

Signage to Increase Public Awareness of SRF Assistance Agreements

An United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) initiative to enhance public awareness of EPA assistance agreements nationwide has been passed through to State Revolving Fund programs. The EPA "signage requirement" applies to SC SRF projects identified to meet federal requirements. Complying with the signage requirement is an eligible SRF expense.

Factors for an SRF Project Sponsor to consider when choosing a signage option include the complexity and location of the project and the nature of the community. There are a number of implementation options that are described below.

Implementation options:

- **Standard Signage:** This is use of a traditional sign that includes the name of the facility, project, and community; project cost; the DHEC logo; and the EPA logo. Other information could be included as space allows. This option should be selected for projects where the sign would be easily visible, such as near a major road or thoroughfare or where the facility is in a location where this would effectively publicize the project. When choosing this option, contact your DHEC project manager to request the DHEC and EPA logos and use guidelines.

The remaining signage options advertise SRF assistance in different formats, but each option should share the following information:

- 1 *Name of facility, project and community*
 - 2 *Project administered by DHEC's State Revolving Fund Section*
 - 3 *Project was [wholly / partially] funded with EPA funding*
 - 4 *Brief description of the project*
 - 5 *Brief listing of water quality benefits to be achieved*
- **Posters or Brochures:** A poster or brochure would share the information listed above and could include a website address for the SC SRF program (<http://www.scdhec.gov/srf>). Pictures of the proposed facility or project location could also be included in this format. Posters or brochures should be placed in a public location that is accessible to a wide audience of community members (e.g., town or city hall, community center, local park, public library, local government facility, court house or other public meeting space). This option may be more appropriate for projects located in rural areas.

- **Newsletter, Periodical, or Press Release:** For communities where there is no suitable public space or where advertisement through signage is unlikely to reach community members effectively, projects may be advertised in a community newsletter or similar periodical. The newsletter, periodical, or press release would contain the information indicated above.
- **Insert or Pamphlet in Water/Sewer Bill:** This approach would effectively publicize the project to those individuals directly benefitting from the project using the information listed above. The layout of such an insert might be an informative paragraph or more like a brochure.
- **Online and Social Media Publicity:** Many communities are increasingly finding that the online forum is the most cost-effective approach to publicize their programs and reach a broad audience of stakeholders. Online publicity may appear on the town, community, or facility website if available. Social media sites such as Facebook or Twitter can also be used. This option could be a more cost-effective option than traditional signs or print media. Since the web offers a visual platform, pictures and other visual elements could be incorporated when sharing the information listed above. In the case of some projects, such as nonpoint source projects, there might be additional opportunities for online publicity through partner agencies or organizations.

Below is sample language that may be used for any of the above options:

Construction of upgrades and improvements to the [Name of Facility or Infrastructure Component @ Project Location] is being financed by the [Clean Water/Drinking Water] State Revolving Fund (SRF). The [CW/DW] SRF program is administered by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control with joint funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the State of South Carolina. This project will [description of project] and will provide [details specifying particular water quality benefits] for community residents and businesses in and near [name of town, city, and/or water body or watershed to benefit from the project]. [CW/DW] SRF programs operate around the country to provide states and communities the resources necessary to maintain and improve the infrastructure that protects our valuable water resources.

A hard copy of the selected option will need to be provided to your SRF project manager for documentation. If a sign, poster, or online publicity method is used, submitting a Word or PDF copy is acceptable.

If you have any questions on how to meet the signage requirement, contact your SRF project manager.