

CHAPTER 9:

Distribution of Aid

The Department has a number of programs that distribute aid for specific activities. These range from funding for roadside cleanup to providing loans through the State Revolving Fund Loan Programs for construction of wastewater treatment facilities and drinking water systems and energy programs.

Waste Management Aid Programs

Following is a summary of funds provided in FY2023 through Waste Grants programs, managed by the Waste Planning and Aid Section.

A. Litter Reduction and Recycling

The Litter Reduction and Recycling Grant Program provides funds to reduce litter, provide education and promote recycling in Nebraska. Funding for the program is an annual fee on manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers who have significant sales in categories of products that would generally be considered to produce litter.

In Calendar Year 2023, 46 Litter Reduction and Recycling grants were awarded, totaling \$2,435,553. The grants were awarded in three categories: Public Education, \$1,528,991; Cleanup, \$81,458; and Recycling, \$825,104. These grants were awarded to both public and private entities.

B. Waste Reduction and Recycling

The Waste Reduction and Recycling Incentive Grants Program provides grants for various solid waste management activities. Revenues to the fund are provided by proceeds from various fees, including a one-dollar fee on each new tire sold in the state, and a retail business fee on tangible personal property sold in the state. In addition, 50% of a fee collected on the disposal of solid waste going to landfills goes to this fund.

In CY2023, 98 projects totaling \$5,297,516 were funded from the Waste Reduction and Recycling Incentive Grants Program.

C. Illegal Dumpsite Cleanup Program

The Illegal Dumpsite Cleanup Program, established in 1997, provides funding for political subdivisions to clean up solid waste disposed of along public roadways or ditches. Potential funding is limited to five percent of the total revenue from the disposal fee collected in the preceding fiscal year. In FY2023, the program provided \$26,012.48 to 25 recipients.

D. Landfill Disposal Fee Rebate Program

The Landfill Disposal Fee Rebate Program was created as an incentive to political subdivisions to support and encourage the purchasing of products, materials, or supplies that are manufactured or produced from recycled material. Funding for the program is from the Waste Reduction and Recycling Incentive Fund. In FY2023, the program provided \$112,099 to five counties and seven cities participating in the program.

Any municipality or county may apply for a rebate if they have a written purchasing policy in effect requiring a preference for purchasing products, materials or supplies which are manufactured or produced from recycled material. If the policy is approved by NDEE, the applicant may receive a ten-cent rebate from the \$1.25 per ton disposal fee. Rebates are provided no more than quarterly and no less than annually.

Additional information about these programs can be found in the Waste Grants Programs portion of Chapter 5.

Water Quality Aid Programs

A. Petroleum Remediation

The Petroleum Remediation program provides aid through the Petroleum Release Remedial Action Fund to assist in paying the cost of cleanup of sites where petroleum has leaked from tanks, generally service stations. Funding to this program is primarily provided by a fee on petroleum sold in Nebraska. Over \$276 million has been disbursed since the program began. The program provided \$3.6 million to 149 sites for investigation and cleanup in FY2023.

Additional information about this program can be found in the Petroleum Remediation portion of Chapter 6.

B. State Revolving Loan Fund Program

I. The Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund (CWSRF) provides low interest loans and loan forgiveness to municipalities for construction of wastewater treatment facilities and sanitary sewer collection systems. The sources of funding for this program include federal grants and funds from the Nebraska Investment Financial Authority (NIFA) through bond issuance. In FY2023, the CWSRF funded projects totaling \$8,448,000 in loans and \$2,935,250 in principal forgiveness and grant funds.

Additional information about these programs can be found in the State Revolving Loan Fund Programs portion of Chapter 6.

II. The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund provides low-interest loans and loan forgiveness to owners of public water systems. In FY2022, the program provided financial assistance to public water system projects totaling \$46,288,000; disadvantaged communities received \$20,946,143 in forgiveness funding.

Additional information about these programs can be found in the State Revolving Loan Programs portion of Chapter 6.

Energy Aid Programs

A. Dollar and Energy Savings Loan Program

The Dollar and Energy Saving Loans (DESL) program assists Nebraska residents, local businesses, school districts, and municipalities in making their homes and buildings more energy efficient. The program also helps reduce energy bills by providing low-cost financing for energy-efficient equipment and projects. NDEE provides funds to Nebraska-based lending institutions to participate in a portion (50-90%) of each energy conservation loan.

In Fiscal year 2023, the DESL program helped finance over \$2.9 million for 168 loans that improved energy efficiency for 171 new projects. Since the inception of the program in 1990, the DESL program has helped finance over 30,800 energy saving projects with the total cost of all improvements financed totaling over \$389.2 million.

B. Weatherization Assistance Program

The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) enables low-income families in Nebraska to reduce their energy bills by making their homes more energy efficient.

The program receives funding from two sources: DOE's Weatherization Assistance Program and the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) financed through the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. Between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023, 448 homes were weatherized across the state, helping to reduce the energy burden for low-income Nebraskans. Since the WAP began in 1977, \$233 million has been provided to make energy efficiency improvements in 71,115 homes.

Seven community action agencies and one non-profit agency are responsible for implementing the home weatherization improvements in Nebraska.

Additional information about these programs can be found in the Energy Programs portion of Chapter 7.