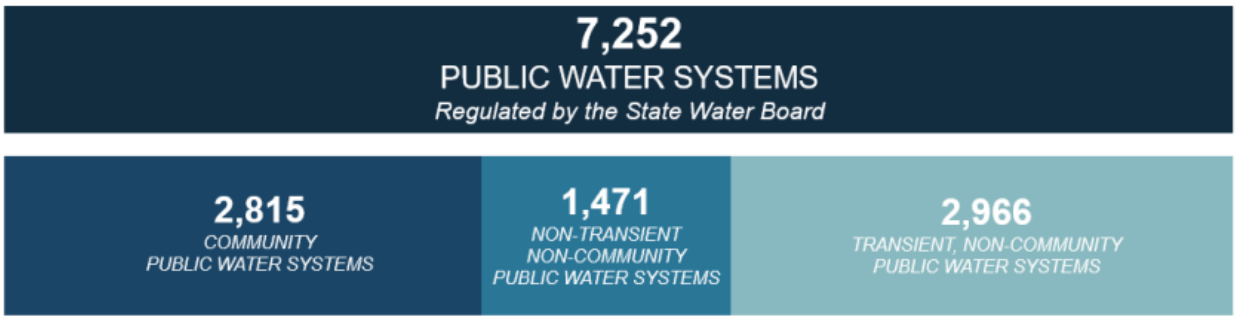
- PWSs that serve small, disadvantaged communities (DACs) that are Failing or At-Risk of Failing, and
- Low-income households served by DW/SSWSs that have water quality or water shortage issues.

I.B.1. PUBLIC WATER SYSTEMS

California has more than 7,000 active water systems as shown in Figure 1. The State Water Board and Local Primacy Agencies are responsible for regulating public water systems.

> **Public Water System**: A system for the provision of water for human consumption through pipes or other constructed conveyances that has 15 or more service connections or regularly serves at least 25 individuals daily at least 60 days out of the year.[4]

Figure 1. California Public Water Systems



The State Water Board's Division of Drinking Water determines if a water system meets the definition of a public water system and categorizes the system's "type" or "classification," which often corresponds to different regulatory requirements, as shown in Table 1.

[4] Health & Saf. Code, § 116275, subd. (h).

Table 1. Public Water System Types

Public Water System Type	Definition
Community Water System (CWS)	A public water system that serves at least 15 service connections used by yearlong residents or regularly serves at least 25 yearlong residents of the area served by the system.[5]
Non-Transient, Non-Community (NTNC)	A public water system that is not a community water system and that regularly serves at least 25 of the same persons for six months or more per year (e.g., K-12 school, year-round business, etc.).[6]
Transient, Non-Community (TNC)	A public water system that does not meet the definition of a community water system or non-transient, non-community water system, which serves 25 or more people at least 60 days out of a year or there are 15 or more service connections that are not used by yearlong residents (e.g., restaurants, gas stations, parks, etc.).

The SAFER program prioritizes community water systems and non-community water systems that serve schools. Furthermore, public water systems are often prioritized based on the system size, community economic status, and SAFER Status.

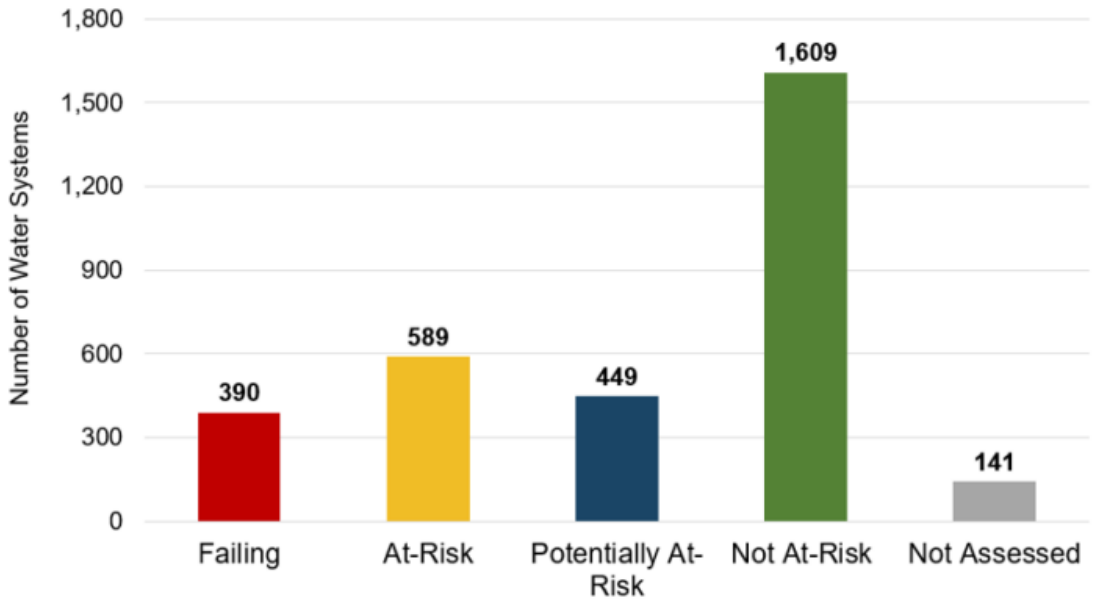
The SAFER Status of a water system is based on a set of stakeholder-developed criteria which is documented in the annual Drinking Water Needs Assessment[7] (Needs Assessment, see also Appendix A) and used to identify "Failing" [8] and "At-Risk" [9] of Failing water systems. Failing water systems are those that are out of compliance with or consistently fail to meet drinking water standards. The State Water Board maintains a

[5] Health & Saf. Code, § 116275, subd. (i).
[6] Health & Saf. Code, § 116275, subd. (k).
[7] 2025 Drinking Water Needs Assessment. Also included as Appendix A. https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/documents/needs/2025needsassessment.pdf
[8] Failing criteria is summarized in the Drinking Water Needs Assessment and detailed online at the link below. Failing Criteria: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/hr2w/docs/hr2w_expanded_criteria.pdf
[9] The criteria used to determine At-Risk, Potentially At-Risk, and Not At-Risk water systems is detailed in the Risk Assessment Methodology Appendix of the annual Drinking Water Needs Assessment report. https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/needs.html

list and map of these systems on its website.[10] Failing systems are identified and refreshed daily as violations and enforcement actions are issued, updated, or resolved. SAFER Risk Assessment statuses are updated quarterly. As Failing systems come back into compliance, their SAFER status will automatically revert to their Risk Assessment result.

The 2025 Risk Assessment was conducted for 3,037 public water systems, including the 390 (13 percent (%)) Failing systems[11], 589 (19%) At-Risk water systems, 449 (15%) Potentially At-Risk water systems, and 1,609 (53%) Not At-Risk water systems were identified, as shown in Figure 2[12].

Figure 2. 2025 PWS Risk Assessment Results



I.B.2. STATE SMALL WATER SYSTEMS & DOMESTIC WELLS

California has approximately 1,235 SSWSs, and approximately 300,000 known DWs, as shown in Figure 3[13].

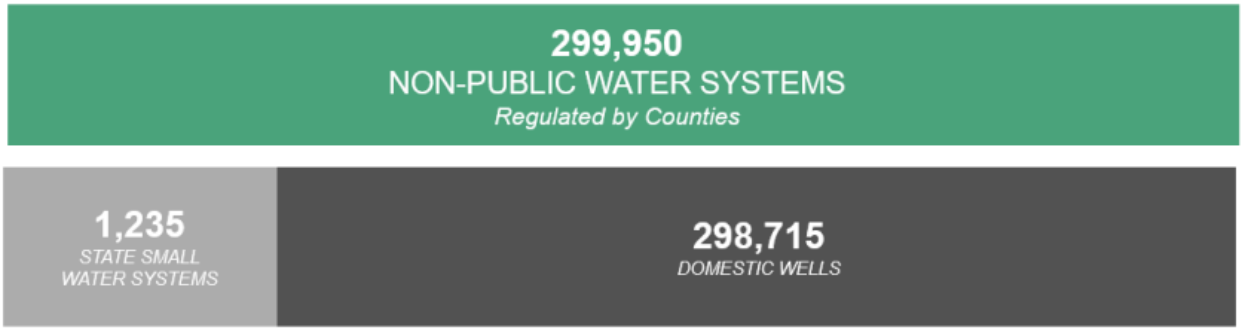
[10] SAFER Dashboard https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/saferdashboard.html

[11] There were 390 Failing systems on December 31, 2024. The Risk Assessment analysis excludes 89 large Failing water system due to their size.

[12] Risk Assessment Results Spreadsheet https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/documents/needs/2025/2025risk.xlsx

[13] Estimates for DWs are much higher, but data for locations and activity status are missing.

Figure 3. California Non-Public Water Systems



The SAFER program prioritizes DACs served by failing DW/SSWSs. Data on known, failing DW/SSWSs is limited because these systems are not regulated by any state agency, but rather locally by Counties. To help identify where potentially failing SSWS/DWs are, the State Water Board conducts an annual Risk Assessment, identifying areas where groundwater is at high-risk of containing contaminants that exceed safe drinking water standards, is at high-risk of water shortage, and where there is high socioeconomic risk. Results are shown in Table 2. This information is presented as an online dashboard.[14] This information is used by the SAFER program to help prioritize targeted outreach, assessments, and data gathering.

Table 2. 2025 State Small Water System and Domestic Well Risk Assessment Results (Statewide)

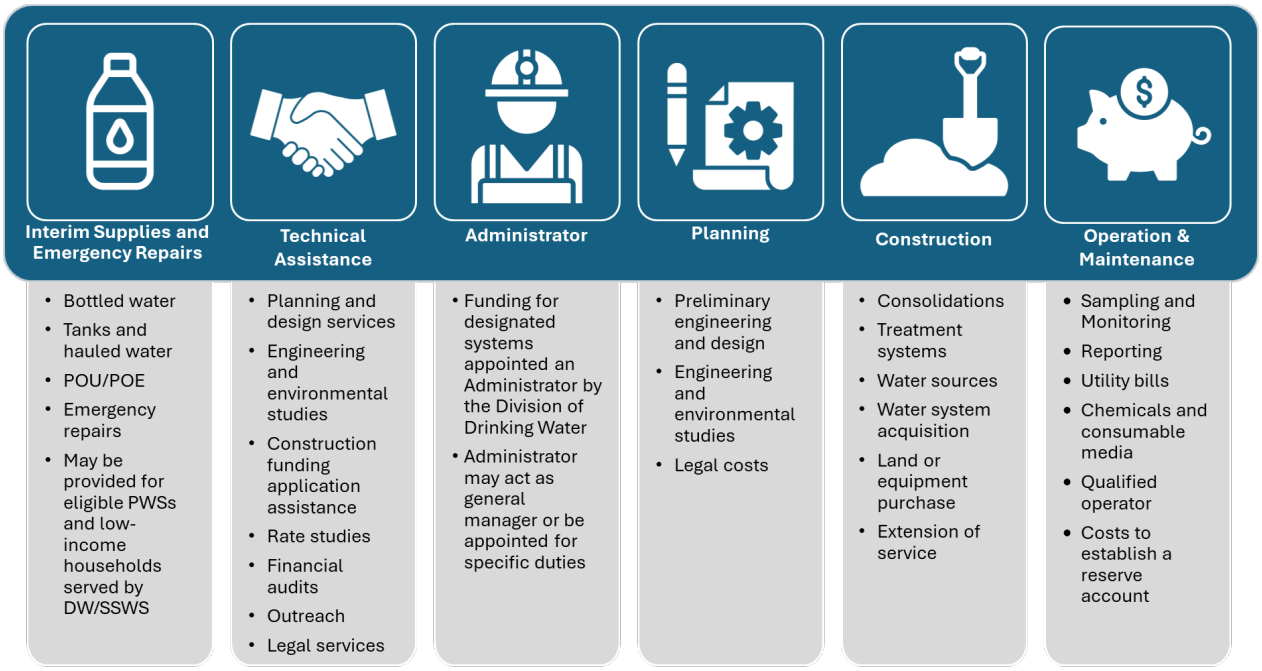
Systems	At-Risk	Potentially At-Risk	Not At-Risk	Total
State Small Water Systems	205 (16.6%)	629 (50.9%)	401 (32.5%)	1,235
Domestic Wells	93,028 (31.1%)	101,090 (33.8%)	104,597 (35%)	298,715

I.C. SOLUTION TYPES FUNDED BY THE SAFER PROGRAM

Figure 4 provides a summary of the different solution types that may be eligible for SADW funding. More detailed information on funding eligibilities is presented in Sections VI and VII.

[14] State Small Water System and Domestic Well Risk Assessment Dashboard https://gispublic.waterboards.ca.gov/portal/apps/experiencebuilder/experience/?id=ece2b3ca1f66401d9ae4bfce2e6a0403

Figure 4. Eligible SAFER Program Solution Types



I.D. GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION FUND REQUIREMENTS

The expenditures from the SADW Fund originating from monies transferred from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) will be used for the purpose of facilitating the achievement of reductions of greenhouse gas emissions or help achieve adaptation and resiliency to climate change by enhancing the long-term sustainability of drinking water systems in GGRF Priority Populations (i.e., GGRF Disadvantaged Communities, GGRF Low-Income Communities, and GGRF Low-Income Households). For the purpose of GGRF funding, a community identified as "GGRF DAC" or GGRF Low-Income Community" will have the same funding eligibility as a DAC.

Additionally, projects funded may assist communities confronted with impacts to source waters that have been exacerbated by climate change, such as reduced surface water flows, accelerating declining groundwater levels, and increasing concentrations of contaminants. Per SADW Fund Policy Section VI.B, projects and services may be funded for non-DACs if there is a reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Such determinations will be made by the Deputy Director of DFA or designee.

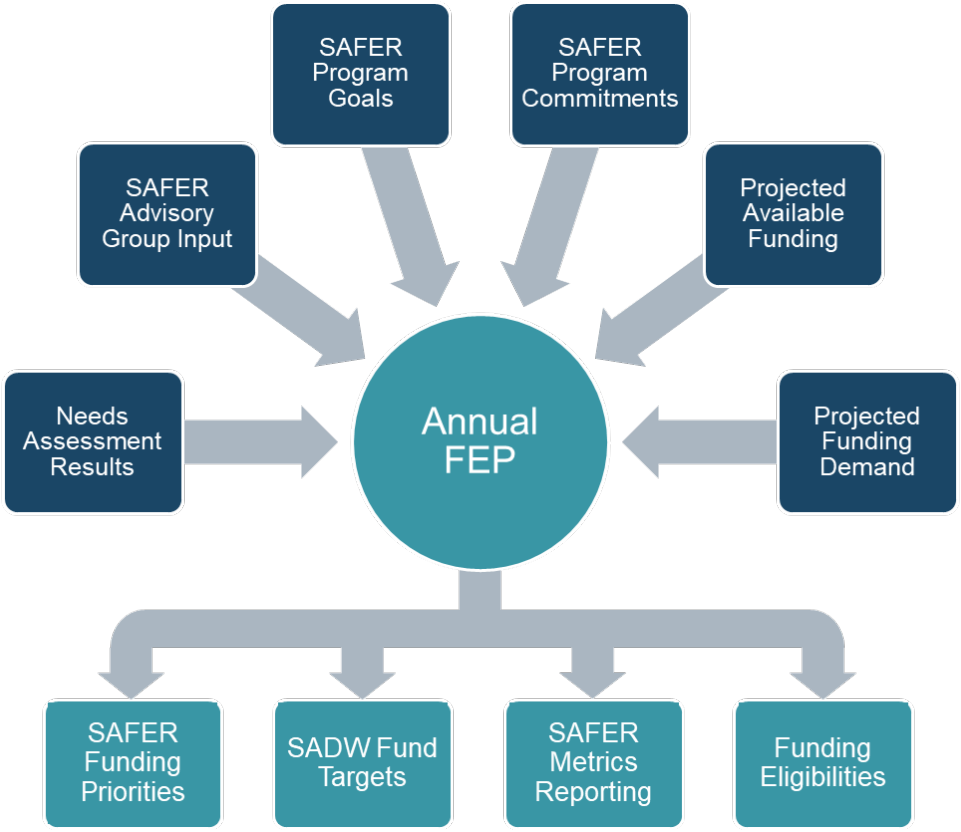
GGRF expenditures from the SADW Fund will be administered in compliance with the Funding Guidelines for Agencies that Administer California Climate Investments (CCI).[15]

[15] 2024 CCI Funding Guidelines
https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/auction-proceeds/2024-CCIFundingGuidelines-FINAL-2.11.25.pdf

I.E. HOW THE FEP IS UTILIZED BY THE STATE WATER BOARD

Each annual FEP discusses broader SAFER Program goals and performance, available funding for the upcoming fiscal year, sets funding priorities and SADW Fund targets, defines funding eligibilities by solution type for both PWSs and state small and domestic well communities, includes a funding solution list for Failing PWSs, and also reports back on the prior fiscal year's fund distribution[16]. Additionally, each annual FEP is informed by the results of the annual Needs Assessment (Appendix A) and the input of the SAFER Advisory Group[17]. This is shown in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5. Annual FEP Inputs and Outputs



[16] Health and Safety Code section 116768.
[17] The SAFER Advisory Group was convened in December 2019 to provide input into the development of the annual FEPs, the SADW Fund Policy, and overall implementation of the Fund. More information on the activities of the Advisory Group in FY 2024-25 is presented in Appendix E.

Any expenditures from the SADW Fund in FY 2025-26 must be consistent with this FEP[18,19]. Complementary funding sources administered by the State Water Board will be used to address the needs and priorities identified in this FEP to the extent allowed by law and applicable policies and plans.

Information on the development of the annual FEP and the public process for its consideration and adoption are detailed in Appendix B.

[18] The Deputy Director of DFA may make clarifying, non-substantive amendments to this FEP. The Deputy Director of DFA may also substantively update and amend the appendices included in this FEP. This FEP will remain in effect until the State Water Board adopts a new FEP. Decisions made under this FEP may still be valid under a later FEP at the discretion of the Deputy Director of DFA.

[19] Per Health and Safety Code section 116768.5, subdivision (c), on or before March 1st of each year, the State Water Board shall provide to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee and the chairpersons of the fiscal committees in each house of the Legislature the most recently adopted FEP. The FY 2024-25 FEP was submitted on February 6, 2025. This FY 2025-26 FEP will be submitted on or before March 1, 2026.

II. SAFER PROGRAM GOALS AND STRATEGY

II.A. SAFER GOALS

The prior FY 2024-25 FEP[20] included a new discussion on broader SAFER Program goals to guide and direct staff and financial resources to be focused on addressing the needs of Failing systems, while continuing to prioritize consolidations as the most sustainable pathway to safe and affordable drinking water for struggling small systems. The FY 2025-26 SAFER Program goals for PWSs are consistent with those established in FY 2024-25 and includes a new goal related to communities served by DW/SSWS, as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6. SAFER Program Goals

[20] FY 2024-25 Fund Expenditure Plan https://waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/docs/2024/draft-final-fy2024-25-fep-clean-version.pdf

II.B. PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM STRATEGY

In order to achieve these goals for PWSs, State Water Board staff are implementing a number of objectives and tracking progress (shown below in Figure 8). Objectives being implemented include:

- Evaluating systems that have been on the Failing list since July 2019 (2019 Cohort) and those systems that have come onto the Failing list after that and determining where they are in the process of achieving a long-term solution and anticipating future return to compliance dates.
- Ensuring compliance orders for Failing systems have deadlines less than five years away to reduce the time between a violation and a system's return to compliance.
- Ensuring that systems with an enforcement action have corrective action plans approved within six months of the violation.
- Reduce the time for design and planning to a complete construction application to less than 2.5 years on average.
- Promoting consolidations where feasible and accelerating these solutions where possible.
- Promoting system sustainability by reducing the number of systems that have multiple instances of failing as well as reducing the number of systems that are submitting multiple requests for emergency funding.

II.C. DOMESTIC WELL/STATE SMALL WATER SYSTEM STRATEGY

The State Water Board will be implementing a three-pronged strategy for DW/SSWSs shown in Figure 7 and described further below.

Figure 7. DW/SSWS Strategy

II.C.1. SHARE DATA TO INFORM POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

To best utilize limited resources and support those most in need, the SAFER program aims to enable local and regional programs and state agencies to share data, leverage well sampling efforts, and develop shared methodologies for assessing risk and identifying communities in need of assistance. Additionally, the SAFER program should provide guidance and support for information-gathering to better understand (1) what

potential long-term solutions exist/could be developed and (2) how best to partner with local communities to explore these options together.

- **Action 1**: Continue to update the SAFER program's annual Drinking Water Needs Assessment, which utilizes available data to determine where there are DW/SSWSs that are at risk for water quality or water shortage, as well as socio-economic risk to identify areas with highest need. This helps focus the work of regional and local partners.
- **Action 2**: Continue to develop guidelines and best practices that can be shared with state, local, and regional partners/regulatory agencies.
  - Outreach and education and local engagement
  - Interim solutions and emergency response for water quality and water supply problems
  - Long term solutions and O&M requirement

II.C.2. FILL FUNDING GAPS IN LOCAL AND REGIONAL PROGRAMS

Regulated entities[21] should provide funding for DW/SSWSs that are impacted by their actions, based on regulatory requirements. SAFER funds may be used to co-fund efforts where co-contamination may be present, or there are gaps in local and regional programs. SAFER staff will work with local and regional partners[22] to ensure that funds are prioritized in alignment with this FEP.

- **Action 1**: Identify where SAFER funding can be efficiently used to fill-in local and regional program funding gaps.
  - Identify timeframe and approach for SAFER-funded interim and long-term solution services in areas in which mitigation funding programs currently exist or will be established.
  - Describe timeframes and scope for SAFER program funding for other interim and emergency solutions
  - Identify potential local and regional program partners to fund or co-fund efforts where there are gaps in mitigation programs in areas identified by the Needs Assessment as having the highest need (see Strategy 1, Action Item 1).
- **Action 2**: Identify potential innovative interim and long-term solutions that could be piloted or are potentially ready for broader deployment.

[21] For example, Central Valley Salinity Alternatives for Long-Term Sustainability (CV SALTS) Management Zones and Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs).
[22] Including but not limited to: CV SALTS Management Zones, and GSAs; Local and County Governments; and Non-Governmental Organizations and Technical Assistance Providers.

II.C.3. PROMOTE AND EXPLORE LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS

SAFER will continue to provide TA and funding to develop financially and technically feasible, sustainable long-term solutions for disadvantaged households and communities served by DW/SSWS with known water quality or water supply problems. The State Water Board is focusing on (1) providing technical assistance to identify what is feasible; (2) supporting financially feasible consolidation and regionalization efforts; and (3) supporting long-term solutions where consolidation or regionalization may not be feasible.

- **Action 1**: Continue to provide TA to explore potential long-term solutions for disadvantaged DW/SSWSs. Update funding guidelines to clarify funding criteria and process for technical assistance to help communities identify what solutions are financially and technically feasible.
- **Action 2:** Continue to provide construction funding to help implement long-term solutions, where financially and technically feasible.
- **Action 3:** Update project funding guidelines for physical consolidation and larger regionalization projects to clarify when funding recipients should include DW/SSWSs within or adjacent to the boundaries of an existing PWS, or along the route of a consolidation of two PWSs, while remaining within funding constraints and allowing for phasing so that projects are not delayed.
- **Action 4:** Provide funding or TA for at least one pilot for regionalization and one pilot for POU/POE implementation and maintenance.

III. SAFER PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

The sections below present key metric highlights for SAFER Program performance related to PWSs and DW/SSWS. More detailed information on SAFER Program performance across various aspects of the program, as defined in the SADW Fund Policy and included in previous FEPs, is included as Appendix C.

III.A. PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM METRICS

III.A.1. PWS GOAL PERFORMANCE

Some data is available from tracking progress for the SAFER goals for PWSs introduced in the FY 2024-25 FEP, which is presented in Figure 8.

Figure 8. SAFER Performance for PWS Goals

III.A.2. OTHER PWS HIGHLIGHTS

Figure 9 presents key SAFER Program highlights related to PWSs since SB 200 was passed in 2019.

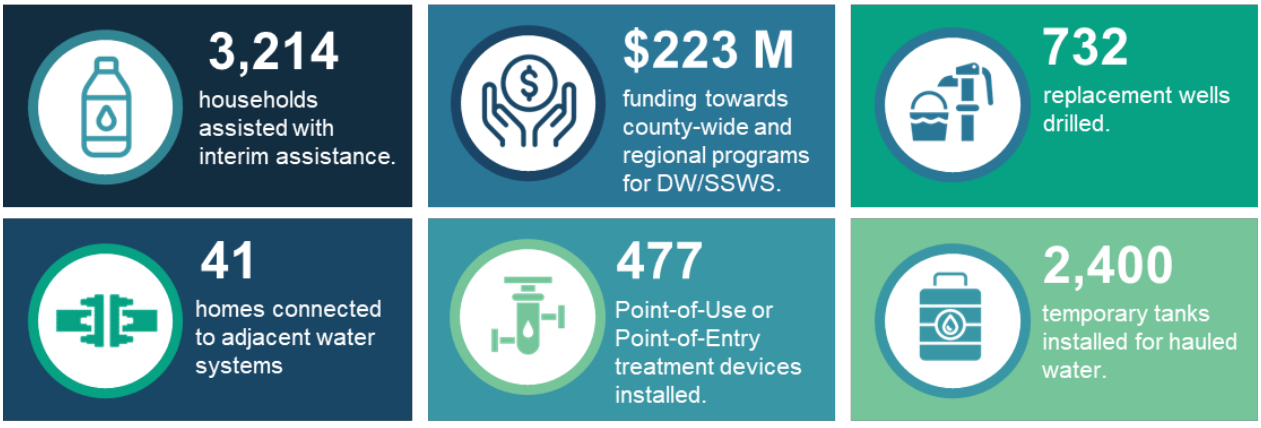
Figure 9. SAFER Program PWS Highlights (7/1/2019 – 3/31/2025)

III.B. DOMESTIC WELLS AND STATE SMALL WATER SYSTEM METRICS

III.B.1. DW/SSWS HIGHLIGHTS

While the SAFER strategy for DW/SSWS is new in this FEP, some performance data related to SAFER Program impacts on communities served by DW/SSWSs is presented in Figure 10.

Figure 10. SAFER Program DW/SSWS Highlights (7/1/2019 – 3/31/2025)[23]



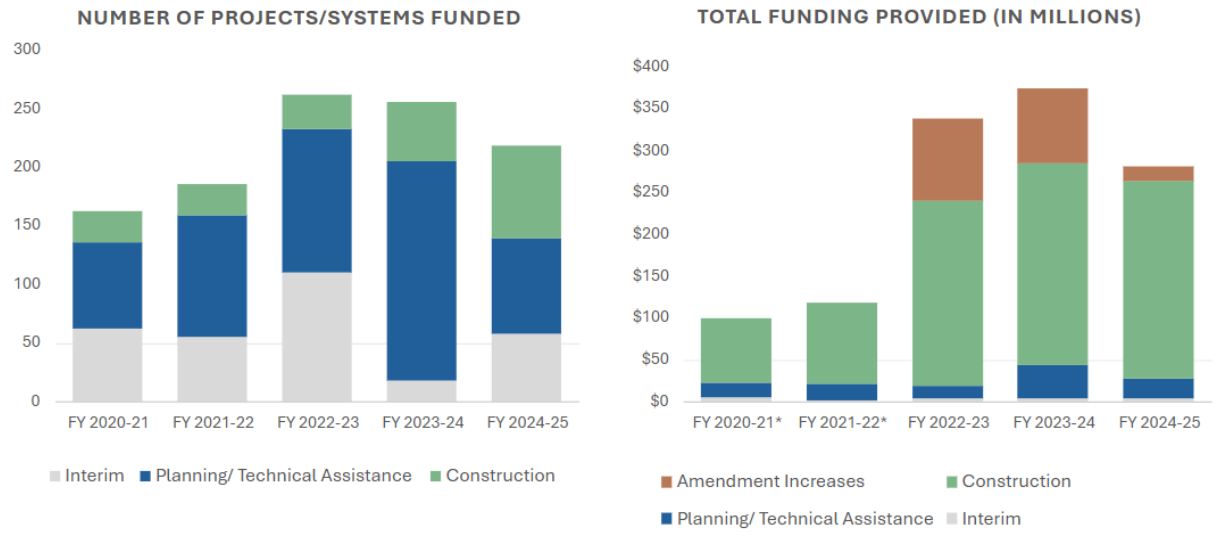
[23] Number of homes connected to adjacent water systems as shown currently represents those completed via regional programs only.

III.C. SAFER PROGRAM FUNDING COMMITTED

III.C.1. FUNDING TRENDS BY FISCAL YEAR

Figure 11 shows historical number of projects funded and total funding provided by FY since July 1, 2019 for interim assistance, planning/TA, and construction solution types for PWSs[24].

Figure 11. SAFER Program Trends (as of March 31, 2025)



* Cost increase amendment data not available for FY 2020-21 or FY 2021-22.
** Interim funding provided does not include funding provided for regional programs. It only includes direct funding for standalone interim projects to PWS's.

Based on the data, the SAFER Program has funded an average of 216 projects per year at an average $330 million total funding provided for these solution types (for FYs with amendment data available). The number of systems funded and the amount of funding has been generally increasing year to year, with a majority of funding going towards construction projects.

III.C.2. SAFER PROGRAM CUMULATIVE FUNDING

Figure 12 shows cumulative funding committed from the SAFER Program (including the SADW Fund and complementary funding sources) between July 1, 2019 and March 31, 2025, totaling $1.66 billion. Of that, a total of $463.7 million in SADW Funding[25] was committed to projects. The breakdown by solution type indicates the most significant

[24] Each bar graph represents a snapshot in time at the end of each FY, related to either funding approved or executed that particular FY for systems that were on the Failing List at the end of each FY.
[25] An additional $130 million was committed in FY 2019-20 from the pre-installment of $100 million from the GGRF and $30 million from GF (AB 74), which is included in the SADW Fund total shown in Figure 12.

investments from the SADW Fund being towards TA (40%), construction (35%) and interim/emergency assistance (18%). While direct funding to systems to complete planning projects is low, with additional TA providers with master agreements now available to take on work, a significant portion of project planning needs are being addressed through TA.

Figure 12. Cumulative SAFER Program Commitments, FY 2019-20 through FY 2024-25 (in millions) (as of March 31, 2025)

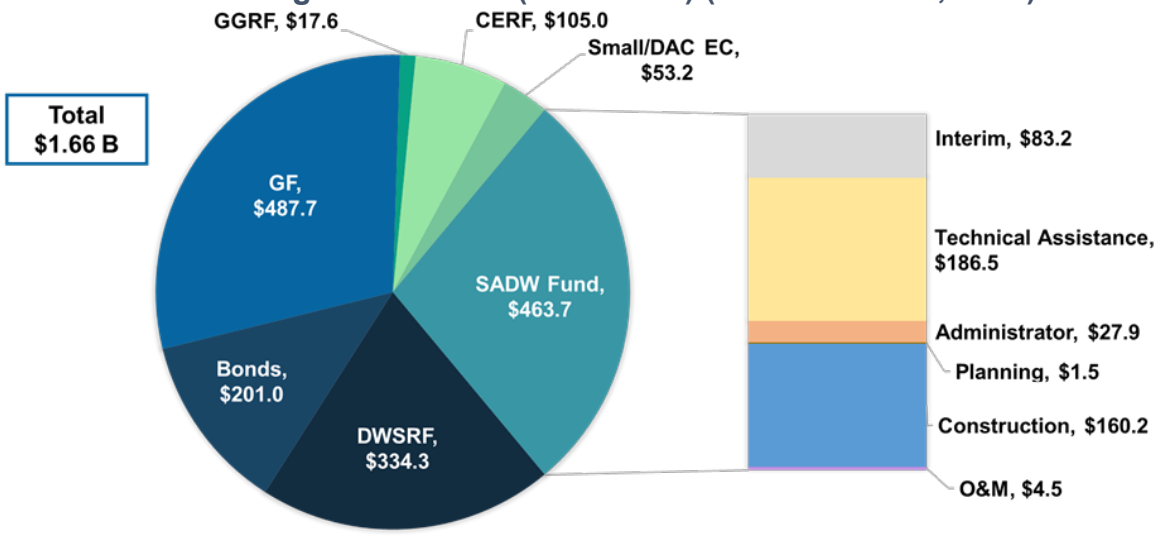
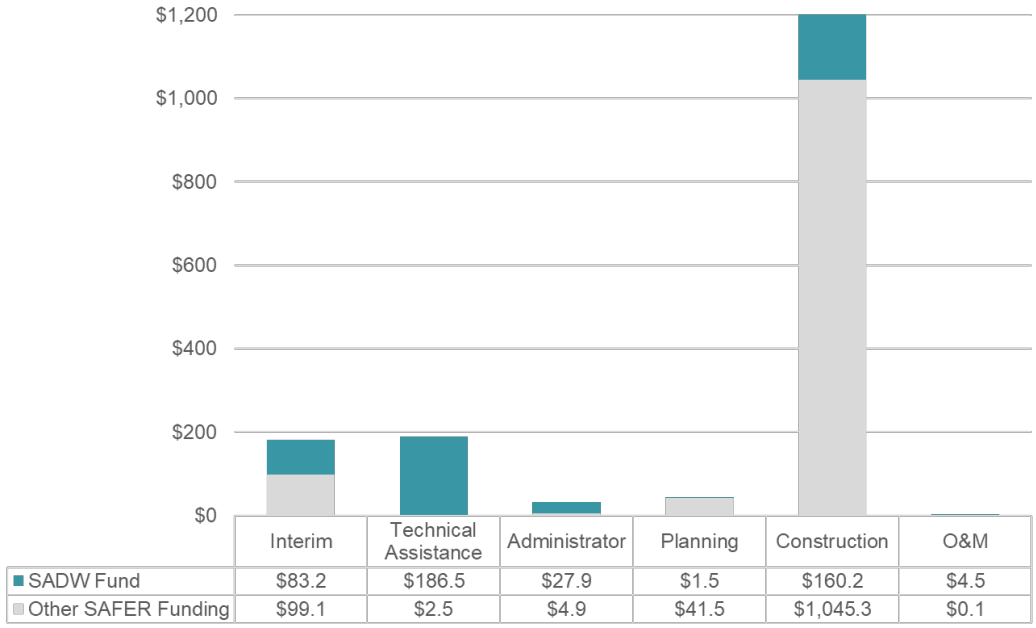


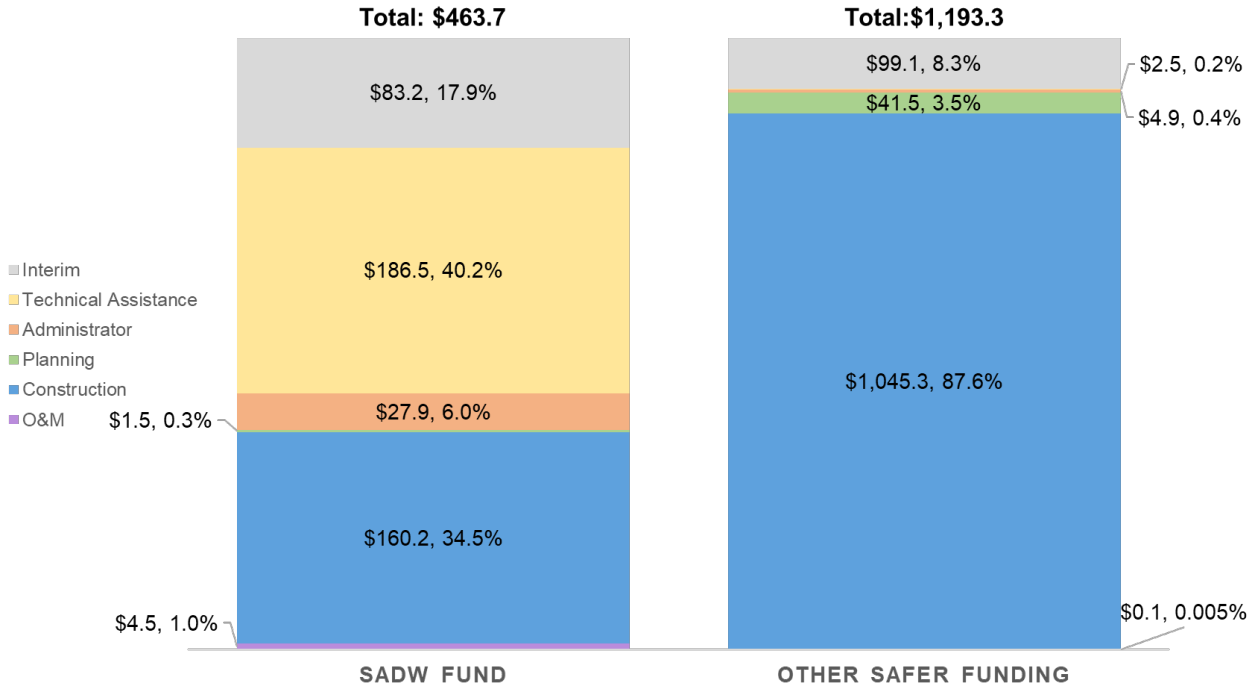
Figure 13 and Figure 14 show breakdowns of SAFER funding commitments by solution type comparing the SADW Fund to the other SAFER complementary funding sources. Given that the SADW Fund is the most flexible of the SAFER funding sources, the highest proportion of funding has gone towards TA (especially for planning towards a long-term solution), construction, and interim water supplies. For other SAFER funding, the highest proportion of funding, over $1 billion, has gone towards construction, with almost $100 million for interim water supplies from various GF appropriations specifically for drought and water shortage issues.

Figure 13. Cumulative SAFER Program Commitments by Solution Type, FY 2019-20 through FY 2024-25 (in millions) (as of March 31, 2025)



	Interim	Technical Assistance	Administrator	Planning	Construction	O&M
SADW Fund	$83.2	$186.5	$27.9	$1.5	$160.2	$4.5
Other SAFER Funding	$99.1	$2.5	$4.9	$41.5	$1,045.3	$0.1

Figure 14. Cumulative SAFER Program Commitments by Solution Type, FY 2019-20 through FY 2024-25 (in millions) (as of March 31, 2025)



III.C.3. FY 2024-25 COMMITTED EXPENDITURES

In FY 2024-25, as of March 31, 2025, $255.6 million had been committed by the broader SAFER Program (i.e., SADW Fund plus complementary funding sources) towards projects. Of that, a total of $63.5 million in SADW Funding was committed to

projects. Figure 15 further details the FY 2024-25 SADW Fund commitments by solution type, with more details available in Appendix D. Figure 16 shows breakdowns of SAFER funding commitments by solution type comparing the SADW Fund to the other SAFER complementary funding sources. Consistent with the cumulative SAFER Program commitments figures, the highest proportion of funding from the complementary SAFER funding sources are going to construction projects.

Figure 15. SAFER Program FY 2024-25 Commitments (in millions) (as of March 31, 2025)

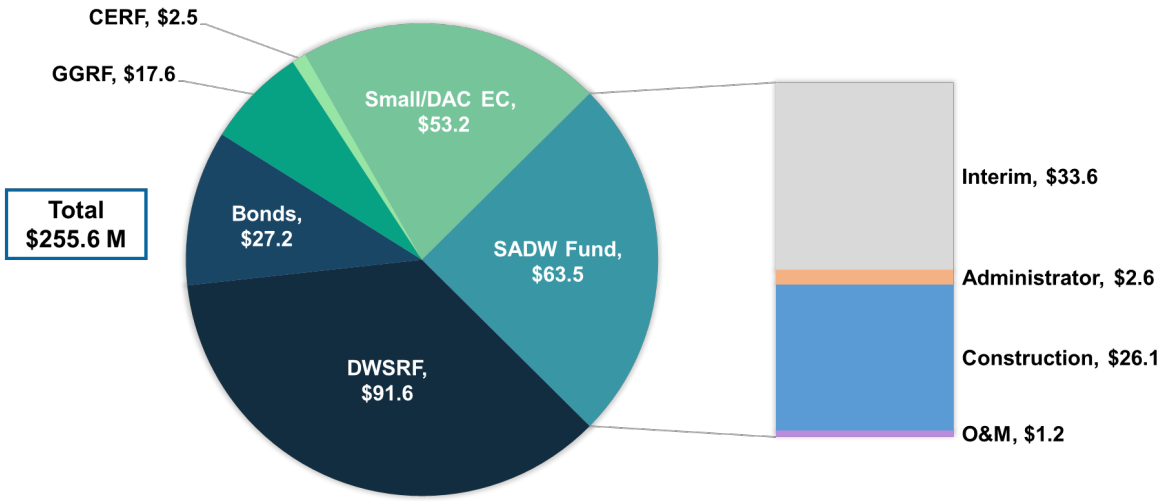
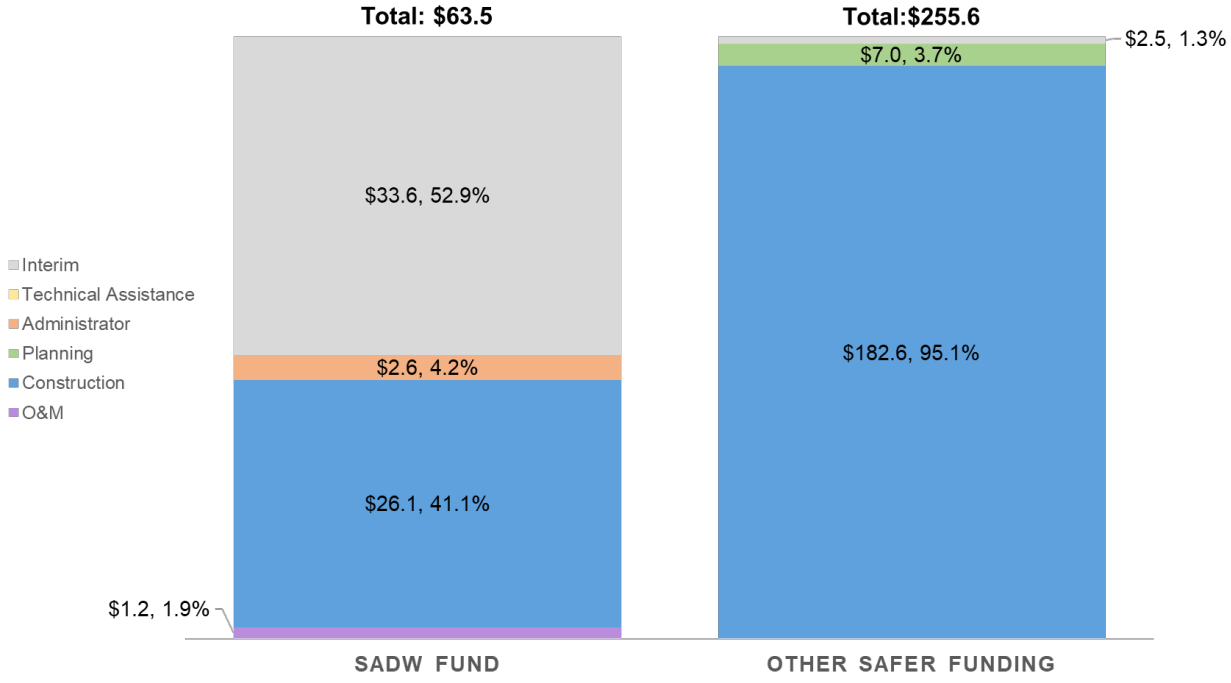


Figure 16. SAFER Program FY 2024-25 Commitments by Solution Type (in millions) (as of March 31, 2025)



FY 2024-25 Committed Expenditure Details

Former target allocations for the SADW Fund for FY 2024-25 are included in Table 3 of the prior FY 2024-25 FEP. Actual committed expenditures for FY 2024-25 (as of March 31, 2025) shown in Figure 15 are discussed below. A full list of FY 2024-25 Committed Expenditures for the broader SAFER Program by project is included in Appendix D.

By Solution Type

- **Interim and Emergency Assistance** – Similar to prior FYs, significant investments were made towards interim water supplies and emergencies ($33.6 million from the SADW Fund and $2.5 million from CERF). The largest commitments included amendments to existing regional bottled water and tanks and hauled water programs in the Central Valley, new county-wide programs for Butte County and Imperial County, and, as well as a co-funding program for non-nitrate well testing, bottled water, and POU treatment with the Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District.
- **TA** – No amendments to existing TA master agreements in FY 2024-25. Large investments from the SADW Fund have been made towards TA in the past FYs and DFA staff are working closely with TA providers to evaluate existing work plans, specifically those that are conducting planning for Failing systems, and what it will take to get those systems ready for construction (i.e., have complete construction applications).
- **Administrator** – $1.6 million in SADW funding was added to the Provost & Pritchard master agreement to assist an estimated additional 5 systems. Two system-specific administrator agreements were approved for Russian River Utilities (for Valley Ford Water Association) and with the County of Tulare (for East Orosi Community Services District).
- **Planning** – With the large amount of funding available through complementary SAFER funding sources, no SADW funding was committed in FY 2024-25 towards planning projects. There were 15 new TA work plans that were executed in FY 2024-25 to conduct full planning, which is 45% of full planning work plans executed compared to FY 2023-24.
- **Direct O&M Support** – SADW funding was committed to three new direct O&M projects and two amendments to support the daily operation costs of a designated system with an appointed administrator. One other direct O&M project to support lower water bills to customers of a Group 1 system was approved in FY 2023-24.
- **Construction** – Fourteen construction projects, at a total of $26.1 million, were funded through the SADW Fund for Failing systems, consolidations, and other CWSs[26]. No additions were made in FY 2024-25 to existing domestic well repair/replacement programs using SADW Funding; however, the Self-Help Enterprises well repair/replacement program was extended out through April 30, 2026.

[26] Two construction projects were funded for non-Failing systems ($2.1 million) .

By System Type

- **Failing Systems and Consolidations** – A majority of funding in FY 2024-25 via the SADW Fund benefiting Failing systems were through construction projects ($24 million). Failing systems also benefitted from interim water supplies and emergencies ($3.9 million), administrators ($2.6 million) and direct O&M support ($927,075).
- **DW/SSWS** – Significant investments were made towards interim solutions for communities served by DW/SSWS ($29.7 million from the SADW Fund and $2.5 million from CERF). The largest commitments included amendments to existing regional bottled water and tanks and hauled water programs in the Central Valley, new county-wide programs for Butte County and Imperial County, and, as well as a co-funding program for non-nitrate well testing, bottled water, and POU treatment with the Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District.
- **Other Systems** – Two construction projects ($2.1 million), and one emergency project ($0.4 million), and one direct O&M project ($249,120) were funded for non-Failing systems.

Other Program Needs

- **Pilot Projects** – Work on the POU/POE Pilot was included in prior FY 2023-24 within the scope of a new TA master agreement with Stantec Consulting Services, Inc. (Stantec) and was implemented in FY 2024-25. More information on the POU/POE Pilot is included in Appendix E.
- **Contracts** – No SADW funding was directed towards contracts.
- **Staff Costs** – In addition to funding projects/local assistance, the SADW Fund is used to support State Water Board staff costs for administration and implementation of SB 200 through 71 staff positions. The estimated staff costs for FY 2024-25 are less than originally anticipated, at $15.2 million, with $5.7 million towards administrative positions (approximately 4.3% of the $130 million) and $9.5 million towards implementation positions. More information on the SADW Program resources is included below in Section III.C.4.

III.C.4. SAFE AND AFFORDABLE DRINKING WATER PROGRAM RESOURCES AND CAPACITY

No new positions were added in FY 2024-25 or were proposed for FY 2025-26 to supplement the existing 71 positions for administering the SADW Fund.[27]

Twenty-eight (28) positions are associated with administrative tasks and 43 positions are associated with implementation tasks related to the SADW Fund. The total projected annual staff costs for FY 2025-26 is approximately $15.7 million, $5.9 million

[27] Refer to Section III.H of the FY 2020-21 FEP for details of the 71 positions.

for the administrative positions (approximately 4.5% of the $130 million anticipated in the SADW Fund) and $9.8 million for the implementation positions.

III.D. PROJECT MILESTONE TRACKING

As a community in need of safe drinking water moves from a problem being identified towards a long-term solution, there are certain phases that a project will progress through to completion, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Project Phase Descriptions

Project Phase	Description
1. Problem Identified	A problem/ violation is identified by DDW, LPA, or U.S. EPA. If a DW/SSWS community, it can be through testing and community outreach.
2. Select a Solution	Evaluating alternatives and selecting a long-term solution either through TA or a Planning Grant. This often includes developing a feasibility study, plans and specifications (P&S), and typically involves community outreach.
3. Construction Application Begins	Applicant has begun submitting a construction application. This includes the initial FAAST submittal and providing the four required application packages: (1) General (2) Technical (3) Environmental and (4) Financial Security.
4. Secure Funding	Time between the submittal of a complete construction application and the execution of a funding agreement.
5. Pre-Bid Deliverables	Water system fulfills any pre-bid deliverables per the funding agreement.
6. Bid Notice to Proceed (NTP)	Submittal of the bid package to DFA for review and approval. Typically, a Recipient will not issue a NTP until DFA provides an approval letter or an executed agreement.
7. Construction	Time between the commencement of construction activities and their completion.
8. Finish Construction	Construction is completed, inspections are completed, punch list items completed, System approval of construction activities completed, and final reimbursement has been completed.
9. Post Construction Activities	Permitting, removal of water system permit for consolidation projects, or any other items associated with DDW. Project is closed out per DFA processes.

III.D.1. PROGRESS OF SAFER PROJECTS

The following figures present information on where State Water Board active and potential projects are in the project phases defined above.

Figure 17. Project Phases for Active and Potential SAFER Projects

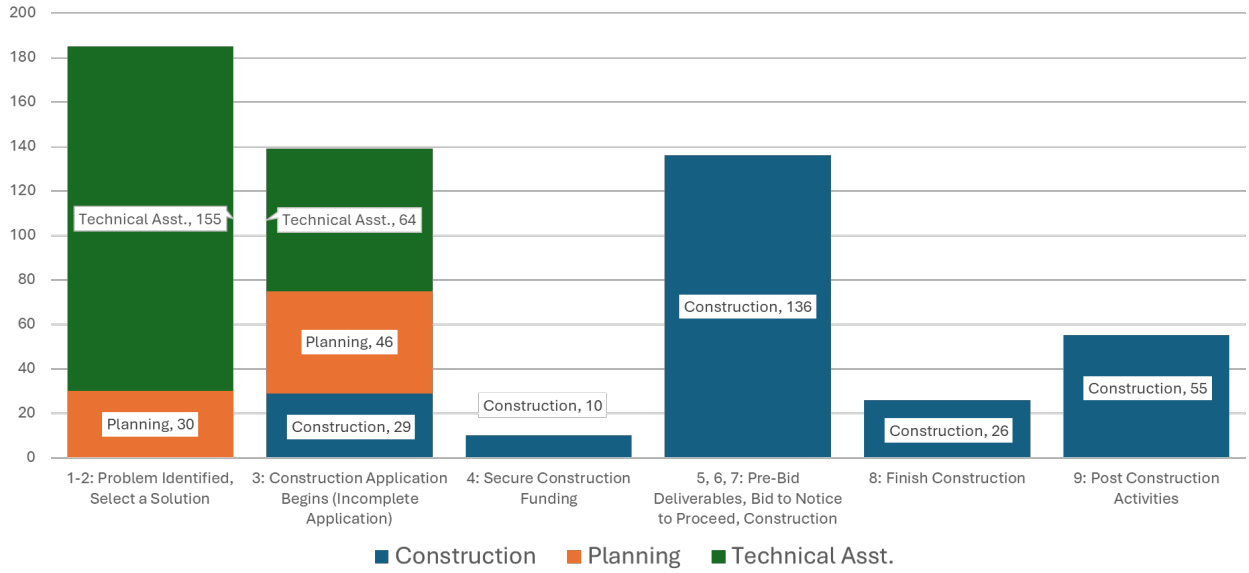
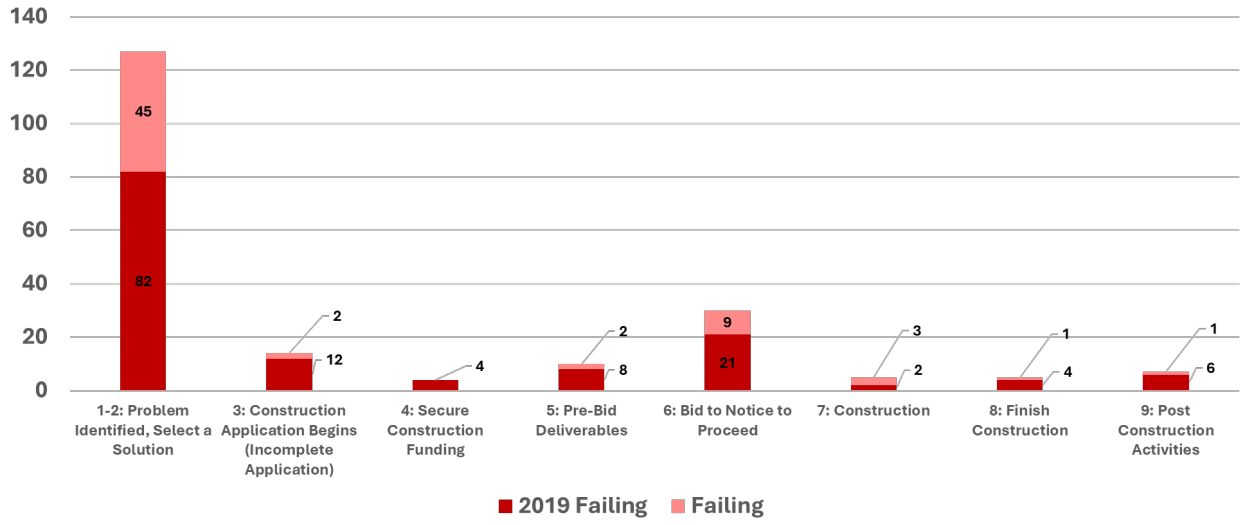
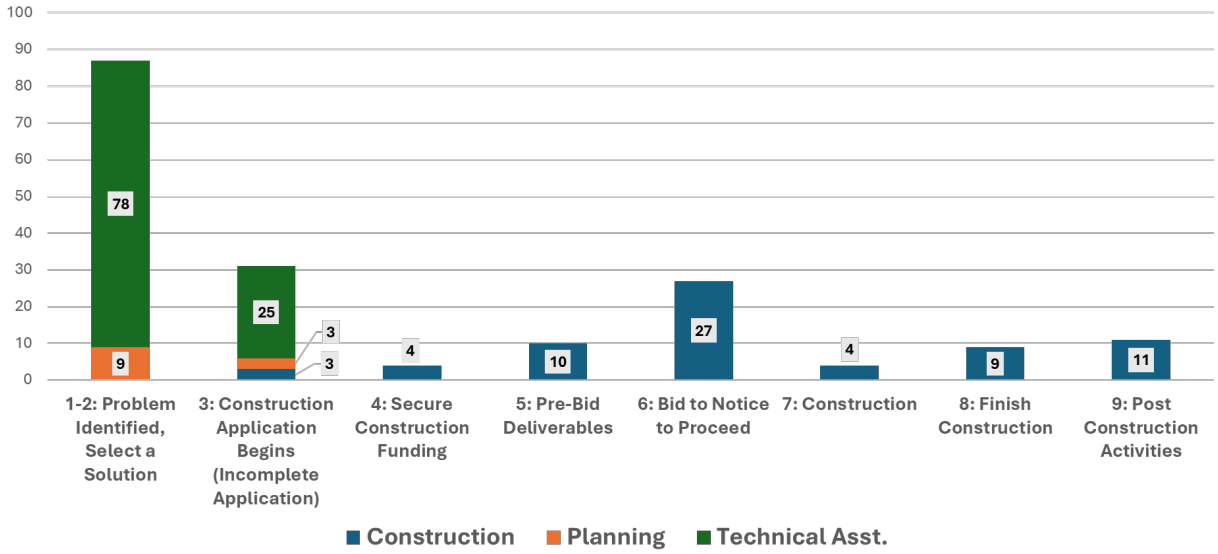


Figure 18. Project Phases for Failing Systems (200 out of 403)[28]



[28] 137 out of 208 2019 Failing Systems are shown in the figure above.

Figure 19. Project Phases for Active Consolidation Projects

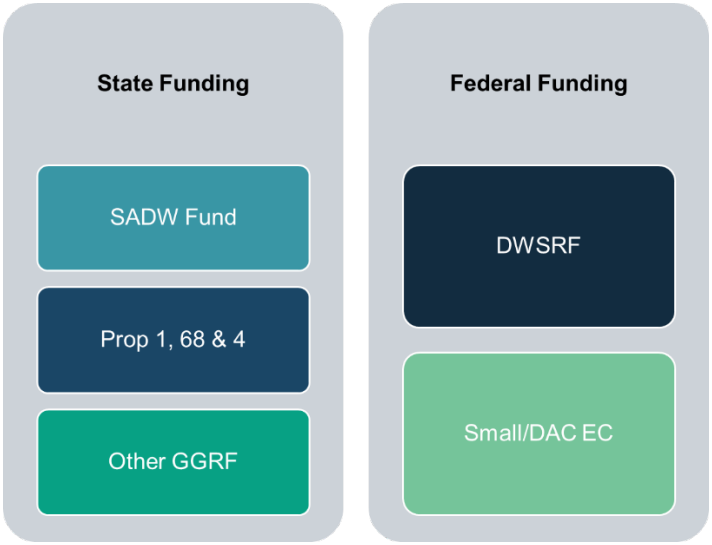


IV. SAFER PROGRAM AVAILABLE FUNDING

IV.A. SUMMARY OF SAFER PROGRAM FUNDING SOURCES

As discussed in Section I.A, when the SAFER Program began in 2019, the new SADW Fund was added to the State Water Board's suite of existing complementary funding sources that can be utilized for drinking water projects. While the complementary funding sources are typically limited to capital infrastructure projects, the SADW Fund allows for an expansion of entities and solution types that are eligible for funding[29,30]. Figures 20, 21, and 22 show the current SAFER Program complementary funding sources by state or federal funding, whether they can fund eligible projects for PWSs or DW/SSWSs, and which solution types are eligible for each.

Figure 20. SAFER Program Complementary Funding by Source



[29] See SADW Fund Policy Sections V, VI, and VII.
[30] Each funding source has its own set of eligibility criteria and governing policies, guidelines, or plans and eligible approved projects will be funded consistent with the appropriate governing document(s).

Figure 21. SAFER Program Complementary Funding Eligibility by System Type[31]

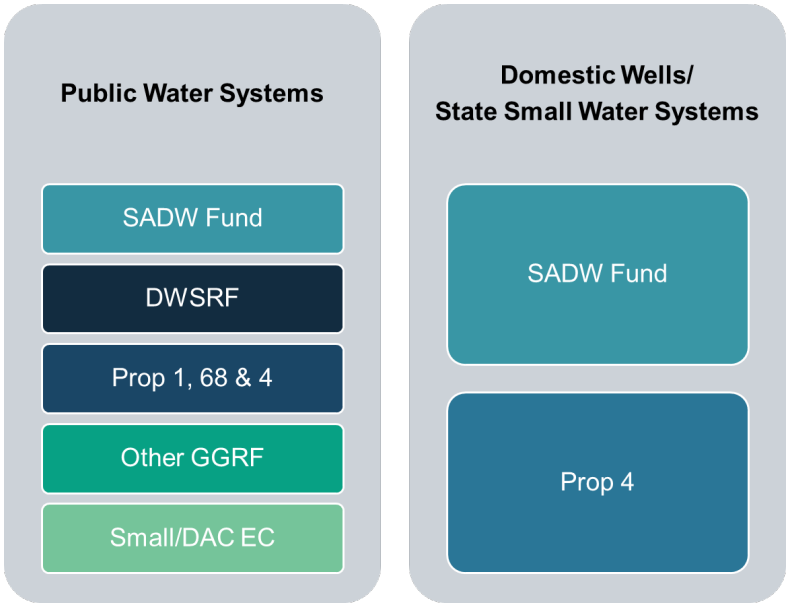
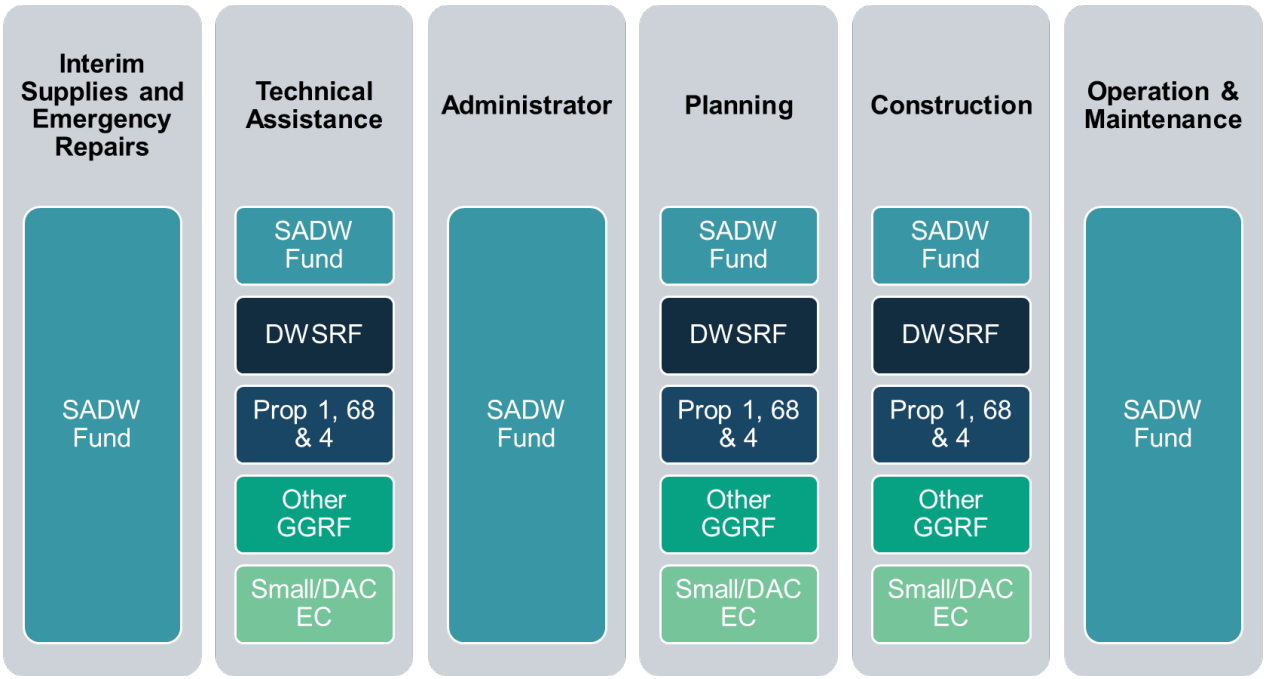


Figure 22. SAFER Program Complementary Funding Eligibility by Solution Type

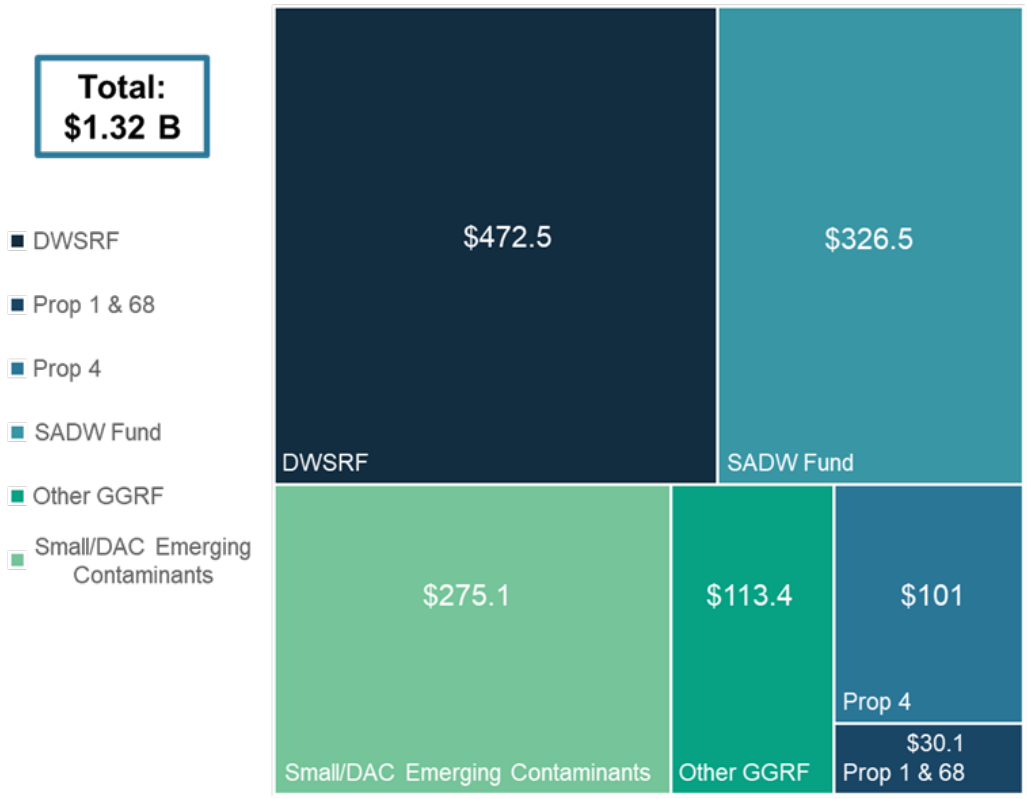


[31] Assistance must go to an eligible entity, which can direct assistance to DW/SSWSs. In limited cases, owners of drinking water wells that are not PWSs or connected to a PWS may be eligible recipients for FY 2024-25 appropriations of the Emerging Contaminants in Small or Disadvantaged Communities (part of the "Small/DAC EC" category in Figures 20 through 22).

IV.B. PROJECTED AVAILABLE FUNDING

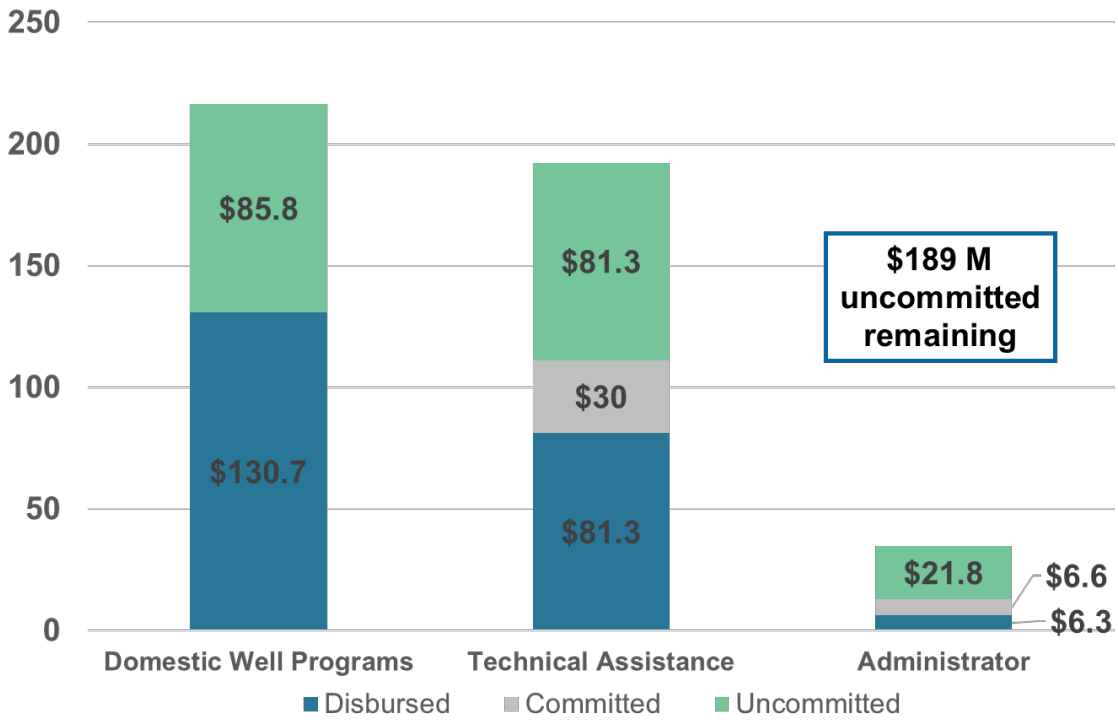
As FY 2025-26 begins, the majority of anticipated funding available for the SAFER Program will be from the SADW Fund, and DWSRF principal forgiveness, with new funding from the 2024 GGRF Infrastructure appropriation and Prop 4. Due to the uncertainty around the long-term availability of federal funds, a conservative estimate of anticipated available funds for drinking water projects for FY 2025-26 is included in Figure 23, which totals $1.32 billion.

Figure 23. FY 2025-26 SAFER Program Anticipated Funding Availability for Projects (SADW Fund plus complementary funding, in millions)



Additionally, 33 multi-year master funding agreements are still active, with funding available to be used for interim solutions, TA, and administrators (see Figure 24). As of March 31, 2025, $189 million remains in these agreements which can be utilized towards PWSs and DW/SSWS programs.

Figure 24. Active Multi-Year Programs (in millions)(as of March 31, 2025)



IV.C. SAFER PROGRAM PROJECTED DEMAND

IV.C.1. COMBINED PWS AND DW/SSWS DEMAND

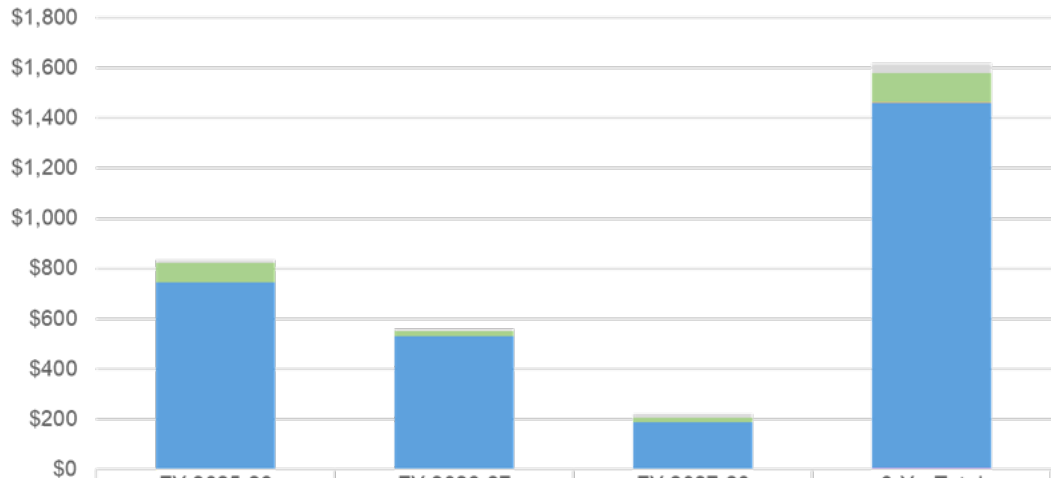
Projected demand for SAFER grant/PF funding provides critical insight into the timing of when funding will be needed for the different system categories across the different solution types over the next three FYs. The funding projections are based on the following considerations:

- **Interim Supplies and Emergency Repairs** – assumption of timing of potential amendments for existing regional programs and the addition of a modest number of new regional or countywide programs for DW/SSWSs, and potential emergency funding requests for PWSs.
- **Technical Assistance** – assumption of amounts to complete existing TA work plans for Failing systems and amounts to complete existing TA work plans for consolidations/connections of DW/SSWS communities to PWSs, with modest amounts for PFAS, hexavalent chromium, and capital development work plans.
- **Administrator** – assumption of number of new designated systems to be appointed administrators and estimated costs.
- **Planning** – assumption of fewer planning agreements than planning conducted via TA.

- **Construction** – assumption of incoming projects for Failing systems, projects that address emerging contaminants, consolidations, and projects that connect DW/SSWS communities to PWSs. Also includes an estimate of budget increases needed for existing construction projects after they go out to bid.
- **Operation and Maintenance** – assumption of incoming requests based on historical demand and average costs.

Figure 25 shows the estimated combined projected demand for PWSs and DW/SSWSs over the next three FYs for Interim, Planning/TA, Administrator, Construction, and Direct O&M. As shown, the highest total demand over the three FYs will be for Construction (91%), Planning/TA (6.5%), and Interim Supplies and Emergency Repairs (2.3%).

Figure 25. Estimated SAFER Program Projected Demand for PWS and DW/SSWS



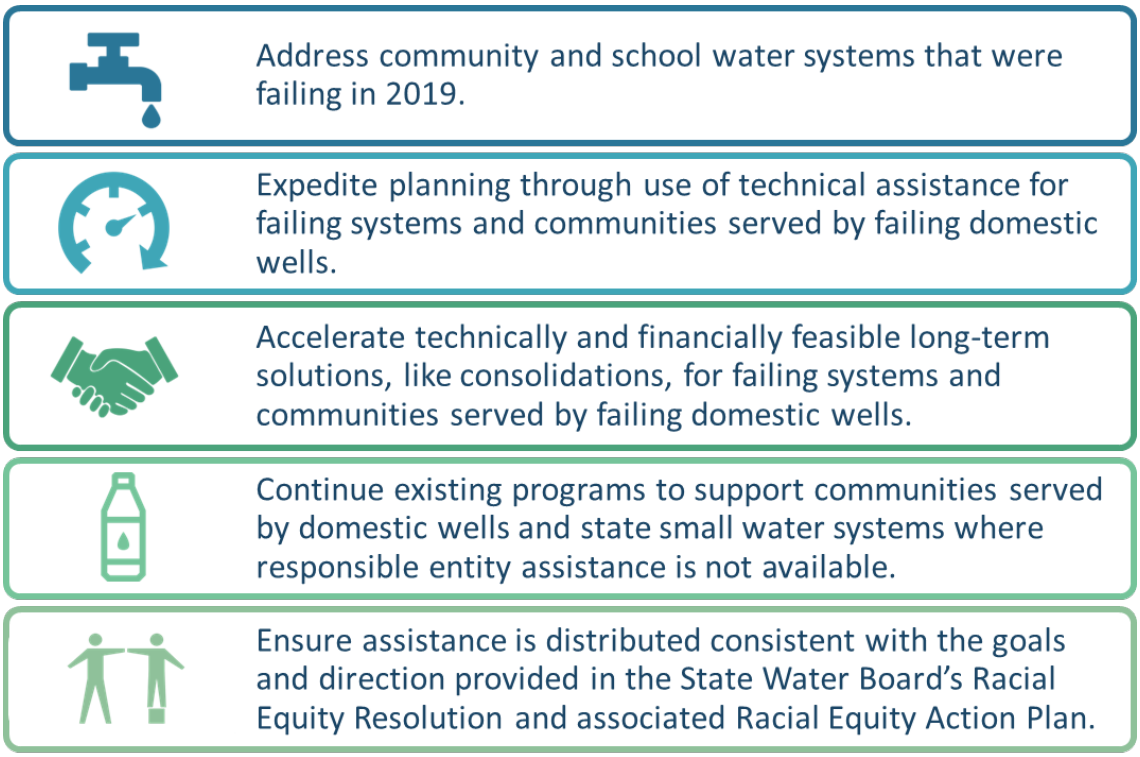
	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27	FY 2027-28	3-Yr. Total
Interim	$12.7	$9.8	$14.6	$37.1
Planning/ Technical Assistance	$76.6	$22.6	$18.6	$117.8
Administrator	$0	$0.2	$0.7	$0.9
Construction	$743.6	$527.5	$186.1	$1,457.2
Direct O&M	$1.5	$1.5	$1.5	$4.5

V. FY 2025-26 FUNDING PRIORITIES AND TARGETS

V.A. FY 2025-26 SAFER PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Consistent with the SAFER Program goals above (Section II.A), the FY 2025-26 priorities for the SADW Fund are presented in Figure 26 below. The expenditures from the SADW Fund for FY 2025-26 will continue to focus on solutions for small DACs[32] and low-income households.

Figure 26. FY 2025-26 SAFER Priorities for PWS and DW/SSWS[33,34]



V.B. FY 2025-26 SADW FUND TARGET ALLOCATIONS

The FY 2025-26 target allocations from the SADW Fund include the FY 2025-26 appropriation of $130 million plus the remaining uncommitted balance carried over from

[32] DAC and low-income eligibility are determined by a comparison of a community or household's income to the median household income (MHI). See Appendix F for the MHI Determination Methodology.
[33] SAFER priorities are not listed in ranked order.
[34] The SAFER Program will be implemented consistent with the above priorities and the requirements and restrictions of each respective funding program and with the appropriate coordination with DDW, Local Primacy Agencies (LPAs), and OPEETA.

prior FY appropriations[35,36], for a total of $326.5 million available for projects. The targets are based on the Needs Assessment results, input from the SAFER Advisory Group, anticipated available funding from the SAFER Program's complementary funding sources (Figure 23) and projected SAFER Program demand (Section IV.C).

Based on anticipated SAFER Program demand, it is expected that funding commitments in the coming FY will generally align with the distribution of demand by both system type (i.e., PWS vs. DW/SSWS) and solution type, as shown in the figures below for both the overall SAFER funding sources and the SADW Fund itself. Given the more flexible nature of the SADW Fund, there is a higher percentage of commitments anticipated for DW/SSWSs, as well as interim supplies, TA, Administrators, and direct O&M when comparing the SADW Fund to targets to those of the broader SAFER funding sources. See Table 4 and Figures 28 and 29 below.

[35] The State Water Board authorizes the Deputy Director of DFA or designee to adjust the FY 2025-26 SADW Fund targets in response to opportunities or challenges that may require shifting funding from one category to another, up to and including the entire amount of funding designated for that category. Actual FY 2025-26 committed expenditures will likely differ from the targets based on factors such as the challenges described in Section III.C.3.

[36] The FY 2025-26 target allocations are in addition to projects already funded in FY 2024-25 and prior.

FY 2025-26 Fund Expenditure Plan
Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund

Table 4. FY 2025-26 SADW Fund Target Allocations (in millions)

Water System Category	Interim and Emergency Assistance	Technical Assistance (includes Planning)	Administrator	Planning	Direct O&M Support	Construction	*SUBTOTAL BY SYSTEM CATEGORY*
Failing PWS	$6	$101.8	$2.5	$0	$0.2	$78.1	**$188.6**
Non-Failing PWS	$0	$1.7	$0	$0	$0.8	$0	**$2.5**
DW/SSWS	$46	$14.4	$0	$0	$0	$70	**$130.4**
SUBTOTAL BY SOLUTION TYPE	**$52**	**$117.9**	**$2.5**	**$0**	**$1**	**$148.1**	
						PROJECT TOTAL	**$321.5**
Other Program Needs	**POU/POE Pilot [1]**	**Staff Costs**					
	$5	$15.7					
						GRAND TOTAL	**$341.7**

[1] POU/POE Pilot included in the Failing PWS system category and TA solution type.

Figure 27. FY 2025-26 SAFER and SADW Fund Targets by System Type

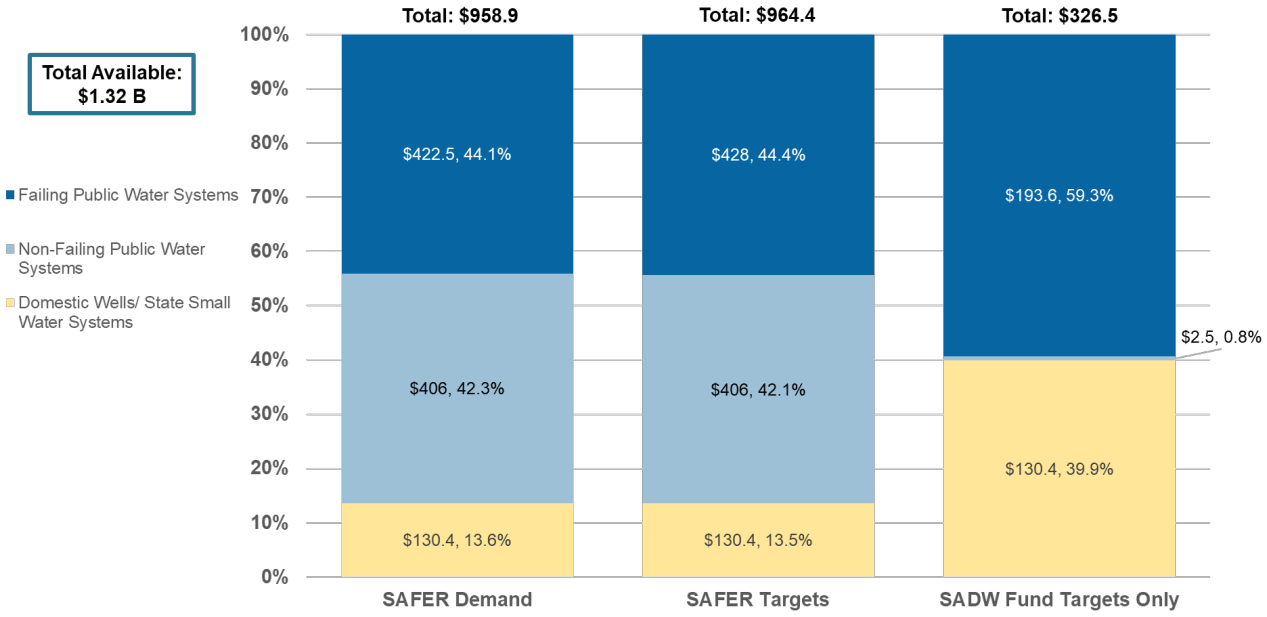
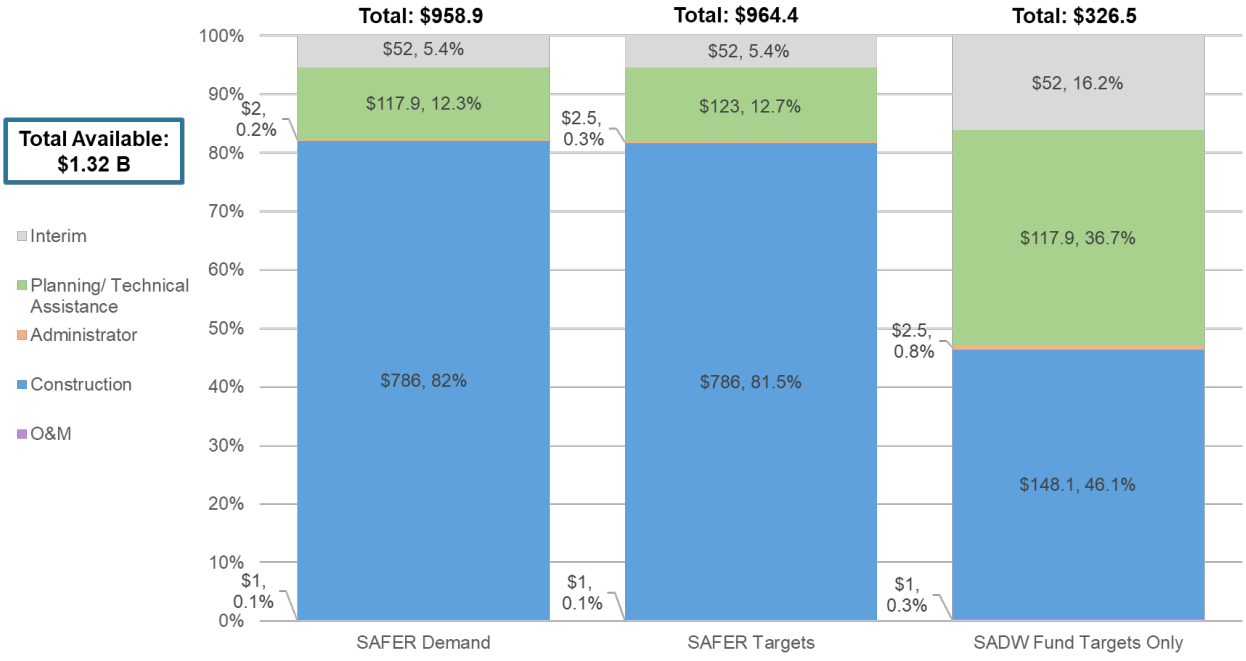


Figure 28. FY 2025-26 SAFER and SADW Fund Targets by Solution Type



V.B.1. FY 2025-26 SADW FUND TARGET SUMMARY

By Solution Type

- **Interim and Emergency Assistance** –The $6 million for Failing systems is based on demand projections over the next three FYs and will be focused on interim water supplies like bottled water, hauled water or emergency repairs, limited to assist systems serving small DACs during outages or for contaminants with acute health impacts. The $46 million for DW/SSWS is also based on demand projections over the next three FYs and may be utilized in partnering with additional entities on a countywide or regional program that would assist eligible low-income households with interim water supplies, POU/POE, or well replacements.
- **Technical Assistance** – Based on projections over the next three FYs, $101.8 million is projected to complete existing work plans for Failing systems and consolidations and to take on new work plans for Failing systems and consolidations that do not yet have funding to complete planning work. $1.7 million is anticipated to be needed to complete existing work plans for At-Risk systems. $14.4 million is anticipated to be needed to complete existing work plans and to take on new work plans associated with planning work to connect DW communities to a PWS.
    - Non-profit TA providers funded by the State Water Board are generally at, or near, their capacity to manage their current workload, let alone take on significant additional workload. However, there may be additional capacity with for-profit TA providers. For-profit TA providers could potentially assist At-Risk systems in planning (e.g., Capital Improvement Plans/Feasibility Studies) to address the components of their infrastructure that are most at-risk of failure. The current staff proposal for TA targets does not include new planning assistance for At-Risk systems.
- **Administrators** – $2.5 million is targeted to fund both ongoing administrator costs and any additional administrator appointments that might occur over the next FY.
- **Planning** – no SADW funding is targeted for planning efforts that occur outside of TA; however, other complementary funding sources are available should these needs arise in the coming FY.
- **Construction** – A high need is projected for the construction of long-term solutions for failing systems as they complete planning efforts, either via TA or as a standalone agreement with the water system. Additionally, there will be need to implement planned solutions that would connect DW/SSWS communities to a PWS. The remainder of available SADW funding is targeted for construction projects, with $78.1 million for PWSs and $70 million for DW/SSWS, which covers projected demand for long-term solutions over the next three FYs, for consolidations, well replacements, and tank installations.
- **Direct O&M Support** – A total of $1 million is targeted for any additional direct O&M requests, included O&M associated with failing systems with appointed administrators that occur in the coming FY.

Other Program Needs

- **POU/POE Pilot** – $5 million is targeted to continue implementation of the six recommended projects from the 2023 Drinking Water Point-of-Use Point-of-Entry Report (POU/POE Report)[37]. This amount falls under the Failing PWS system category and TA solution type. More information on the POU/POE Pilot is included in Appendix E.
- **Staff Costs** – In addition to funding projects/local assistance, the SADW Fund is used to support State Water Board staff costs for administration and implementation of SB 200 through 71 staff positions, which were authorized through the budget process. Anticipated SADW Program staff costs for FY 2025-26 are approximately $15.7 million. Staff cost obligations associated with existing program positions must be met. More information on SAFER Program Resources is included in Section III.C.4.

[37] 2023 Drinking Water Point-of-Use Point-of-Entry Report
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/safer/docs/2023/2023-POU-POE-report.pdf

VI. FUNDING ELIGIBILITIES FOR PUBLIC WATER SYSTEMS

While funding priorities for FY 2025-26 are stated in Section V.A, the following sections describe funding eligibilities for PWSs for the SADW Fund across the different eligible solution types, as well as funding process information[38]. For funding eligibilities for DW/SSWSs, refer to Section VII.

Additionally, the following Appendices are available related to PWSs.

- Appendix H is a list of PWSs that are on the Failing list, presented with available funding information; and
- Appendix I is a list of PWSs that are on the At-Risk list, presented with available funding information.

VI.A. ELIGIBLE PUBLIC WATER SYSTEMS

Per Section V of the SADW Fund Policy, eligible recipients of the SADW Fund include public agencies, nonprofit organizations, public utilities, mutual water companies, California Native American Tribes, administrators, Technical Assistance Providers[39], and groundwater sustainability agencies.

Scenarios where PWSs may receive SADW funding include, but are not limited to:

- PWSs may receive SADW funding directly if they are a community water system or considered a public agency, a public utility, or a mutual water company.
- If a PWS is unable to take on the administration of a grant they may elect to work with a nonprofit organization as the grant recipient on behalf of the PWS (e.g., emergency repairs, planning, construction).
- Some existing countywide and regional programs administered by a nonprofit or local county may be able to assist eligible PWS customers with the services provided as part of that regional program (e.g., Self Help Enterprises Regional Bottled Water Program).
- A tribal water system that is owned by a California Native American Tribe may be eligible for SADW Funding.
- Administrators, appointed by DDW for designated PWSs, may receive and administer funding on behalf of the designated PWS.

[38] See Appendix G for more information on funding process and improvements.
[39] Technical Assistance Providers were added to the list of entities eligible for SADW Funding on September 23, 2021. Refer to Appendix C of the SADW Fund Policy for the Drinking Water Technical Assistance Provider Request for Qualifications Guidelines. https://waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/docs/2022/rfq-guidelines.pdf

- PWSs may also benefit from TA where the grant agreement is between the State Water Board and the qualified TA provider.

More details on eligible projects by solution type is included in Section VI.B.

VI.A.1. PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM FUNDING PRIORITY CRITERIA

Due to fluctuating funding resources available year-to-year, grant/PF funding priority criteria for PWSs are defined in each annual FEP and DWSRF IUP and are based on the following:

- PWS type (refer to Section I)
- Projects addressing water system SAFER status
- Project category
- Water system size
- Community economic status

The way these criteria are applied for funding decisions will vary by solution type, further discussed in Section VI.B.

Projects Addressing Failing Status

A project that will resolve a Failing system's compliance order(s) associated with the Failing criteria. The project may include consolidation, treatment, new/repaired source, storage, distribution system enhancements or repairs, etc. Currently, there are six Failing criteria[40] categories:

1. Primary MCL Violation
2. Secondary MCL Violation
3. *E.Coli* Violation
4. Treatment Technique Violation[41]
5. Source Capacity & Water Outage Violation
6. Monitoring & Reporting Violations[42]

In addition, systems with exceedances of the hexavalent chromium MCL are considered eligible for funding similar to Failing systems, even if they are not yet on the Failing list.

A project that is addressing a Failing SAFER status may also include components that

[40] Failing Criteria for Community Water Systems and Schools https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/hr2w/docs/hr2w_expanded_criteria.pdf

[41] Systems that are only Failing for three or more Treatment Technique violations within the last three years, with no open/unaddressed Enforcement Action, are excluded from this project category.

[42] Monitoring and reporting violations are typically addressed through technical assistance that addresses the underlying managerial and/or technical capacity challenges.

are necessary to keep a system from moving to an At-Risk SAFER status. Projects addressing certain Failing criteria categories may be prioritized or de-prioritized based on annual funding availability, funding program eligibilities, and/or funding priorities.

Projects Addressing At-Risk Status

The State Water Board identifies public water systems that are "At-Risk" of failing through the Division of Drinking Water's Risk Assessment. A project addressing key risk indicators contributing to its "At-Risk" SAFER status may be prioritized or de-prioritized based on annual funding availability, funding program eligibilities, and/or funding priorities. The Risk Assessment assesses risk of failure in four categories: water quality, water accessibility, affordability, and TMF capacity.

Water Quality risk indicators measure current water quality and trends to identify compliance with regulatory requirements, as well as frequency of exposure to drinking water contaminants.

Accessibility risk indicators measure a system's ability to deliver safe, sufficient, and continuous drinking water to meet public health needs.

Affordability risk indicators measure the capacity of households and the community to supply the revenue necessary for a water system to pay for necessary capital, operations, and maintenance expenses.

TMF Capacity risk indicators measure a system's capacity to plan for, achieve, and maintain long term compliance with drinking water standards.

Infrastructure projects that address the risk indicators contributing to a water system's At-Risk SAFER status may be eligible for funding. A project that reduces operation and maintenance costs or helps bring a system into consistent compliance with drinking water standards may be eligible for grant/PF funding.

Project Categories

Table 5 defines different categories of drinking water projects that can be funded through the SAFER Program. For projects that fit into multiple project categories, the project category that most clearly aligns with the intended goal/intent of the project should be selected.

Consolidation and/or Emerging Contaminant projects may receive grant/PF funding regardless of the SAFER status of the water system(s). All other grant/PF eligible project categories in the table below will be grant/PF eligible only if the project is addressing a SAFER Failing or At-Risk status.

Table 5. Drinking Water Project Categories

Project Category	Description
Consolidation[43]	Projects that physically or managerially consolidate at least two water systems into a single public water system and/or projects that connect state small water system(s) and/or domestic well(s) to a public water system. See Definitions section and DWSRF IUP Appendix F for details.
System Enhancement/ Repairs/New Infrastructure (CIP improvements)	New infrastructure and infrastructure improvements that enhance reliability or sustainability of the water system
Drought Resiliency	Projects that improve a water system's ability to meet customer demand, especially during drought conditions. Drought resiliency projects may include, but are not limited to, construction of a back-up source for systems with a single source, storage tank, back-up generator, installation of meters, etc.
Distribution System	New distribution system, replacement or rehab of existing distribution system, leak repairs, etc.
Emerging Contaminants[44]	Projects that address one or more emerging contaminants.
Interim Assistance	Non-construction assistance. Includes, but is not limited to; bottled water, vended water, and point-of-use or point-of-entry treatment units.[45]
Operation and Maintenance Assistance	Direct O&M assistance includes financial payments to cover all or some of a public water system's personal, contractor, materials, and/or other ongoing expenses required for operating the water system.

[43] Consolidation projects that primarily address a Failing water system's compliance issue(s) are a higher priority than consolidation projects that benefit non-Failing water systems.
[44] In general, Emerging Contaminant projects will be funded through the EC Supplemental IUP.
[45] Health & Saf. Code, §116767, subd. (q).

System Types

The following PWSs may be eligible for grant/PF or reduced interest rate loans, for planning and construction projects, to the extent consistent with state and federal law.[46]

1) A Small CWS serving a DAC or MIC.
2) A NTNC that serves a Small DAC, if the system serves solely the following:
   - a public K-12 school[47]; and/or
   - a not-for-profit K-12 private school; and/or
   - a not-for-profit daycare facility; and/or
   - a not-for-profit labor camp; and/or
   - a not-for-profit elder care facility; and/or
   - a not-for-profit health care facility.

   Grant/PF funds will only be awarded to an eligible not-for-profit NTNC to the extent the NTNC cannot afford the full cost of repayable financing. The system's current operating budget shall be evaluated by the State Water Board to determine if an eligible not-for-profit NTNC has the financial capacity to afford repayable financing.

   An eligible not-for-profit NTNC water systems owned by a public school district is eligible for 100% grant/PF, subject to all other eligibility rules and requirements. To determine the equivalent service connections for a school, the total number of staff and students is divided by 3.3. In the case of oversubscription, grant/PF may be limited to Title I schools. In the case of multifamily residential properties served by a single connection, the single connection can be treated as multiple service connections for the purposes of calculating grant eligibility, based on the number of households or housing units within the building or complex.

3) A PWS that is consolidating or extending service to one or more Small CWSs, state small water systems, eligible NTNC that serves a DAC (see #2 above), or households on domestic wells.
4) An Expanded Small CWS or a Medium CWS that serves a DAC.

VI.B. ELIGIBLITIES BY SOLUTION TYPES

The following solution types may be applicable to PWSs and are fundable by the SADW Fund (see also Figure 4):

[46] Eligibility for non-repayable financing varies depending on funding source. To the extent permitted by funding source, the categories below include systems owned by Native American Tribes.
[47] Notwithstanding the definition of "not-for-profit" in the DWSRF Policy, NTNCs owned by public schools are deemed to be not-for-profit and may be eligible for grant/PF if authorized under the funding source.

- Interim and emergency assistance
- TA
- Administrators[48]
- Planning
- Construction (including consolidations)
- O&M

The following sections define the FY 2025-26 funding priority criteria for each solution type.

VI.B.1. INTERIM AND EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

Although the goal of the SAFER Program is to ensure long-term, sustainable supplies of safe drinking water, it may be necessary to fund interim solutions in certain communities as they progress towards a long-term solution. Interim solutions will help provide community members with access to safe drinking water while long-term solutions are being planned and constructed (e.g., bottled water, tanks and hauled water, point of use(POU)/point of entry (POE) treatment). Emergency improvements or repairs to existing water systems may also be necessary to ensure safe drinking water and are included in this solution type.

Interim Water Supplies

Interim water supplies may include bottled water, hauled water, POU/POE systems, vending machines/filling stations, temporary connections to safe water sources, or purchasing water at a higher cost (e.g., outside of a wholesale agreement or using other's water rights). Cost-effective and feasible solutions will vary by community size and types of contaminants. DFA will support the implementation of alternatives to bottled water wherever feasible and cost-effective. Some communities may require a combination of these solutions. In some cases, interim solutions may take a phased approach, e.g., immediate short-term provision of bottled water while POU/POE treatment is piloted and implemented. In other cases, an interim solution may be the only feasible long-term solution for a community.

A small Failing PWS serving less than 1,000 people, that is failing for exceedance of an acute primary MCL, may be eligible for interim water supplies for low-income households within the PWS service area boundary. Household income will be verified as part of the enrollment process defined in either a funding agreement with the PWS or if households served by a PWS are enrolled into an existing regional interim solution program. Table 6 presents a list of existing countywide and regional programs and indicates which programs may assist PWSs. Interim water supplies will generally be provided to eligible

[48] Administrator funding eligibility is not included in this section as designating PWSs for administrator appointment is a regulatory tool. For more information on the Administrator Program, see Appendix E.

households until the PWS's long-term solution has been constructed and the PWS is no longer on the Failing List; however, a PWSs eligibility for continued interim services is re-evaluated on an annual or bi-annual basis.

Table 6. Regional Programs for Interim Water Supplies that may Assist PWSs[49]

Funded Partner	Where	Applicable Services
County of Riverside	County-wide	Bottled water
County of Shasta	County-wide	Bottled water, hauled water
Community Water Center	Santa Cruz, San Benito, and Monterey counties	Bottled water
Pueblo Unido Community Development	For households located within Polanco Parks in unincorporated communities of the Eastern Coachella Valley.	POU/POE
Rural Community Assistance Corporation	Statewide, K-12 schools only (Bottled Water for Schools and Drinking Water for Schools Programs)	Bottled water, POU/POE
Self Help Enterprises	San Joaquin Valley (Kern, Kings, Tulare, Fresno, Madera, Merced, Mariposa, San Joaquin, and Stanislaus counties). Also includes K-12 Drinking Water for Schools Program.	Bottled water, hauled water, POU/POE

If there is a known entity implementing a mitigation program (e.g., CV-SALTS Management Zones or GSAs with existing dry well mitigation programs), further evaluation will be conducted to appropriately fund the need, as presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Interim Water Supply Provision Scenarios for PWSs

Scenario	Action	Duration
New enrollee PWS or K-12 school serving a community where no other local interim program exists.	PWSs that are DAC or eligible schools may be enrolled in State Water Board-funded program (if available) or apply for funding via Urgent Drinking Water Needs.	Services provided until funding agreement ends (generally for a two-year duration) or the long-term solution is constructed. Amendments may be considered. If enrolled in a school program, continued

[49] A full list of regional programs is available at: Division of Financial Assistance Statewide and Regional Program List https://waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/sustainable_water_solutions/docs/2023/safer-programs.pdf

Scenario	Action	Duration
		eligibility is re-evaluated annually or bi-annually.
New enrollee PWS or K-12 school serving a community where an entity has an existing mitigation program.	Households within the PWS boundary are referred to the appropriate mitigation program. Eligibility of school for the mitigation program will be evaluated.	N/A
Existing enrollee PWS or K-12 school serving a community where no other local interim program exists.	Administrator of State Water Board-funded program will evaluate PWS boundary in relation to known local programs. PWSs that are DAC or eligible schools may continue to be enrolled in State Water Board-funded program (if available) or apply for an amendment via Urgent Drinking Water Needs.	Continue services for another two years starting July 1, 2025 or until the long-term solution is constructed.
Existing enrollee PWS or K-12 school serving a community where an entity has an existing mitigation program.	Households within the PWS boundary are referred to the appropriate mitigation program. Eligibility of school for the mitigation program will be evaluated. Administrator of State Water Board-funded program will facilitate the transition.	N/A

Transitioning PWS Communities off Interim Assistance

As defined in Table 7 above, there will be situations where PWS communities will need to be transitioned off of State Water Board-funded interim assistance programs, either because: 1) a PWS's long-term solution has been constructed and/or the PWS is no longer Failing, 2) there is an existing local mitigation program, or 3) the two-year duration of service provision is over. This will be implemented via the following steps by the funding partners implementing State Water Board-funded programs:

- Submittal of a template transition letter for each of the three scenarios to DFA for review.

- Obtain written documentation that the local program will be providing interim assistance, if applicable.
- Notification and coordination with DDW prior to transitioning the community off of interim assistance.
- Advanced notification to the water system/community.

Emergency Repairs

Emergency funding generally refers to system-level emergency improvements or repairs (e.g., well replacement or emergency interties, that fall outside of the provision of bottled or hauled water) to address unforeseen needs experienced by individual water systems (see SADW Fund Policy Section VIII.E). Emergency funding requests are accepted on a continuous basis to address needs as they arise. An eligible applicant may apply for emergency funding directly with DFA. If the affected water system is located in the Central Valley or Coachella Valley, emergency funding may be available through Self-Help Enterprises' (SHE) or Pueblo Unido's emergency programs, respectively.

In some cases, assistance with interim water supplies may also be provided to ensure safe water is available while emergency improvements or repairs are implemented. Longer-term TA or planning needs can be subsequently evaluated and addressed, as needed. Since the long-term goal is for all systems to become sustainable, emergency funding may be conditioned on the system working to improve asset management and financial planning or taking other actions as directed by the State Water Board to improve the system's technical managerial and financial (TMF) capacity. In addition, systems that do not have an adequate emergency response plan or reserves to address "routine" emergencies (e.g., well pump failure or ruptured distribution lines) may be evaluated as candidates for appointment of an administrator or potential consolidation.

Emergency funding is not intended to serve as an expedited path to funding for non-emergency projects. Emergency requests submitted to circumvent the regular funding process for long-term solutions will not be approved.

Interim and Emergency Assistance Funding Eligibility Criteria

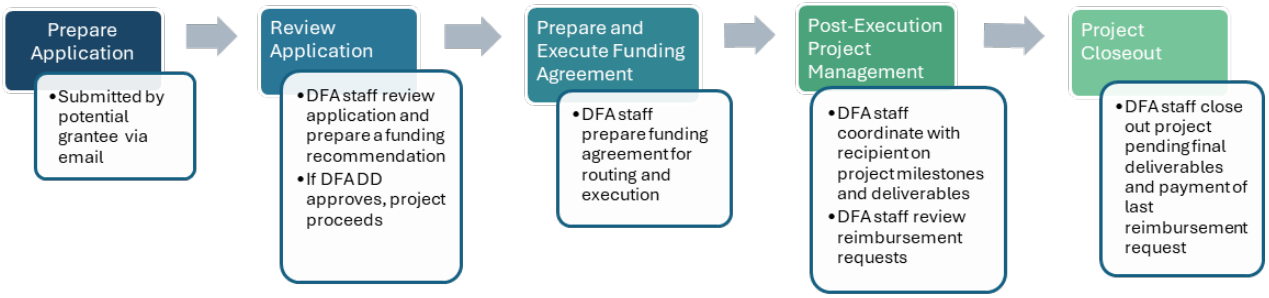
Eligible PWSs may apply for interim water supplies and/or emergency repairs with the expectation that they will initiate planning efforts (with or without TA) towards a long-term solution. Grant funding is available to small CWS or NTNC systems that serve DACs and also serve less than 1,000 people. Interim solutions will be focused on those households that can least afford to purchase their own bottled water, so DFA will generally require income verification for a household to receive bottled water or other type of interim solution. DFA may also accept analyses from providers of interim solutions demonstrating that all households in the community are, or are likely to be, below the applicable household income thresholds. After interim solutions are in progress, longer-term TA or planning needs will also be evaluated and addressed.

Interim and Emergency Assistance Funding Process

Interested parties may apply for funding for interim water supplies and emergency repairs through the UDWN application which can be found in the 'How to Apply' section of the CAA Urgent Drinking Water Needs Program webpage[50]. If an existing and applicable regional program exists, the applicant will be referred to the appropriate third-party provider or existing mitigation program as outlined in Table 7.

Figure 29 outlines the typical funding process for a project or assistance requested via the UDWN application. Timing from submittal of a complete UDWN application for interim assistance and the execution of an agreement can vary, with the ability to execute agreements in the most urgent situations within a week.

Figure 29. UDWN Funding Process



Other Considerations

Funding Sources

Funding for Interim Water Supplies and Emergency projects may come from various funding sources including, but not limited to, the SADW Fund and the CAA, and eligibility and funding agreement requirements may vary by funding source. DFA may direct an applicant, or project type to either SADW or CAA funding, but will ensure that the State Water Board does not run afoul of the statutory basis for CAA funding by eligible entities and project types, or the CAA Funding Program Guidelines[51] which implement those requirements.

Private, For-Profit Water Systems

For requests for funding for interim water supplies or emergency repairs, private, for-profit system owners may be evaluated on their reserves and ability to qualify for alternative

[50] CAA Urgent Drinking Water Need Projects
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/urgent_water_needs.html
[51] CAA Funding Program Guidelines
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/caa/docs/121118_6_final_caa_guidelines_clean_version.pdf

sources of funding to pay for or contribute to costs of the requested project. Financial documents (which may include, but are not limited to, profit and loss statements, tax returns, etc.) will be solicited and evaluated on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Division. This information will be provided in the funding recommendation to DFA's Deputy Director for review.

For private, for-profit water systems or other private entities that will be funded via the CAA, per the Guidelines, eligible entities may be required to provide financial statements to demonstrate that there are inadequate financial reserves available to address the urgent drinking water need. In addition, eligible individuals and privately-owned entities such as sole proprietors, partnerships, corporations and limited liability companies, are required to provide the following information:

- Owners' household information, including income information of each household member, and household living expenses;
- Assets and liabilities; and
- Trust certifications.

In addition, funding provided to a public utility that is regulated by the Public Utilities Commission or a mutual water company must have a clear and definite public purpose and benefit the customers of the water systems and not the investors or shareholders.

Based on the review of financial documents, additional documentation may be required and the approved grant amount may be reduced.

VI.B.2. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The State Water Board provides grant funding to qualified TA providers[52] to provide a variety of services geared toward accelerating the implementation of drinking water solutions. The State Water Board categorizes TA into two categories: planning assistance and capacity development assistance. Communities receiving TA often require both types of assistance to address regulatory compliance needs. See also Appendix J for more information on the TA Program.

Planning Assistance

TA that helps communities navigate from problem to solution is referred to as planning assistance and may include:

[52] Interested TA providers must submit a Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) to be evaluated and added to the qualified TA provider pool to receive funding from the State Water Board to provide TA.
Drinking Water TA Provider RFQ Guidelines
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/docs/2022/rfq-guidelines.pdf

- Feasibility study (FS) and Engineering Report (ER)
- Community outreach and engagement
- Consolidation agreements
- Full planning for submitting a construction funding application
- Support during construction

Capacity Development

TA that is intended to enhance the technical, managerial, and financial (TMF) capacity of PWSs is referred to as capacity development (CapDev) and may include but is not limited to:

- Income surveys
- Rate studies
- Financial audits
- Asset management
- Training (for Board members, operators, etc.)

Table 8 presents a list of existing master agreements with qualified TA providers, the counties served, services offered (see list above), and the amount of funding remaining in these agreements that is otherwise not committed to existing work plans.

Table 8. Technical Assistance Master Agreements (as of March 31, 2025)

Funded Partner	Where	Services	Available Funding
California Urban Water Agencies	Statewide	All except income surveys and legal services	$7.6 M
SB Coleman, Inc.	All CA Counties except: Imperial, Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura	All except consolidation planning and rate studies	$5.4 M
Community Water Center	San Joaquin Valley and Central Coast	All except hydrogeological analyses and income surveys	$7.3 M
GHD, Inc.	Statewide	All	$13.5 M
Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability	San Joaquin Valley and Coachella Valley	Outreach, consolidation planning, income	$0.3 M

Funded Partner	Where	Services	Available Funding
		surveys, and legal services	
NV5, Inc.	Statewide	All except hydrogeological analyses, income surveys, and rate studies	$6.1 M
Provost & Pritchard Engineering Group, Inc.	All CA Counties except: Alpine, Del Norte, Humboldt, Imperial, Lake, Marin, Modoc, Mono, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Deigo, San Francisco, San Mateo, Stanislaus	All except income surveys and legal services	$11.6 M
Rural Community Assistance Corporation	Statewide	All	$19.8 M
Self-Help Enterprises	San Joaquin Valley Counties	All	$18.6 M
Stantec Consulting Services, Inc.	All CA Counties except: Del Norte, Humboldt, Lassen, Modoc, Shasta, Siskiyou, and Trinity	All except legal services	$8.2 M
University Enterprises Inc. at California State University, Sacramento	Statewide	All except legal services	$1.9 M
University of California at Davis, School of Law	Statewide	Legal services	$1.5 M

Technical Assistance Funding Eligibility Criteria

Eligible PWSs may request TA for a number of services; however, priority will be given to requests that address a PWS's Failing SAFER status. TA for the consolidations of non-Failing PWSs may also be considered. Small PWSs that have a post-2024 sample exceedance for the hexavalent chromium MCL and a compliance plan in place may be eligible for TA. Table 9 presents eligibility criteria for TA for PWSs.

TA provided to small non-DACs will be for long-term solutions that, when implemented, will reduce GHG emissions directly or indirectly through water system improvements that

reduce water and energy demand and increase sustainability to mitigate potential for emergency response needs.

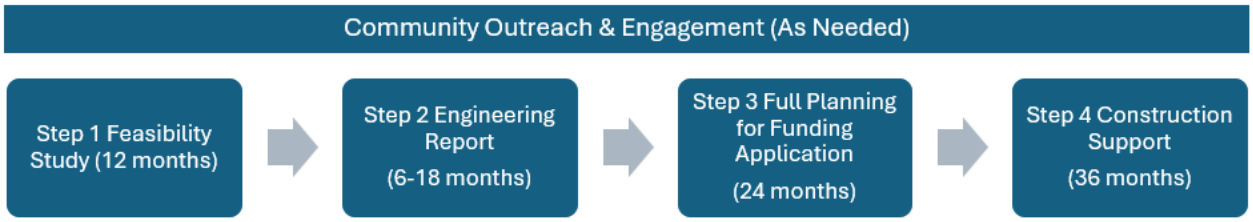
Table 9. TA Eligibility Criteria

Current SAFER Status	TA Eligible	Potential Consolidation Project
DAC, SDAC, or MIC		
Failing[53]	Planning & CapDev	Planning & CapDev
At-Risk; Potentially At-Risk	CapDev Only	
Not At-Risk; Not Assessed or Missing	Not Eligible	
Non-DAC		
Failing	Planning & CapDev	Planning & CapDev
At-Risk; Potentially At-Risk; Not At-Risk; Not Assessed or Missing	Not Eligible	

TA Steps: From Problem to Planning for a Possible Long-Term Construction Project Solution

The State Water Board will prioritize TA planning projects as summarized in Table 9. The State Water Board proposes the following clarifications and expectations for TA projects including PWSs. Figure 30 defines steps for a PWS to go from problem identification to planning via TA for a possible long-term construction project solution, including criteria to move from one step to the next.

Figure 30. Steps for a PWS Receiving TA for Planning



Community Outreach & Engagement: The required level of community outreach will be determined when scoping a project and the necessary type of engagement may shift throughout the life of the project. The following steps highlight when the outcomes of community outreach and engagement will inform the progression of a long-term project through the State Water Board's TA funding process.

[53] Systems exceeding the hexavalent chromium MCL have the same eligibilities as Failing systems.

- Engagement and Education: Throughout the development of the feasibility study (FS) and engineering report (ER), the provider will continue to reach out to the community and educate them on potential alternatives for the long-term solution, the costs and benefits of implementing that solution, and requirements for receiving funding. Engagement may be provided via mailers, door-to-door outreach, updates at community meetings, or all three.
- Collecting Right-of-Entry (ROE) Agreements, Service Agreements, and Easements: During the development of the ER and Full Planning steps, outreach will be conducted to obtain the necessary agreements and easements to allow the project to be constructed if work is required to be conducted on private property.

STEP 1: Feasibility Study: This is the preliminary assessment of the PWS's issues and the initial step in development of potential long-term solutions. The FS is usually developed for systems where the potential long-term solutions are not readily apparent. If the long-term solution for the system is already known, or if it is likely to be consolidation, then this step may be skipped, and the project will begin at Step 2.

If not skipped, the FS will be the basis for an ER, which is a required component of a State Water Board construction funding application. The FS typically includes all of the steps through the alternative analysis that are described in the DWSRF Technical Application Instructions. Development of an FS should take 12 months or less to complete. The results of the FS will be used to inform the community of their potential long-term solution options and estimated costs associated with implementing each option.

Criteria to Move Forward to Step 2:

- The FS must identify one or more alternatives that are deemed technically feasible/permittable, financially feasible, and affordable by the community, the regulator, and the potential funding agency.
- To qualify for additional TA assistance and move towards the next step in the planning process, a preferred long-term solution should be selected and be on track to:
    - Be within either the State Water Board's construction funding thresholds established in the current FY's DWSRF IUP or an alternative funding source's eligibility criteria.
    - Result in a project that can be permitted by the regulator.
    - Allow for the long-term affordability of the project. The FS should include consideration of the likely water rate associated with implementing the long-term solution. The affordability of the long-term solution will be compared to all other alternatives evaluated in the FS, including a "no-project" alternative. The likely water rate as a percentage of MHI may also be used as an indicator of whether affordability may be a challenge in implementing any of the identified options.
    - Identify a willing PWS applicant for the State Water Board construction funding application. The applicant must have the necessary managerial capacity and

governance structure[54] to implement the project and then operate and maintain the project for its useful life.

- If the system decides to pursue a long-term solution not meeting all the criteria above, then TA funding may not be provided to support further planning beyond this step.

STEP 2: Engineering Report: A full ER is a required component of the State Water Board's construction funding application. The ER generally defines the issues faced by the community; identifies and evaluates different alternatives including an analysis of consolidation as an alternative; and provides a comparison of proposed alternatives with respect to design criteria, environmental considerations, constructability, overall advantages/disadvantages of evaluated alternatives, a life cycle cost analysis, cost estimate, and more. The ER also includes the engineering consultant's recommended alternative, which will include consideration of feedback from the water system governing body and community members, where applicable. If a FS was already completed in Step 1, the ER will complete the remaining elements that are outlined in the ER requirements included in the State Water Board's DWSRF Technical Application Instructions. If Step 1 was completed, the expected timeline to complete the ER is 6 months. If no work has been completed prior to developing the ER, it should be completed within approximately 18 months. Table 10 compares the tasks that are included in an FS against the tasks included in the ER.

Table 10. Feasibility Study vs. Engineering Report Components

Elements	Feasibility Study	Engineering Report
1. Executive Summary	Required	Required
2. Background Project Information	Required	Required
3. Problem Description	Required	Required
4. Consolidation Analysis	Required	Required
5. Alternative Analysis	Required	Required
6. Selected Project	-	Required
7. Detailed Cost Estimate for the Selected Project	-	Required
8. Proposed Schedule	-	Required
9. Schematic and Map of System's Proposed Facilities	-	Required
10. Comprehensive Response to Climate Change	-	Required
11. Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Reduction Efforts	-	Required

[54] Section VII., Governing Authorities, of the Policy for Implementing the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund provides the authorities that an applicant must have to receive a construction funding agreement from the State Water Board. https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/services/funding/documents/srf/dwsrf_policy/dwsrf-policy-final.pdf

Elements	Feasibility Study	Engineering Report
12. Copy of Any Permits required as Part of the Project	-	Required
13. Supplemental Information Form	-	Consolidation Projects Only

Criteria to Move Forward to Step 3:

- The selected alternative identified in the ER must be technically feasible, fundable, and affordable for the community. The same criteria from moving from Step 1 to Step 2.
- For voluntary consolidation projects, a letter of intent must be provided by all water systems to demonstrate their willingness to consolidate. The letter of intent may be waived if a mandatory consolidation order has been issued by the State Water Board.

STEP 3: Full Planning for Funding Application: This involves completion of all planning tasks that are required to submit a completed State Water Board construction funding application. This can include developing final plans and specifications, an engineer's cost estimate, California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documents and notices, audited financial statements, consolidation agreements, and development of other documents necessary for project planning. This step may also include support in developing and/or completing the four required State Water Board Construction Financing Application packages (General/Technical/Environmental/Financial Security). If the need for additional TA CapDev support is identified (i.e., rate study, legal assistance, income survey, etc.) then the TA work plans may be amended to include the additional TA support required to complete a construction funding application and satisfy TMF funding requirements associated with State and Federal construction funding.

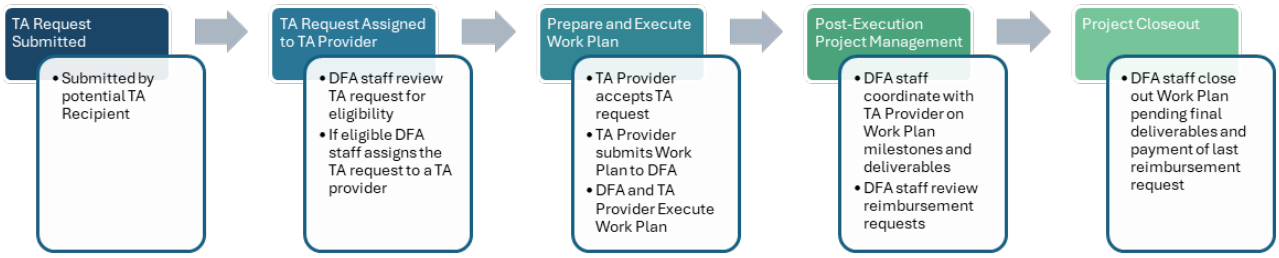
STEP 4 (optional): Construction Support: This step may not be applicable to all TA recipients. It can involve providing construction grant administration and/or construction management services to the funding recipient. These services may include, but are not limited to: bidding services, submitting invoices and quarterly reports, engineering services during construction, construction oversight, collecting remaining right of entry agreements, assistance with service lateral installation, or assistance with billing and transitioning service to the receiving water system.

Technical Assistance Request Process

To request TA, a water system may submit a TA request directly, or seek the assistance of a local nonprofit organization, DDW District Office, or County Department of Environmental Health to submit the request on its behalf. The completed TA Request Form is submitted by emailing it to DFA-TArequest@waterboards.ca.gov or by filling out the online form.

Figure 31 outlines the typical process for a TA request. Timing from submittal of a TA request through assignment and execution of a work plan can range from one to three months.

Figure 31. TA Request Process



TA Providers

The State Water Board previously accepted SOQs from prospective drinking water TA providers following the Drinking Water TA Provider RFQ Guidelines. Once evaluated and accepted, the TA provider was added to the qualified TA provider pool and could then submit a proposal to the State Water Board to enter into a master agreement to provide TA services. The State Water Board is not currently accepting new SOQs.

VI.B.3. PLANNING

Planning is a necessary step towards a community's long-term solution and may include items such as, legal costs, studies, preliminary engineering, and design for a project. Planning may be conducted either through a grant agreement with an individual water system (outlined in this section) or via TA (see Section IV.C). A system-led planning project may be eligible for funding via the DWSRF and its complementary funding sources administered through the annual DWSRF IUP, but also the broader SAFER Program (via the SADW Fund).

The State Water Board will provide funding for the planning and design of eligible drinking water improvements to publicly and privately-owned CWS and non-profit, non-community water systems. Certain state funding may also be provided to eligible entities to undertake projects on behalf of a PWS. Grant/PF may be available for projects benefitting Small, Expanded Small, or Medium DACs or MICs. Large CWSs and many NTNC systems are not eligible.

Planning Funding Eligibility Criteria

An eligible applicant may apply solely for planning funding with the option to later apply for construction funding. Planning grant/PF funds are available to **Small** or **Expanded Small** CWS or eligible NTNC systems that serve a **DAC.** In addition, Small and Expanded Small Non-DACs may receive 100% planning grant/PF to address a Failing SAFER

status. Medium, and Large PWSs are generally not eligible for planning grant/PF. Additional information can be found in the DWSRF IUP.

Table 11. Planning Grant/PF Eligibility Criteria

Project Category[55]	System Not Failing or At-Risk of Failing	Project Addresses System Failing or At-Risk of Failing Status
Consolidation	Up to 100% Planning Costs	Up to 100% Planning Costs
Emerging Contaminants		
Drought Resiliency	Loan Only (refer to DWSRF IUP)	
Distribution System		
System Enhancements / Repairs / New Infrastructure (CIP improvements)		
Interim Assistance	*N/A*	
O&M Assistance		

Planning Funding Process

Interested parties may apply for funding for planning grants for drinking water infrastructure and consolidation projects through the FAAST[56] pre-application, which includes a set of general questions regarding the water system, project description, and type of funding assistance being requested. The pre-application process allows DFA staff to engage with interested parties early to better assist with the application, connect interested parties with TA providers if needed, and determine which funding source within the broader SAFER Program is most appropriate. Prospective applicants may also choose to skip the pre-application and apply for planning funding through FAAST, and submit a general, technical, environmental, and financial security package for review.

Figure 32 outlines the typical funding process for a planning project requested through the DWSRF application. Timing from submittal of a complete planning application and the execution of an agreement can range from six to nine months.

[55] See Table 5. Drinking Water Project Categories
[56] FAAST - Financial Assistance Application Submittal Tool
https://faast.waterboards.ca.gov/

Figure 32. Planning Funding Process

VI.B.4. CONSTRUCTION

A construction project that addresses a PWS's Failing or At-Risk SAFER status is the culmination of a PWS's path towards a long-term solution and includes, but is not limited to, final plans and specifications, treatment systems, new water sources, interconnections, consolidations, acquisition of water systems, purchase of land or equipment, and extending service to residents currently served by individual wells or surface water sources. A system-specific construction project may be eligible for funding via the DWSRF and its complementary funding sources administered through the annual DWSRF IUP, but also the broader SAFER Program (via the SADW Fund).

The State Water Board will provide funding for the construction of eligible drinking water improvements to publicly and privately-owned CWS and non-profit, non-community water systems. Certain state funding may also be provided to eligible entities to undertake projects on behalf of a PWS. Grant/PF may be available for projects benefitting Small, Expanded Small, or Medium DACs or MICs. Large CWSs and many NTNC systems are not eligible.

Construction Funding Eligibility Criteria

Grant/PF construction funds are available to benefit CWS or not-for-profit NTNC systems that serve a **Small, Expanded Small, or Medium DAC** or **Small MIC** based on the following criteria summarized in Table 12 and Table 13 subject to the limitations discussed in Section VI.A.1 above. Grant/PF construction funds are also available to consolidate domestic wells that are At-Risk or state small water systems that are At-Risk. The State Water Board offers up to 100% project cost grant/PF for construction projects based on the community/system SAFER status and project type. Grant/PF will generally be limited to project components necessary to resolve the SAFER Failing or At-Risk status, or for consolidation.

The maximum grant/PF is based on grant/PF funding benefiting the community in a five-year period. This includes planning, TA, Administrator, direct O&M, and construction funding for the community, but not GWGP funds, consolidation incentives, or funds received under a supplemental IUP.

A project involving consolidation or the extension of services may result in the cost per connection for a specific community being significantly higher than the other communities involved in the project. For these projects, both the overall cost per connection and the individual community cost per connection must remain within the limits summarized in Table 12.

If the project is only partially grant/PF eligible, the applicant may choose to fund the remainder of the total project cost (Local Cost Share) from other sources (e.g., repayable financing; grant funding from sources other than the State Water Board; or other sources).

The Deputy Director of DFA may approve:

- Up to a $80,000 per connection during the Final Budget Approval (after the project goes out to bid).
- Up to $120,000 per connection for projects addressing compliance with a mandatory consolidation order or addressing a system with an appointed Administrator.
- Grant/PF for a project that addresses a system's Failing status or a consolidation project for a MIC or non-DAC for good cause to the extent authorized under federal and state law.

In addition, the following limits may apply:

- If there are limited grant/PF funds available, small DACs will be prioritized for funding.
- Prop 1 and Prop 68 grant funds are limited to $5 million per project ($20 million limit for projects that provide regional benefits or are shared among multiple entities).

Table 12. Maximum Grant/PF and Cost Per Connection Construction Limits

Connections[57]	Maximum Cost per Connection	Maximum Grant/PF
1-20	N/A	$3,000,000
21-50		$7,000,000
51-100		$10,000,000
101-200		$14,000,000
≥ 201	$70,000[58]	$50,000,000

Table 13. Construction Grant/PF Eligibility Criteria

Project Category [59]	System Not Failing or At-Risk of Failing	System Failing or At-Risk of Failing Status
Consolidation	Up to 100% project cost	Up to 100% project cost
Emerging Contaminants[60]		
Drought Resiliency	Loan Only (refer to DWSRF IUP)	
Distribution System		
System Enhancements / Repairs / New Infrastructure (CIP improvements)		
Interim Assistance	N/A	
O&M Assistance		

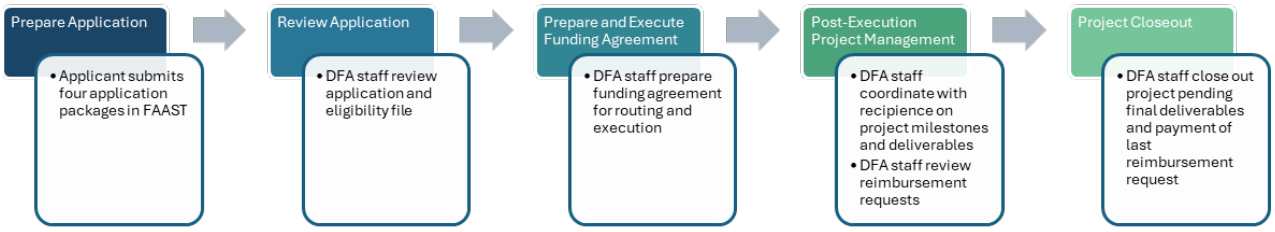
[57] Includes total residential connections included in the project: public water system, state small water system, and domestic well residential connection. See Appendix K for more information on the cost per connection methodology.
[58] Deputy Director can approve higher cost per connection after a project goes to bid up to $80,000 per connection.
[59] See Table 5. Drinking Water Project Categories.
[60] In general, Emerging Contaminant projects will be funded through the DWSRF IUP's EC Supplemental IUP.

Typical Construction Funding Process

Interested parties may apply for funding for construction grants through FAAST[61], and submit a general, technical, environmental, and financial security package for review. If an interested party is working with a TA provider for planning, preparation of a construction application is typically included in the TA work plan.

Figure 33 outlines the State Water Board's typical funding process for a construction project. Timing from submittal of a complete construction application and the execution of an agreement can range from six to twelve months.

Figure 33. Construction Funding Process



As outlined in the DWSRF Policy and IUP, multiple funding sources, including SADW funds, may be used to fund construction projects. Other more unique approaches to funding construction projects with SADW funds are outlined below.

Expedited Drinking Water Grant Funding Program

Certain types of eligible construction projects may be funded with SADW funds, and other state grants, via the EDWG Funding Program[62], which is a more streamlined application compared with the DWSRF application. More information on the EDWG Program is included in Appendix E.

- Eligible applicants include:
  - CWSs owned by public agencies.
  - CWSs owned by public utilities incorporated in California and in good standing with the Secretary of State that are subject to regulation by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC).
  - NTNC water systems owned by public school districts.
- Eligible projects include:
  - Must be eligible project types under the DWSRF Policy and the DWSRF IUP;
  - Must benefit a small SDAC, a small DAC, a small non-DAC, or an expanded small DAC/SDAC, as defined in the DWSRF Policy and DWSRF IUP;

[61] FAAST - Financial Assistance Application Submittal Tool
https://faast.waterboards.ca.gov/
[62] Expedited Drinking Water Grant Funding Program Guidelines
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_info/agendas/2023/mar/030823_7_guidelines.pdf

- Must consist of the construction of capital assets, as defined in Government Code §16727(a);
- Must not be comprised solely of the planning activities associated with an eventual construction project;
- Must be a Category A-D project and/or be a consolidation project, as defined in the DWSRF Policy and DWSRF IUP[63];
- Projects proposed by a public utility shall have a clear and definite public purpose and shall benefit the customers of the water system and not the investors.

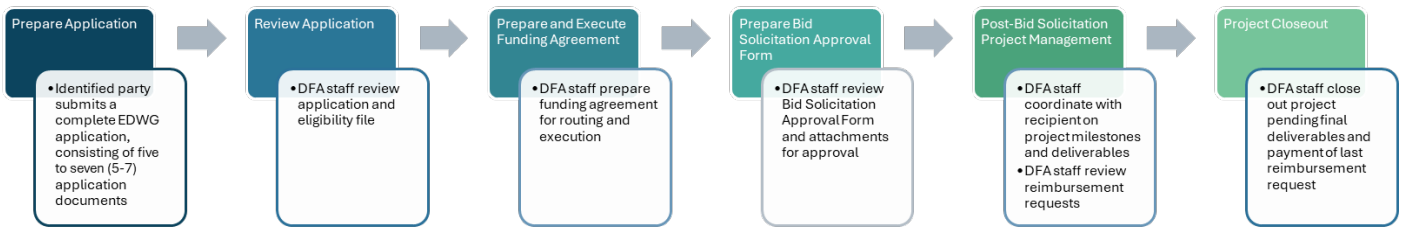
The grant limits shall be the same as set forth in the DWSRF IUP, except that the maximum amount per project is $15 million, unless the Deputy Director of DFA or designee approves a grant limit above $15 million for a project for good cause, on a case-by-case basis.

EDWG Construction Funding Process

Eligible parties and projects that have submitted a partial or complete DWSRF construction application may be invited to the EDWG program and may be asked to submit an EDWG construction application for review. The EDWG construction application consists of a scope of work, engineering document, self-certification form, authorized representative resolution, and CEQA planning exemption certification form (if applicable) for review prior to the execution of funding agreement. The EDWG environmental package, EDWG financial package, TMF assessment, and any other required documents can be submitted after the execution of a funding agreement and generally prior to the solicitation of bids. If the identified party is working with a TA provider for planning, the TA work plan can be adjusted for the preparation of an EDWG construction application.

Figure 34 outlines the typical funding process for a construction project identified for the EDWG Program. Timing from submittal of a complete application and the execution of an agreement can range from four to eight months.

Figure 34. EDWG Construction Funding Process



[63] Projects addressing a system's Failing status will also be prioritized for the EDWG Program.

Final Budget Approval Amendments

Construction projects that require an increase in funding during a final budget approval (FBA) amendment may be funded with SADW funds. In an evaluation of recently executed FBA amendments with cost increases since January 1, 2023, there has been an increasing trend of requests that are on average 30 percent over the original agreement amount. For FY 2025-26, it is projected that approximately $72 million in grant/principal forgiveness will be needed for FBA amendments. Some portion of SADW funds targeted for construction projects may be used to assist with funding FBA amendments, as noted in Section IV.B, and will be prioritized for projects addressing Failing water systems and consolidation.

Construction Via Urgent Drinking Water Needs Process

Certain types of eligible construction projects may be funded with SADW funds via the Urgent Drinking Water Needs (UDWN) application process rather than the traditional DWSRF application and approval process, for projects that meet all of the following criteria, and are aligned with the SAFER Programs priorities:

- Project cost is less than $1,000,000.
- Project will serve a small DAC, primarily low-income households, or a school.
- Water system is Failing and the project is:
    - urgent in nature (i.e., a system [or household(s)] is experiencing or is expected to experience a water shortage), **or**
    - supports consolidation goals (i.e., relatively small-scale work on private property that will help move a consolidation project towards completion).
- The project does not include an extensive planning component (or planning has been completed) or have outstanding legal complexities and is ready-to-proceed (i.e., shovel-ready).
- Environmental work (California Environmental Quality Act [CEQA]) has been completed or the project has been deemed CEQA-exempt.

The Deputy Director of DFA has discretion to approve projects that do not meet the criteria outlined above on a case-by-case basis to streamline the funding application and approval process where funding source rules do not preclude such an approach.

Consolidations

Consolidations are considered a type of construction project, which means joining two or more PWSs, State Small Water Systems, or affected residences into a single PWS. For the purposes of funding eligibility under the DWSRF IUP and this FEP, consolidations can also include projects that will achieve the following: provision of water via a master meter agreement where the Subsumed Water System is no longer separately permitted, or managerial consolidation where separate water system permits may still exist upon completion of the project. The term “consolidation” does not include the provision of water

via an interconnection where the water systems will continue to operate under separate PWS permits.

It is the intent of the State Water Board to promote consolidation where appropriate and feasible, especially among Small CWSs serving DACs, which also supports SAFER Program goals 1 and 3. To support consolidation, DFA, in coordination with DDW, will continue to emphasize consolidation opportunities by providing project financing and TA. Funding available through DFA can act as a key incentive for consolidation projects, even when other approaches such as mandatory consolidation orders are not applicable.

For more information, refer to the Guidelines for Consolidation Projects (Appendix A of the Policy for Implementing the DWSRF (DWSRF Policy))[64].

VI.B.5. OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

The goal of the Direct O&M Funding Program is to provide assistance in cases where there is a direct correlation to supporting the affordability of water (as part of the human right to water) while also improving system sustainability. O&M funding has also been utilized to facilitate voluntary consolidations and provide interim O&M funding for water systems that will be or have been appointed an administrator.

Eligible costs that may be covered through reimbursement to the water system are the actual, reasonable, and necessary O&M costs for eligible Projects, including, but not limited to:

- Permitting
- Sampling and Monitoring
- Reporting
- Utility bills
- Chemicals and consumable media
- Replacement or changeout of existing equipment
- Appropriately qualified plant operator(s) and contractors
- Costs to establish an operating reserve account
- Costs to pay principal or interest of existing long-term indebtedness
- Unforeseen repairs necessary to keep or restore water service to the system's customers.

The following are not eligible for reimbursement as part of a Project:

- O&M costs incurred prior to July 24, 2019, except for long-term debt obligations
- Contingency costs
- Indirect costs, overhead costs, or markup

[64] Guidelines for Consolidation Projects https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/services/funding/documents/srf/dwsrf_policy/appendix_a.pdf

- Costs for capital improvement projects.

For FY 2025-26, direct O&M support will be considered on a case-by-case basis (previously referred to as 'Group 2 Case by Case'[65]) for circumstances including, but not limited to:

- Small DAC water systems with existing debt burdens.
- NTNCs owned by a K-12 public school district.
- Small DAC water systems owned by California Native American Tribes that can demonstrate an O&M assistance need.
- Small DAC water systems on the Failing List.

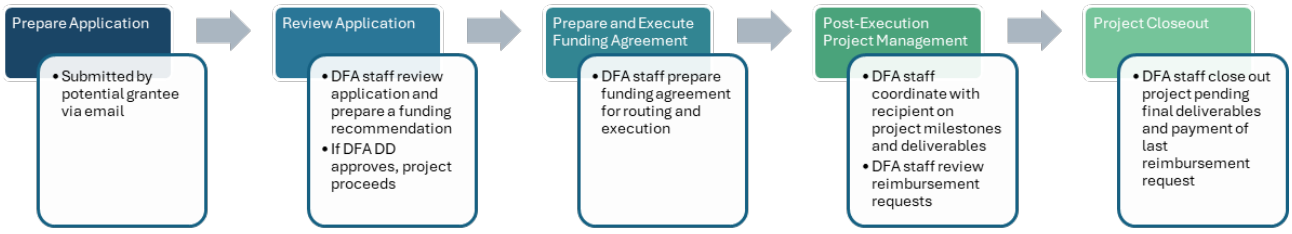
The Deputy Director of DFA has discretion to approve projects that do not fall into the scenarios outlined above on a case-by-case basis.

O&M Funding Process

Interested parties may apply for funding for direct O&M funding through the interim water supplies and emergency repairs through the UDWN application which can be found in the 'How to Apply' section of the Direct Operation and Maintenance Funding Program webpage[66].

Figure 35 outlines the typical funding process for a project or assistance requested via the UDWN application. Timing from submittal of a complete UDWN application for O&M assistance and the execution of an agreement can range from three to six months.

Figure 35. O&M Funding Process



[65] See FY 2024-25 FEP, Section V.D and Appendix K. https://waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/docs/2024/draft-final-fy2024-25-fep-clean-version.pdf

[66] Direct Operation and Maintenance Funding Program https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/sustainable_water_solutions/direct-operation-maintenance.html

VI.C. PFAS AND OTHER EMERGING CONTAMINANTS

Federal funding, such as the emerging contaminants in Small or Disadvantaged Communities Grant Program[67] is currently available to address emerging contaminants, such as manganese, PFAS and 1,2,3-TCP[68].

A portion of SADW funds may be utilized consistent with this FEP to meet the needs of small DACs, to the extent consistent with the funding source requirements, and aligned with SAFER Program priorities. These may include:

- Support of statewide testing for small or DAC CWSs for PFAS. This work is anticipated to be implemented via an agreement with an eligible third-party TA provider.
- Discussions with consultants, non-governmental organizations and subject matter experts to identify potentially interested parties to conduct treatment pilots and/or demonstration projects for small DACs. The scope could include development of design templates for small and medium systems.
- Support of development and planning for projects benefiting small DACs where physical consolidation approaches may be the most cost-effective approach to addressing emerging contaminants contamination.
- Support of planning for projects benefiting small DACs to treat PFAS and other emerging contaminants.

The Deputy Director has authority to approve funding of eligible needs consistent with this FEP. A majority of funding is expected to be utilized for eligible emerging contaminant construction projects, which will be implemented and funded consistent with the process outlined in the DWSRF application process and IUP, including the Supplemental IUP for Emerging Contaminants.

Information on PFAS and other contaminants of emerging concern as they relate to DW/SSWSs is discussed in Section VII.C.1.

VI.C.1. HEXAVALENT CHROMIUM

The State Water Board adopted the proposed hexavalent chromium MCL in April 2024 and went into effect in October 2024. Since compliance enforcement of the MCL will be rolled out over the course of two to four years based on system size, systems with sampling results exceeding the MCL will not be placed on the Failing List unless both 1)

[67] Emerging Contaminants in Small or Disadvantaged Communities Grant Program https://www.epa.gov/dwcapacity/emerging-contaminants-ec-small-or-disadvantaged-communities-grant-sdc

[68] See also the FY 2025-26 DWSRF IUP Section VI on Emerging Contaminants and PFAS and the IUP's Appendix L Emerging Contaminants Supplemental IUP.

the average of four quarterly sampling results is above the proposed MCL, and 2) the appropriate compliance date passes.

Systems with exceedances of the hexavalent chromium MCL are considered eligible for funding similar to Failing systems, even if they are not yet on the Failing list. If a system is found to have a hexavalent chromium exceedance and already has a long-term solution in progress, the proposed project will be re-evaluated to ensure that it also includes a mechanism to address the potential hexavalent chromium issue, in addition to addressing the other causes for the system being on the Failing list. There are currently 117 known small systems with potential hexavalent chromium MCL exceedances.

VI.D. DROUGHT INFRASTRUCTURE (SB 552)

In September 2021, SB 552 was chaptered which included requirements around drought planning that are expected to improve the ability of Californians to manage future droughts and help prevent catastrophic impacts on drinking water for communities vulnerable to impacts of climate change. The 2022 Needs Assessment includes a targeted drought infrastructure cost assessment and estimates the total cost for all applicable small water suppliers to implement the five requirements with the earliest compliance deadlines to be $2.4 billion.

The existing Backup Generator Funding Program[69] administered by RCAC and any existing TA work plans that included tasks related to SB 552 compliance will continue through completion. New requests related to SB 552 compliance may be considered with respect to other funding priorities.

VI.E. TRIBAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to the data managed by United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) of federally recognized tribes[70] in California in 2024, there are approximately 148 tribal water systems, comprised of 112 tribal CWSs, 23 non-transient non-community water systems (NTNCs), and 13 transient water systems that are regulated by U.S. EPA. State Water Board staff worked with U.S. EPA tribal drinking water staff to apply the Failing PWS criteria to the 148 tribal water systems that U.S. EPA regulates. Per this assessment, 16 tribal CWSs met the criteria for a Failing system, representing a total of 1,914 connections. Six of the 16 tribal CWSs have primary MCL enforcement actions, one had an E.coli violation, and thirteen have treatment technique violations.

Federally regulated tribal water systems are not required to sample contaminants regulated by California. Therefore, it is expected that there may also be tribal water systems that are not currently meeting California-specific maximum contaminant levels

[69] To the extent possible, the existing Backup Generator Funding Program will evaluate the potential to use the lowest emission power sources when feasible.
[70] U.S. EPA's Envirofacts Safe Drinking Water Search for Tribes
https://enviro.epa.gov/enviro/sdw_form_v3.create_page?state_abbr=09

that are not captured in this list. Planning and construction funding for tribal water systems can be obtained from the U.S. EPA (either directly or via Indian Health Service [IHS]), in addition to being available from the State[71]. SAFER Program funding may be able to assist tribal communities to address funding gaps for items such as funding shortfall for construction projects, funding projects that serve communities with both tribal and non-tribal households, funding urgent needs (e.g., interim water supplies and emergency repairs), eligible O&M costs, and providing TA.

In January 2025, $485,380 was approved for the Big Sandy Rancheria of Western Mono Indians of California. The funding is for the planning phase and includes drilling up to two test well(s) and preparing necessary documents for a construction application. The new production well will provide additional water supply to meet the current demands of the tribe.

The tribal needs assessment is included in the 2025 Needs Assessment. More information on outreach to tribes is included in this FEP's Appendix E.

[71] In association with projects implemented by tribes or others, reasonable project costs associated with the implementation of necessary environmental monitoring or mitigation (i.e., biological, cultural etc.), as required by DFA and state and/or federal agencies, can typically be included in the project budget and reimbursed with State Water Board funds.

VII. FUNDING ELIGIBILITIES FOR STATE SMALL WATER SYSTEMS AND DOMESTIC WELLS

Funding resources have been historically limited for interim or long-term solutions for communities served by DW/SSWSs. General fund appropriations in 2015 in response to the 2012-2016 drought marked the start of certain regional funding programs administered by a third-party that could provide interim water supplies for affected eligible low-income households. In 2019, the SADW Fund was a new funding source that could potentially fund more interim assistance, technical assistance, and long-term solutions for DW/SSWSs via third-party funding partners.

The State Water Board now has several programs in place that assist disadvantaged Californian's served by failing or high-risk DW/SSWSs. These programs are a mix of interim solutions (e.g., bottled water, tanks and hauled water, POU/POE treatment systems) and long-term solutions (e.g., well repairs and replacements, connections to existing systems, and POU/POE in some cases). These programs are generally also contingent on either a water quality issue (determined through well testing results) or water shortage (e.g., dry or failed well), as well as income qualification.

Funding eligibilities for DW/SSWSs across solution types are further described below. Additionally, the following Appendices are available related to programs for households served by DW/SSWSs.

- Appendix L is a list of programs that assist households supplied by a DW that consistently fails to provide an adequate supply of safe drinking water.
- Appendix M is a list of programs that assist households and schools whose tap water contains contaminants, such as lead or secondary contaminants, at levels that exceed recommended standards.

VII.A. IDENTIFICATION OF DOMESTIC WELLS AND STATE SMALLS THAT ARE AT RISK

Per Health and Safety Code section 116772, subdivision (a), the State Water Board was required to develop and make available by January 1, 2021, a map of aquifers that are at high risk of containing contaminants that exceed safe drinking water standards that are used or likely to be used as a source of drinking water for a state small or a domestic well. This was accomplished through the development of the Aquifer Risk Map[72], which is updated annually through the Needs Assessment's Risk Assessment for DW/SSWSs.

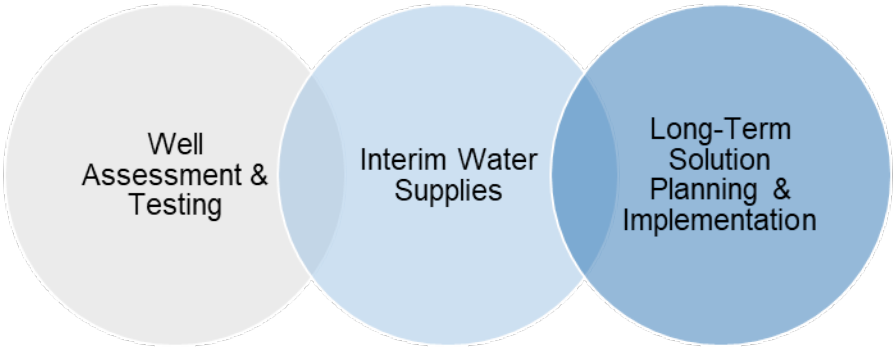
[72] The At-Risk Aquifer Map and associated methodologies can be found at: https://gispublic.waterboards.ca.gov/portal/apps/experiencebuilder/experience/?id=18c7d253f0a44fd2a5c7bcfb42cc158d

Based on the results of the 2025 Needs Assessment, over 93,000 of the DWs and 205 of the SSWSs with available data were assessed as high-risk[73]. The counties with the highest number of DWs in At-Risk areas are Nevada, Fresno, El Dorado, and San Diego counties. The counties with the highest number of SSWSs in At-Risk areas are Kern, Tulare and Monterey counties.

VII.B. ELIGIBLITIES BY SOLUTION TYPES

The State Water Board has several programs in place that assist disadvantaged Californians served by failing or high-risk DWs/SSWSs. As shown in Figure 36 these programs are a mix of interim solutions (e.g., bottled water, tanks and hauled water, POU/POE treatment systems) and long-term solution planning and implementation (e.g., well repairs and replacements, connections to existing systems, and POU/POE in some cases). These programs are generally also contingent on either a water quality issue (determined through well testing results) or water shortage (e.g., dry or failed well), as well as income qualification.

Figure 36. Domestic Well & State Small Water Systems Funding Assistance



Funding for DW/SSWSs may be prioritized for provision of interim water supplies on a regional basis and evaluating the most sustainable and cost-effective long-term solutions. Individual well testing may be required, and community outreach will be an important component of any project or regional program.

Generally, for programs benefitting households served by DW/SSWSs and funded by the SADW Fund, the following income-related parameters will be applied:

(1) Support domestic well testing without requiring income certification or other income analysis but focus on areas of highest risk for water shortage or water quality issues, in areas where the State Water Board has potential local or regional partners.
(2) Require individual household income verification or evaluation of community income levels for interim or long-term solution provision funded by the SADW Fund, to ensure

[73] Per Health and Safety Code section 116769, subdivision (a)(4), the FEP shall include an estimate of the number of households that are served by DW/SSWSs in high-risk areas identified pursuant to Article 6 (commencing with section 116772).

that solutions go to small DACs or low-income households. DFA may also accept analyses from providers of interim solutions demonstrating that all households in the community are, or are likely to be, below the applicable household income thresholds.

As programs are developed, DFA will consider the needs of the area, addressing water quality and/or water quantity issues. State Water Board staff will support community outreach and assist in identifying potential local partners, e.g., County Environmental Health Departments, GSAs, CV-SALTS Management Zones, or other local NGO partners.

VII.B.1. INTERIM AND EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

The State Water Board funds several interim and emergency assistance programs for low-income households served by DW/SSWSs through regional and countywide programs being implemented across the state. The services provided by each program vary based on the needs of the area and the capacity of the third-party provider and may include well assessments, water quality testing, bottled water, hauled water, and POU/POE.

Table 14 presents a list of existing countywide and regional programs and indicates which interim services are available for eligible low-income households

Table 14. DW/SSWS Regional Programs for Interim Water Supplies

Funded Partner	Where	Well Testing	Bottled Water	Hauled Water	POE/ POU
County of Butte	County-wide	X	X	X	
County of Shasta	County-wide	X	X	X	
County of Santa Cruz	County-wide	X		X	X
Community Water Center	Santa Cruz, San Benito, and Monterey counties	X[74]	X		X
Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District	Kaweah groundwater basin	X	X		
Imperial County	County-wide	X			X
Pueblo Unido Community Development	For households located within Polanco Parks in	X			X

[74] Well testing is available in the Central Coast Region via the Central Coast Regional Water Board's domestic well testing program.

Funded Partner	Where	Well Testing	Bottled Water	Hauled Water	POE/ POU
	unincorporated communities of the Eastern Coachella Valley.				
Self Help Enterprises	San Joaquin Valley (Kern, Kings, Tulare, Fresno, Madera, Merced, Mariposa, San Joaquin, and Stanislaus counties)	X	X	X	X
Tule Basin Water Foundation	Tule groundwater basin	X	X		
Valley Water Collaborative	Modesto and Turlock groundwater basins	X	X		X

Well Assessments and Water Quality Testing

The State Water Board has limited water quality, water shortage, and location data for DW/SSWSs, as these systems are not regulated by the state nor are maximum contaminant levels directly applicable to DW/SSWSs. Due to the lack of data from DW/SSWSs, it is difficult to precisely determine which households and systems may need assistance. Therefore, the State Water Board supports several local NGO and County partners in conducting well assessments and water quality sampling. The State Water Board also directly supports DW/SSWSs assessments through its TA work.

While well testing programs are available for eligible households in the areas shown in Table 14, the State Water Board will not provide these services for households where there is an existing mitigation program implementing a testing program. In some cases, where co-contamination is found to be present, co-funding between the State Water Board's funding partners and the mitigation program may occur (e.g., with management zones where there is an existing co-funding agreement with the State Water Board).

The establishment of new well assessment and water quality sampling programs for DW/SSWSs in geographic areas not covered by the programs listed in Table 14 may be considered for funding (or co-funding, if appropriate) via the SAFER Program, especially if the funding partner also has the capacity to take on the provision of interim water supplied or long-term solutions to further minimize the administrative burden of implementing these types of programs on a countywide or regional scale.

Interim Water Supplies

To better align how the State Water Board manages and develops its interim/emergency assistance programs for DW/SSWSs with the proposed SAFER DW/SSWS Strategy, the following scenarios will be implemented, which accounts for the presence of a known entity implementing a mitigation program (e.g., CV-SALTS Management Zones or GSAs with existing dry well mitigation programs), as presented in Table 15.

Table 15. Interim Water Supply Provision Scenarios for DW/SSWSs

Scenario	Action	Duration
New enrollee low-income household where no other local interim program exists.	Eligible low-income households may be enrolled in State Water Board-funded program. If a responsible party establishes a mitigation program in the future, then State Water Board-funding partners shall refer the enrollee to the mitigation program.	Applicable services are provided for up to two years.
New enrollee low-income household where there is an existing mitigation program.	Households are referred to the appropriate mitigation program for services. In cases where the mitigation program is only able to cover a portion of the interim assistance cost, the State Water Board-funded program may cover the rest of the services.	Dependent on the capacity of the local mitigation program and the existence of a State Water Board-funded program.
Existing low-income enrollees in a State Water Board-funded regional program.	State Water Board-funding partner will determine if a local mitigation program exists. If a local mitigation program exists that provides interim assistance, the State Water Board-funding partner shall refer the enrollee to the local program. If the household is located where a mitigation program is in development and not currently actively assisting households, then State Water Board-funding partners are only	Dependent on presence of local mitigation programs. Follow same scheme as defined above with durations starting July 1, 2025.

Scenario	Action	Duration
	expected to provide notice to the entity of the count of households receiving interim assistance and costs from the State Water Board-funded program. The current enrollees may continue to receive interim assistance following the established program criteria.	
Continued enrollment	State Water Board-funding partner will verify household eligibility on an annual basis.	For enrollees with over one year remaining on a State Water Board-funded program.

The establishment of new interim water supply programs for DW/SSWSs in geographic areas not covered by the programs listed in Table 15 may be considered for funding (or co-funding, if appropriate) via the SAFER Program.

Transitioning Households off Interim Assistance

As defined in Table 15 above, there will be situations where DW/SSWS households will need to be transitioned off of State Water Board-funded interim assistance programs, either because: 1) the household's long-term solution has been completed, 2) there is an existing local mitigation program, 3) the two-year duration of service provision is over, or 4) the household no longer qualifies. These transitions will be implemented via the following steps by the funding partners implementing State Water Board-funded programs:

- Submittal of a template transition letter for each of the four scenarios to DFA for review.
- Obtain written documentation the local program will be providing interim assistance, if applicable.
- Documentation of why the household no longer qualifies, if applicable.
- Documentation that the household has water service restored and is free of contamination, if applicable.
- Advanced notification to the household.

DFA's Funding Partners that implement interim assistance programs may enter into a separate agreement with the property owner of the household receiving interim assistance. That agreement is between the Funding Partner and the property owner and will include requirements beyond what DFA has established via the DFA/Funding Partner grant agreements. For example, the Funding Partner may have requirements or expectations around access to the property; the ability to inspect and service equipment provided; documentation to confirm ownership or residency; and other provisions the Funding Partner deems necessary to provide that interim assistance. Any requirements

established by Funding Partners as part of their agreements with property owners is an arrangement between those parties and any disputes arising from the agreements between Funding Partner and property owner will not be subject to DFA review or resolution. As such, Funding Partners determine whether the property owner is adhering to any agreements and whether failure to adhere to any of those provisions should result in suspension or termination of services provided.

Long-Term Solution Planning and Implementation

The State Water Board helps fund the planning and construction of long-term solutions for DACs served by DW/SSWSs. Planning for these communities may be conducted via TA providers and includes community outreach and feasibility studies to identify possible long-term solutions. The State Water Board also supports the construction of long-term solutions, like consolidation projects connecting DW/SSWSs to nearby public water systems. Where physical consolidation may not be technically feasible and/or financially feasible, the State Water Board may support many local/regional programs that fund the repair/replacement of wells and the installation of water storage tanks and/or POU/POE devices.

Technical Assistance (Planning)

Table 16 presents eligibility criteria for Planning via TA for DW/SSWSs. These projects may also need CapDev[75] services via TA, which would be eligible for DACs or SDACs only.

Table 16. Planning via TA Eligibility Criteria

High Risk Domestic Wells / State Small Water System	TA Eligible	Potential Consolidation Project
DAC or SDAC	Planning	Planning
Non-DAC	Not Eligible	Not Eligible

TA Steps: From Problem to Planning for a Possible Long-Term Construction Project Solution

The State Water Board recognizes that planning projects involving communities served by DW/SSWSs often take a longer time to navigate through the long-term solution planning process. Furthermore, larger regionalization projects that involve multiple PWSs and communities served by DW/SSWS often require additional community outreach and planning resources. Figure 37 defines steps for a DW/SSWS community to go from problem identification to planning via TA for a possible long-term construction project solution, including criteria to move from one step to the next. For projects where physical consolidation of the DW/SSWS is the preferred long-term solution, a willing PWS

[75] See Section VI.B.2 for examples of CapDev services. See also Appendix J for more information on the TA Program.

consolidation partner should be identified either before planning begins or in the early steps of the planning process. The PWS will be the preferred recipient of the TA work to consolidate a DW/SSWS community.

Figure 37. Steps for a DW/SSWS Community Receiving TA for Planning

Community Outreach & Engagement: Community outreach and engagement is often the first step in providing TA to communities served by DW/SSWSs. Community engagement is typically needed throughout the phases of a planning project. Regular communication with the community members via email, phone calls, door-to-door outreach, and various engagement meetings to solicit community input and provide project updates is essential for successfully implementing community drinking water solutions.

STEP 1: DW/SSWS Assessment: An initial assessment is conducted to identify the drinking water issue(s) that the community is experiencing. This step may include outreach, well testing and gathering information to confirm the problems and gage interest in a community wide long-term solution. This step may take up to 12 months.

Criteria to Move Forward to Step 2:

- Obtain documentation of DW/SSWS drinking water challenges. For DW households, sampling locations should be evenly distributed throughout the community. Water quality sampling results from certified labs and/or well inspection reports from within the last three years may be used to verify qualifying drinking water challenges.
- At least 30% documented interest and support from the community for a long-term solution.

STEP 2: Feasibility Study (FS): This is the preliminary assessment of the community's challenges and the initial step in development of potential long-term solutions. The FS is usually developed for communities where the potential long-term solutions are not readily apparent. The FS will be the basis for an Engineering Report (ER), which is a required component of a State Water Board construction funding application. The FS typically includes all of the steps through the alternative analysis that are described in the DWSRF Technical Application Instructions. Development of an FS should take 12 months or less to complete. The results of the FS will be used to inform the community of their potential long-term solution options and estimated costs associated with implementing each option.

Criteria to Move Forward to Step 3:

- After completion of the FS, the estimated cost of the project needs to be within the State Water Board's project funding thresholds[76] to advance to Step 3. This requires identifying how many benefitting connections are needed to meet either the total project max funding limit or the cost per connection limit based on the preliminary cost estimate. At this phase, recorded interest must be at least 50% of the connections needed for the project to meet the project funding thresholds within the current DWSRF IUP. If the recorded interest is not 50% within the 18-24 months of initiating FS, then the project may not move forward to Step 3.
- To qualify for additional TA and move forward in the planning process, a preferred long-term solution should be selected and be on track to:
    - Be within either the State Water Board's construction funding thresholds established in the current FY's DWSRF IUP or an alternative funding source's eligibility criteria.
    - Result in a project that can be permitted by the regulator.
    - Allow for the long-term affordability of the project. The FS should include consideration of the likely water rate associated with implementing the long-term solution. If the water rate will be greater than 2.5% of the community's MHI then it can be an indicator that the alternative may not be affordable. The current or proposed water rate as a percentage of MHI will not be used to automatically disqualify a long-term solution alternative but may be an indicator of whether affordability may be a challenge in implementing any of the identified options.
    - For projects where physical consolidation of the DW/SSWS is the preferred long-term solution, identify a willing PWS applicant who would be the funding recipient for the State Water Board construction funding agreement. The applicant must have the necessary managerial capacity and governance structure to implement the project and then operate and maintain the project for its useful life.

STEP 3: Engineering Report (ER): A full ER, is a required component of the State Water Board's construction funding application. The ER generally defines the issues faced by the community; identifies and evaluates different alternatives including an analysis of consolidation as an alternative; and provides a comparison of proposed alternatives with respect to design criteria, environmental considerations, constructability, overall advantages/disadvantages of evaluated alternatives, a life cycle cost analysis, cost

[76] Typically, consolidation projects connecting DW/SSWS communities are seeking 100% grant to fund a project. However, a loan may also be utilized to fully or partially fund a project. Depending on the project scale, scope, and/or total estimated budget, the funding thresholds within the current DWSRF IUP will inform this analysis.

estimate, and more. The ER will also include the engineering consultant's recommended alternative. This step should be limited to 6 months after completion of the FS.

Criteria to Move Forward to Step 4:

- The selected alternative identified in the ER must be technically feasible, fundable, and affordable for the community. The same criteria for moving from Step 2 to Step 3 applies.
- 100% recorded interest within 6 months of the completed ER from the minimum number of DW/SSWS connections needed for the project to meet either the total project max funding limit or the cost per connection thresholds based on the current DWSRF IUP.
- If the level of interest does not meet the IUP funding thresholds, approval from DFA's Assistant Deputy Director, or designee, must be obtained to move forward to Step 4.
- If applicable, the Receiving System should have also provided a letter of commitment.

STEP 4: Full Planning for Funding Application: This involves completion of all planning tasks that are required to submit a completed State Water Board construction funding application. This can include developing final plans and specifications, an engineer's cost estimate, CEQA documents and notices, audited financial statements, and development of other documents necessary for project planning. This step may also include support in developing and/or completing the four required State Water Board Construction Financing Application packages (General/Technical/Environmental/Financial Security). If the need for additional TA CapDev support is identified (i.e., rate study, legal assistance, income survey, etc.) then the TA work plans may be amended to include the additional TA support required to complete a DWSRF Application for Construction Financing and satisfy TMF funding requirements associated with State and Federal construction funding.

Limit to TA Assistance:

- Service Agreements and Easements must be signed and obtained before the construction funding agreement is executed. At least 50% of the necessary connections that had recorded interest in Step 3 above must have signed agreements by the time the application packages are submitted. Outreach may be provided up to 6 months after the Construction Funding Agreement is ready to be issued in order to complete any remaining outstanding right of entry agreements.

STEP 5 (optional): Construction Support: This step may not be applicable to all TA recipients. It can involve providing construction grant administration and/or construction management services to the funding recipient. These services may include, but are not limited to: bidding services, submitting invoices and quarterly reports, engineering services during construction, construction oversight, collecting remaining right of entry agreement, assistance with service lateral installation, or assistance with billing and transitioning service to the receiving water system. Construction support may be included

in the work plan if a receiving system or new entity does not have the capacity to manage a funding agreement without assistance from the TA provider.

Well Repairs and Replacements

Existing Programs

The State Water Board funds several programs for low-income households served by DW/SSWSs that offer well repairs or replacements, typically for wells that have gone dry, shown below in Table 17. A replaced well for a household is considered a long-term solution as the household will no longer need to rely on bottled and/or hauled water.

Table 17. Regional Programs for Well Repairs/Replacements

Funded Partner	Where
County of Butte	County-wide
County of Shasta	County-wide
County of Santa Cruz	County-wide
Pueblo Unido Community Development	For households located within Polanco Parks in unincorporated communities of the Eastern Coachella Valley.
Rural Community Assistance Corporation	Statewide
Self Help Enterprises	San Joaquin Valley (Kern, Kings, Tulare, Fresno, Madera, Merced, Mariposa, San Joaquin, and Stanislaus counties)

The establishment of new well repair/replacement programs for low-income households served by DW/SSWSs in geographic areas not covered by the programs listed in Table 17 may be considered for funding (or co-funding, if appropriate) via the SAFER Program.

Future Implementation

Similar to scenarios described above for interim water supplies, the following will be implemented for long-term solutions where physical consolidation is not technically or financially feasible, as shown in Table 18. Well Repair/Replacement Scenarios for DW/SSWSs.

Table 18. Well Repair/Replacement Scenarios for DW/SSWSs

Scenario	Action
New enrollee low-income household where no other local mitigation program exists.	Eligible low-income households with a documented dry well may be enrolled in State Water Board-funded program to get their well repaired or replaced.
New enrollee low-income household where an entity	Households are referred to the appropriate mitigation program for services.

Scenario	Action
has an existing mitigation program.	In cases where the mitigation program is only able to cover a portion of the well cost, the State Water Board-funded program may cover the rest of the cost, limited to $60,000 per well.
Existing low-income household enrollee in a State Water Board-funded program where a local entity has an existing mitigation program.	State Water Board-funding partner will determine if a local mitigation program exists. If a local mitigation program exists that provides well repair or replacement, the State Water Board-funding partner shall refer the enrollee to the local mitigation program.
Existing low-income household enrollee in a State Water Board-funded program where no local mitigation program exists.	Current enrollees may continue to receive assistance from the State Water Board-funded program.
New enrollee low-income household or existing low-income enrollees where there is no viable long-term solution.	If there is an existing State Water Board-funded tank/hauled water program, tanks may be installed for eligible households and left in place, with up to one year of hauled water provision.

Decentralized Treatment

Existing Programs

POU/POE: As indicated above in Table 14, the State Water Board has existing programs that may provide POU/POE filtration device for wells with water quality issues. In some cases, where physical consolidation is not feasible, attainment of a POU/POE is considered a long-term solution. Existing State Water Board programs typically include the installation of a POU or POE (dependent on the particular contaminant causing the water quality issue) for eligible households with a documented water quality issue, plus up to three years of O&M (i.e., annual filter changeouts).

The establishment of new POU/POE programs for low-income households served by DW/SSWSs in geographic areas not covered by the programs listed in Table 14 may be considered for funding (or co-funding, if appropriate) via the SAFER Program.

Future Implementation

POU/POE: In cases where POU/POE is implemented as a household's long-term solution, any provision of interim bottled or hauled water by a State Water Board-funded program will be discontinued.

Permanent Tanks and Hauled Water

In some situations, DW/SSWSs are without a viable long-term solution because physical consolidation or well repair/replacement is not technically or financially feasible. If a

household is eligible and pending funding availability, State Water Board-funding partners may permanently install a water storage tank system for long-term hauled water use. In such cases, the cost of the hauled water may only be funded by the State Water Board's funding partners for up to one year.

Consolidation with a Public Water System

Grant construction funds are available to consolidate disadvantaged households served by failing or high-risk DWs/SSWSs. The State Water Board offers grant/PF to PWS for the consolidation of DW/SSWSs following the project funding thresholds summarized in Table 12. Grant funding will generally be limited to project components necessary for consolidation.

VII.C. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

VII.C.1. CONTAMINANTS OF EMERGING CONCERN

The State Water Board will support well testing for some contaminants of emerging concern or contaminants without an established MCL (e.g., PFAS, ,4-dioxane, N-nitrodimethylamine [NDMA]) via existing or new programs for domestic well testing or as an added task to projects where wells are being repaired, replaced, or abandoned.

Where these contaminants are identified, planning and TA work may include analysis of project alternatives designed to address both existing and anticipated future compliance needs.

Interim water supplies and pilot studies for treatment of these types of contaminants may also be considered for funding. Full-scale treatment and long-term solutions may also be considered. Additional information related to funding for emerging contaminants related to PWSs is included in Section VI.C.

DEFINITIONS

Unless otherwise defined below, the definitions in the SADW Fund Policy shall apply to funding under this FEP, unless otherwise noted.

"**At-Risk**" Public Water System: means a public water system that is at-risk of failing according to the criteria set forth in the State Water Board's Drinking Water Needs Assessment.[77]

"**Consolidation**" means joining two or more Public Water Systems, State Small Water Systems, or affected residences into a single Public Water System. For the purposes of funding eligibility under this FEP, consolidations can also include projects that will achieve the following: provision of water via a master meter agreement where the Subsumed Water System is no longer separately permitted, or managerial consolidation where separate water system permits may still exist upon completion of the project. The term "consolidation" does not include the provision of water via an interconnection where the water systems will continue to operate under separate PWS permits.

"**Emerging Contaminant**" is any physical, chemical, biological, or radiological substance or matter in any environmental media that may pose a risk to human and/or ecological health, for which there is not a currently published federal environmental or health standard, or the existing standard is evolving or being re-evaluated, and/or the presence, frequency of occurrence, source, fate and transport, and/or toxicology of which is not well understood, routinely monitored, and/or may lack analytical methods. For the purposes of this FEP, an "Emerging Contaminant" or "EC" is a contaminant listed on any of EPA's Contaminant Candidate Lists (i.e., CCL1 – CCL5 and any future CCL).

"**Expanded Small Disadvantaged Community**" or "Expanded Small DAC" means a Disadvantaged Community with a population more than 10,000 persons but no more than 20,000 persons, or more than 3,300 service connections but no more than 6,600 service connections.

"**Failing Water System**" or "**Failing Status**" means or refers to a public water system that is out of compliance or that consistently fails to meet drinking water standards according to the State Water Board's criteria.[78]

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[77] For additional information, please see the following websites: Drinking Water Quality: Needs Assessment | California State Water Resources Control Board (criteria for identifying At-Risk water systems) and SAFER Dashboard | California State Water Resources Control Board (SAFER risk statuses of water systems that were evaluated).

[78] State Water Board's Failing Criteria for Community Water Systems and Schools are available at the following link: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/hr2w/docs/hr2w_expanded_criteria.pdf. Systems that were assessed for meeting the criteria include Community Water Systems and Non-Community Water Systems that serve K-12 schools and daycares. For additional information, please see the definition of "SAFER Status."

"**Large Community Water System**" or "**Large CWS**" means a CWS that serves more than 30,000 service connections or a yearlong population of more than 100,000 *persons*.

"**Medium Community Water System**" or "**Medium CWS**" means a CWS that serves more than 6,600 service connections but no more than 30,000 service connections; or a yearlong population of more than 20,000 persons but no more than 100,000 persons.

"**Medium Disadvantaged Community**" or "**Medium DAC**" means a Disadvantaged Community with a population more than 20,000 but no more than100,000 people, or more than 6,600 service connections but no more than 30,000 connections.

"**Moderate Income Community**" or "**MIC**" means the entire service area of a CWS in which the MHI is at or greater than 80% of the statewide annual MHI and less than 150% of the statewide annual MHI.

"**Native American Tribe**" means a federally recognized Indian tribe, or a State Indian tribe listed on the Native American Heritage Commission's California Tribal Consultation List.

"**Non-Community Water System**" or "**Non-CWS**" means a PWS that is not a CWS.

"**Non-Disadvantaged Community**" or "Non-DAC" means the entire service area of a community water system in which the MHI is at or greater than 80% of the statewide annual household income. Non-DACs include MICs.

"**Principal Forgiveness**" or "PF" is a form of additional subsidization in which a DWSRF loan's principal amount is forgiven, interest is not charged, and the principal does not need to be repaid by the recipient.

"**Receiving Water System**" means the Public Water System that provides service to a Subsumed Water System, state small water system, or domestic well through physical or managerial consolidation.

"**SAFER Status**" refers to a categorization of community water systems and non-community water system K-12 schools and daycares determined by the State Water Board. The following five SAFER Statuses are used by the State Water Board.[79]

Failing: Failing water systems are those that are meeting current Failing criteria as defined by the State Water Board.

At-Risk: Water systems at-risk of failing. The system's risk scores are the highest within the results of the Drinking Water Needs Assessment's Risk Assessment.

[79] The categorization methods, Failing criteria and risk assessment methods are summarized in the Drinking Water Needs Assessment. A list of water systems that were evaluated and their Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience (SAFER Statuses is available at the following link: SAFER Dashboard | California State Water Resources Control Board.

Potentially At-Risk: Water systems potentially at-risk of failing. The system has accrued risk points within the Risk Assessment, but not enough to be designated At-Risk.

Not At-Risk: Water systems not at-risk of failing. The system has accrued zero or very little risk points within the Risk Assessment.

Not Assessed: Water systems that are currently not Failing and are excluded from the Risk Assessment analysis.

"**Small Disadvantaged Community**" or "**Small DAC**" means a Disadvantaged Community with a population no more than 10,000 persons, or no more than 3,300 service connections.

"**Small Severely Disadvantaged Community**" or "**Small SDAC**" means a community with a population no more than 10,000 persons, or no more than 3,300 service connections, and whose MHI is less than 60 percent of the statewide average MHI.

"**Subsumed Water System**" means the Public Water System consolidated into or receiving service from the Receiving Water System.

ACRONYMS

%	percent
1,2,3-TCP	1,2,3-trichloropropane
CAA	State Water Pollution Cleanup and Abatement Account
CapDev	Capacity Development
CCI	California Climate Investments
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CERF	California Emergency Relief Fund
CIP	Capital Improvement Plan
CPUC	California Public Utilities Commission
CV-SALTS	Central Valley Salinity Alternatives for Long-Term Sustainability
CWDB	California Workforce Development Board
CWS	Community Water System
DAC	Disadvantaged Community
DDW	Division of Drinking Water
DFA	Division of Financial Assistance
DW	Domestic well
DWOCP	Drinking Water Operator Certification Program
DWR	Department of Water Resources
DWSRF	Drinking Water State Revolving Fund
EDWG	Expedited Drinking Water Grant (Funding Program)
FAAST	Financial Assistance Application Submittal Tool
Failing List	Failing Water System List
FBA	Final Budget Approval
FEP	Fund Expenditure Plan
Fund	Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund
FY	Fiscal Year
FS	Feasibility Study
GF	General Fund
GGRF	Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GSA	Groundwater Sustainability Agency
GWGP	Groundwater Grant Program
IHS	Indian Health Service
IUP	Intended Use Plan (for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund)
LPA	Local Primacy Agency
MCL	Maximum Contaminant Level
MIC	Moderate Income Community
MHI	Median Household Income
NDMA	N-nitrodimethylamine
Needs Assessment	Statewide Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Needs Assessment
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization

NTNC	Non-Transient Non-Community Water System
NTP	Notice to Proceed
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
OPEETA	Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs
P&S	Plans and Specifications
PFAS	Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances
POU/POE	Point of Use/Point of Entry
POU/POE Report	2023 Drinking Water Point-of-Use Point-of-Entry Report
Program	Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience Drinking Water Program
Prop 1	Proposition 1
Prop 4	Proposition 4
Prop 68	Proposition 68
PWS	Public Water System
RCAC	Rural Community Assistance Corporation
Regional Water Board	Regional Water Quality Control Board
RFQ	Request for Qualifications
ROE	Right-of-Entry
SADW Fund	Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund
SADW Fund Policy	Policy for Developing the Fund Expenditure Plan for the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund
SAFER	Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience
SAFER Program	Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience Drinking Water Program
SB	Senate Bill
SDAC	Severely Disadvantaged Community
SHE	Self-Help Enterprises
SOQ	Statement of Qualifications
Stantec	Stantec Consulting Services, Inc.
SSWS	State Small Water System
State Water Board	State Water Resources Control Board
TA	Technical Assistance
TMF	Technical, Managerial, and Financial (Capacity)
TNC	Transient Non-Community Water System
UDWN	Urgent Drinking Water Needs
U.S. EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency