Rural Development
United States Department of Agriculture

RURAL DEVELOPMENT UTILITIES PROGRAMS

Technical Assistance Grant Programs:
Technical Assistance and Training Grant
and
Solid Waste Management Grant
Application Guide
Fiscal Year 2012

**This application guide has been updated with new guidelines and procedures. Please read each section thoroughly.

The information requested in these guidelines is being collected and used by the Rural Utilities Service to determine eligibility for grants and to meet reporting requirements. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act, as amended, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0572-0112. Public burden reporting for this collection of information is estimated to be 3 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of the collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the following addresses:

Program Development and Regulatory Analysis
Rural Utilities Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW.
Stop 1522, Room 5168 South Building
Washington, DC 20250-1522

and to the

Office of Management and Budget
Paperwork Reduction Project (0572-0000)
Washington, DC 20503.

DO NOT SEND COMPLETED FORMS TO THE ABOVE ADDRESSES

Section 1: The Technical Assistance and Training Grant Program

1.1 Introduction
Drinking water systems are basic and vital to both health and economic development. With dependable water facilities, rural communities can attract families and businesses that will invest in the community and improve the quality of life for all residents. Without dependable water facilities, the communities cannot sustain economic development.

The Rural Development Utilities Programs (RDUP) supports the sound development of rural communities and the growth of our economy without endangering the environment. RDUP provides financial and technical assistance to help communities bring safe drinking water and sanitary, environmentally sound waste disposal facilities to rural Americans in greatest need.

The Technical Assistance and Training (TAT) Grant Program has been established to assist communities with water or wastewater systems through free technical assistance and/or training provided by the grant recipients. Qualified private non-profit organizations will receive TAT grant funds to identify and evaluate solutions to water and waste disposal problems in rural areas, assist applicants in preparing applications for water and waste grants made at the State level offices, and improve operation and maintenance of existing water and waste disposal facilities in rural areas.

In this guide, you will find information to help you:

- Assess your eligibility for RDUP grant assistance
- Understand how and when to apply
- Create a successful application

1.2 Authorization
On November 2, 1987, the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) (predecessor of RDUP) published 7 CFR part 1942, subpart J, Technical Assistance and Training Grants, as a final rule in the Federal Register (52 FR 41950) implementing a new grant program. On February 5, 1992, FmHA published 7 CFR part 1942, subpart J, Technical Assistance and Training Grants, as a final rule in the Federal Register (57 FR 4357) revising the regulation to implement another new grant program. In 1994 when RDUP assumed the functions of the Water and Waste Disposal programs from the former FmHA and the Rural Development Administration (RDA), RDUP changed the Technical Assistance and Training (TAT) and Solid Waste Management (SWM) grants regulations from 7 CFR 1942, subpart J, to 7 CFR 1775.

Should any differences result in the interpretation of these guidelines and 7 CFR Part 1775, the regulation will take precedence over information contained in this guide. This guide is to be used in conjunction with 7 CFR Part 1775.

1.3 Available funding for FY 2012
The amount available for Fiscal Year 2012 will be determined when the budget is approved by Congress.

1

1.4 TAT Program Contacts

The Water and Environmental Programs (WEP) staff will administer the TAT Program. We encourage you to contact the WEP staff early in the application process with any questions or ideas concerning your proposal. The staff will answer your questions about the application process and program requirements.

> Telephone: 202-720-9589
> Fax: 202-690-0649
> E-mail: water@wdc.usda.gov

1.5 TAT Resources on the Web

Visit our Web site at http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/tatg.htm

Section 2: General Considerations for a TAT Grant

2.1 Eligible Organizations

An organization is eligible to receive a TAT grant if it:

a. Is a private, non-profit organization that has tax-exempt status from the United States Internal Revenue Service (IRS);

b. Is legally established and located within one of the following:

- a state within the United States
- the District of Columbia
- the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
- a United States territory

c. Has the legal capacity and authority to carry out the grant purpose;

d. Has a proven record of successfully providing technical assistance and/or training to rural areas;

e. Has capitalization acceptable to the Agency, and is composed of at least 51 percent of the outstanding interest or membership being citizens of the United States or individuals who reside in the United States after being legally admitted for permanent residence;

f. Has no delinquent debt to the Federal Government or no outstanding judgments to repay a Federal debt;

g. Demonstrates that it possesses the financial, technical, and managerial capability to comply with Federal and State laws and requirements.

h. Contracts with a nonaffiliated organization for not more than 49 percent of the grant to provide the proposed assistance.

2.2 Eligible Grant Purposes
The following activities are authorized under the TAT statute:

Grant funds must be used to capitalize a Technical Assistance and Training program for the purpose of:

a. Identifying and evaluating solutions to water problems of associations in rural areas relating to source, storage, treatment, or distribution;

b. Identifying and evaluating solutions to waste problems of associations in rural areas relating to collection, treatment, or disposal;

c. Assisting associations in the preparation of water and/or waste loan and/or grant applications;

d. Providing technical assistance and/or training to association personnel that will improve the management, operation and maintenance of water and waste disposal facilities; or

e. Paying expenses associated with providing technical assistance and/or training authorized in (a) – (d).

2.3 Ineligible Grant Purposes
Grant funds may not be used to pay any of the following:

a. Duplicate current services, or replace or substitute support normally provided by other means, such as those performed by an association's consultant in developing a project, including feasibility, design, and cost estimates.

b. Fund political or lobbying activities.

c. Purchase real estate or vehicles, improve or renovate office space, or repair and maintain privately owned property.

d. Pay the costs for construction, improvement, rehabilitation, modification or operation and maintenance of water, wastewater, and solid waste disposal facilities.

e. Construct or furnish a building.

f. Intervene in the Federal regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings.

g. Sue the Federal Government or any other government entities.

h. Pay for technical assistance which duplicates assistance provided to implement an action plan funded by the Forest Service (FS) under the National Forest-Dependent Rural Communities Economic Diversification Act (7U.S.C. 6601 note) for five continuous years from the date of grant approval by the FS. To avoid duplicate

assistance, coordinate with the <u>State Rural Development office</u> and the <u>Forest Service</u> before submitting an application.

i. Pay for any other costs that are not allowable under OMB Circular A-87, OMB Circular A-110, OMB Circular A-102 or OMB Circular A-122.

2.4 Security Requirements

A grant agreement will be executed between the Grantee and the Agency.

Section 3: Application Submission Process

3.1 Two Ways of Filing Applications

You may file an application in either paper or electronic format. Send or deliver paper applications by the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) or courier delivery services to the RDUP receipt point. File an application electronically through Grants.gov, the official Federal Government website at http://www.grants.gov. **RDUP will not accept applications by fax or e-mail.**

3.2 DUNS Number Requirement

Whether you file a paper or an electronic application, you will need a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number. You must provide your DUNS number on the SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance."

To verify that your organization has a DUNS number or to receive one at no cost, call the dedicated toll-free request line at 1-866-705-5711 or access the Web site http://www.dunandbradstreet.com. You will need the following pieces of information when requesting a DUNS number:

- Legal Name
- Headquarters name and address of the organization
- Doing business as (dba) or other name by which the organization is commonly recognized
- Physical address
- Mailing address (if separate from headquarters and/or physical address)
- Telephone number
- Contact name and title
- Number of employees at the physical location

3.3 Paper Applications

Mail or ensure delivery of an original paper application (no stamped, photocopied, or initialed signatures) and two copies by the deadline date of December 31, 2011.

If your grant application will service **only one** state, please forward your application to your **local USDA Rural Development Office**. The address and contact information for each

state's USDA Rural Development Office can be accessed by clicking on the following link: http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/states/usamap.htm
If the grant application will service **more than one state**, please forward the application to:

> Assistant Administrator
> Water and Environmental Programs
> Rural Utilities Service
> 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
> STOP 1548, Room 5145 South
> Washington, DC 20250-1548

The application and any materials sent with it become Federal records by law and cannot be returned to you.

3.4 Electronic Applications
You may file an electronic application at the web site:

www.grants.gov.

You must be registered with Grants.gov before you can submit a grant application. If you have not used Grants.gov before, you will need to register with the Central Contractor Registry (CCR) and the Credential Provider. You will need a DUNS number to access or register at any of the services. The registration processes may take several business days to complete. Follow the instructions at Grants.gov for registering and submitting an electronic application. RDUP may request original signatures on electronically submitted documents later.

The CCR registers your organization, housing your organizational information and allowing Grants.gov to use it to verify your identity. You may register for the CCR by calling the CCR Assistance Center at 1-888-227-2423 or you may register online at: http://www.ccr.gov.

The Credential Provider gives you or your representative a username and password, as part of the Federal Government's E-Authentication to ensure a secure transaction. You will need the username and password when you register with Grants.gov or use it to submit your application. You must register with the Central Provider through Grants.gov: https://apply.grants.gov/OrcRegister.

Submit all electronic documents using one of the following formats:

- Excel
- Word
- PDF

3.5 Deadlines for Grant Applications

Applications will be accepted from _October 1 through December 31_ of each calendar year. Applications may be hand-delivered to the State Office by close of business December 31, postmarked, or time-stamped electronically by the filing deadline of midnight December 31 to be considered submitted on time. Applications received after December 31 will NOT be considered in that year's review and will be returned to the applicant.

Paper applications must show proof of mailing or shipping consisting of one of the following:

- A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service (USPS) postmark
- A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the USPS
- A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier

> **Note: Packages arriving at USDA via the USPS are irradiated, which can damage the contents.** RDUP encourages you to consider the impact of this procedure in selecting your application delivery method. Also, if there is a disruption in mail delivery service, we strongly encourage you to submit applications via express mail or commercial delivery to our office.

If a receipt date falls on a weekend or on a Federal holiday, it will be extended to the next business day.

Section 4: Requirements for a Completed Grant

4.1 Preparing the Application

To be considered for support, you must be an eligible entity and must submit a complete pre-application by the deadline date. You should consult the cost principles and general administrative requirements for grants pertaining to their organizational type in order to prepare the budget and complete other parts of the application. You also must demonstrate compliance (or intent to comply), through certification or other means, with a number of public policy requirements.

Completed Application

1. Standard application forms
2. A proposal
3. A work plan
4. A budget and budget justification
5. Evidence of legal existence and legal authority
6. A list of directors and officers
7. Other specified information

4.2 Required Forms

Applicants must complete and submit the following forms to apply for a TAT grant:

- Standard Form 424, "Application for Federal Assistance"
- Standard Form 424A, "Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs"
- Standard Form 424B, "Assurances—Non-Construction Programs"
- Standard Form LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activity"
- Form RD 400-1, "Equal Opportunity Agreement"
- Form RD 400-4, "Assurance Agreement (Under Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964)

* Note: Some of the following information has been updated to include new formatting guidelines.

4.3 Project Proposal

The project proposal should outline the project in sufficient detail to provide the reader with a complete understanding of how the proposed project will work. Explain what your project will accomplish by utilizing the grant funds. Demonstrate the feasibility of the proposed project in meeting the objectives of this grant program. Proposals should be no more than 20 pages single sided using a font size of 12 points (Times New Roman font style preferred). The proposal should cover the following elements:

1. Project Summary

Present a brief project overview. Explain the purpose of the project, how it relates to RDUP' purposes, how you will carry out the project, what the project will produce, and who will direct it.

2. Needs Assessment

Describe why the project/service is necessary. Demonstrate that eligible entities need grant funds. Quantify the number of prospective communities or provide statistical or narrative evidence that a sufficient number of communities will exist to justify the grant award. Describe the service area, including population and median household income (MHI). Address community needs.

3. Project Goals and Objectives

Clearly state your project goals. Your objectives should clearly describe the goals and be concrete and specific enough to be quantitative or observable. They should also be feasible and relate to the purpose of the project.

4. Project Narrative

The narrative should cover in more detail the items briefly described in the Project Summary. It should establish the basis for any claims that you have substantial expertise in providing effective Technical Assistance and Trainings. In describing what the project will achieve, you should tell the reader if it also will have broader influence. The narrative should address the following points:

- Document your ability to administer Technical Assistance and Training in accordance with the provisions of 7 CFR Part 1775.

- Document that, to establish the Technical Assistance and Training, you can commit financial resources your organization controls. This documentation should describe the sources of funds other than the TAT grant that will be used to pay your operational costs and provide financial assistance for projects.

- Demonstrate that you have secured commitments of significant financial support from other funding sources, if appropriate.

5. Work Plan

The work plan must describe the tasks and activities that will be accomplished with available resources during the grant period. It must show the work you plan to do to achieve the anticipated outcomes, goals, and objectives set out for the TAT Program. The plan must include:

- The benefits of the technical assistance and/or training.

- Brief description of how the service will be provided and whether currently employed personnel or contracted personnel will be used.

6. Budget and Budget Justification

The written justification for projected costs should explain how budget figures were determined for each category. It should indicate which costs are to be covered by grant funds and which costs will be met by your organization or other organizations. The justification should account for all expenditures discussed in the narrative. It should reflect appropriate cost-sharing contributions. The budget justification should explain the budget and accounting system proposed or in place. The administrative costs for operating the budget should be expressed as a percentage of the overall budget. The budget justification should provide specific budget figures, rounding off figures to the nearest dollar. Applicants should consult OMB Circular A-122: "Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations" for information about appropriate costs for each budget category.

7. Area(s) to be Served

Describe the areas to be served, including population, non-metropolitan median household income information, and the name of association(s) or type of association(s) that will be served. Also describe the method used to select the association(s) that will receive the service.

8. Summary of Experience

Give a brief summary of experience of the applicant to provide the proposed service. More details, including experience of key staff members, resumes, and person(s) providing the technical assistance and/or training, may be included in an appendix.

9. Evaluation Method(s

Describe the evaluation method(s) to determine if objective(s) or the proposed activity is being accomplished.

10. Duration of Project/Service

Briefly describe the duration of the project or service, and the estimated time from grant approval to beginning of project or service, not to exceed 12 months. The grant period begins October 1 of each year and ends September 30 of the following year.

11. Sustainability

Briefly describe the plans for increased self-sustainability for the project/service in future years.

4.4 Required Information Not Found on Standard Application Forms

In addition to completing the standard application forms, you must submit supplementary materials:

1. Evidence of Legal Existence

Demonstrate that your organization is legally recognized under State and Federal law. Satisfactory documentation includes but is not limited to, certificates from the Secretary of State, or copies of state statutes or laws establishing your organization. Letters from the IRS awarding tax-exempt status are not considered adequate evidence.

2. List of Directors and Officers

Submit a certified list of directors and officers with their respective terms.

3. IRS Tax exempt Status

Submit evidence of tax exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service.

4. Debarment and Suspension Rules

You must disclose debarment and suspension information required in accordance with 7 CFR, Part 3017, subpart 3017.335, if it applies. (The section heading is "What information must I provide before entering into a covered transaction with the Department of Agriculture?" It is part of the Department of Agriculture's rules on Government-wide Debarment and Suspension.)

5. Drug-free Workplace Requirements

You must identify all of your organization's known workplaces by including the actual address of buildings (or parts of buildings) or other sites where work under the award takes place. Workplace identification is required under the drug-free workplace requirements in accordance with 7 CFR, Part 3021, subpart 3021.230. (It is part of the Department of Agriculture's rules on Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace Financial Assistance. The section heading is "How and when must I identify workplaces?")

6. Audit

Submit the most recent audit of your organization.

7. Financial statements

Submit the following financial statements:

- A pro forma balance sheet at start-up and for at least three additional years;

- Balance sheets, income statements, and cash flow statements for the last three years. If the applicant organization has been formed less than three years, the financial statements should be submitted for the periods from inception to the present.

8. Other Organizational Documents

If contracting with an affiliated organization, please provide the contract and/or legal documents that illustrate the affiliation between the contractor and your organization. For further information, contact the WEP staff at (202)720-9589.

4.5 Optional Information Not Found on Standard Application Forms

You may present additional information to support and describe your plan for achieving the grant objectives. The information may be regarded as essential for understanding and evaluating the project such as letters of support, resolutions, policies, etc. The supplements may be presented in appendices to the proposal.

Section 5: Application Review Process

5.1 Receipt Acknowledgment

RDUP will acknowledge the application's receipt by letter within 30 days of receiving your application. Your application will be reviewed for completeness to determine if you included all of the items required. If your application is incomplete or ineligible, RDUP will return it to you with an explanation.

5.2 Evaluating the Application

A review team, composed of at least two members, will independently evaluate all applications and proposals. They will make overall recommendations based on factors such as eligibility, clarity, detailed information, application completeness, and conformity to application requirements. They will score the applications based on criteria in the next section.

5.3 Scoring Criteria

All applications that are complete and eligible will be ranked competitively based on the following scoring criteria:

1	Applicant Status: National Organization	10 points
	Multi-State Organization	5 points
	State/Area Organization	2 points
2	Applicant experience at developing and implementing successful technical assistance and/or training programs:	
	More than 10 years	5 points
	Six to ten years	2 points
	Up to five years	0 points

3	Applicant resources – organizational staff versus contract personnel to carry out the technical assistance and/or training:	
	At least 75% staff	10 points
	50% to 75% staff	5 points
	Less than 50% staff	**Ineligible**
4	Population of proposed area(s) to be served:	
	Less than 2,500	Up to 15 points
	Less than 5,500	Up to 10 points
	5,500 or more	0 points
5	MHI of proposed area(s) to be served:	
	Less than 80% of the SNMHI (State Non-metropolitan Median Household Income)	Up to 10 points
	80% to 100% of the SNMHI	Up to 5 points
	More than 100% of the SNMHI	0 points
6	Project Duration:	
	Projects providing technical assistance and/or training that accomplish the objective within a 12 month or less time frame	5 points
	Over 12 months	0 points
7	Needs Assessment - The problem/issue(s) being addressed is clearly defined, supported by data, and addresses the need.	Up to 15 points
8	Goals and objectives are clearly defined, tied to the need as defined in the work plan, and are measurable.	Up to 15 points
9	Work plan - Clearly articulates a well thought out approach to accomplishing objectives; clearly identifies who will be served by project.	Up to 40 points
10	Actual assistance provided:	
	Applicant is providing "hands on" technical assistance and/or training primarily to water and waste systems managers/operators.	Up to 20 points or
	Applicant is providing technical assistance primarily through the distribution of educational materials and other outreach methods.	Up to 10 points or
	Applicant is providing technical assistance through a demonstration project.	Up to 5 points
11	Evaluation methods are, specific to the activity, clearly defined, measurable, with expected project outcomes.	Up to 20 points
12	In-Kind Support:	
	Demonstrated commitment of non-federal resources of more than 25% of total budget.	10 points
	Demonstrated commitment of non-federal	5 points

	resources 10- 25% of total budget.	
	Less than 10% of non-federal resources.	0 points
13	Sustainability: Applicant demonstrates ability to sustain project without federal award using a thorough financial analysis to include: cash on hand, projected revenues, outside source contributions, and show a steady increase to sustainability within 5 years.	Up to 10 points
14	Prior Grant/Years Funded:	
	Applicant has not received a prior TAT grant	15 points
	Applicant has received past TAT grant (1-3 years)	10 points
	Applicant has received past TAT grant (4-5 years)	5 points
	Applicant has received past TAT grant (more than 5 years)	0 points
15	Administrator Discretion: RDUP Administrator may provide additional points based on the following factors: geographic, economic, agency priority issues.	Up to 15 points

5.4 Application Selection

RDUP will rank all qualifying applications by their final score. Applications will be selected for funding, based on the highest scores and the availability of funding for TAT grants. **Each applicant will be notified in writing of whether or not the pre-application has been selected for funding.**

Note: Applicants selected for funding must register and maintain a current Central Contractor Registration (CCR). The Grantee must maintain the currency of your information in the CCR until you submit the final financial report required under this award and all grants funds under this award have been disbursed or de-obligated, whichever is later. This requires that you review and update the information at least annually after the initial registration, and more frequently if required by changes in your information or another award term. Recipients can register on-line at (https://www.bpn.gov/ccr/). You as the recipient may not make a sub-award to an entity unless the entity has provided its Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to you. Sub-recipients with sub-awards of $25,000 or more must also have and maintain a current CCR registration. You as the recipient must report each first tier sub-awards of $25,000 or more in non-Recovery Act funds to http://www.fsrs.gov no later than the end of the month following the month the obligation was made.

5.5 Possible RDUP Actions on the Application

In making its decision about your application, RDUP may determine that your application is:

- Eligible and selected for funding,
- Eligible but offered fewer funds than requested,

- Eligible but not selected for funding, or
- Ineligible for the grant.

5.6 Appeals Process

In accordance with 7 CFR Part 1900, subpart B, you generally have the right to appeal adverse decisions. Some adverse decisions cannot be appealed. For example, if you are denied RDUP funding due to a lack of funds available for the grant program, this decision cannot be appealed.

However, you may make a request to the National Appeals Division (NAD) to review the accuracy of our finding that the decision cannot be appealed. The appeal must be submitted within the proper timeframe, in writing and filed at the appropriate Regional Office, which can be found at http://www.nad.usda.gov/offices.htm or by calling (703) 305-1166.

Appendix—Rules and Regulations

These rules and regulations have been mentioned throughout the text of the guidelines, but are listed in one place for easy reference. The Code of Federal Regulations is located at http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html; the OMB circulars are located at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/index.html.

- Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 7, Part 1775: "Technical Assistance and Training Grant Program"
- CFR, Title 7, Part 3017, "Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement)"
- CFR, Title 7, Part 3021, "Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-free Workplace (Financial Assistance)"
- CFR, Title 7, Part 1900, subpart B, "Adverse Decisions and Administrative Appeals"
- CFR, Title 7, Part 3015: "Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations"
- CFR, Title 7, Part 3019: "Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations"
- OMB Circular A-122: "Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations"
- OMB Circular A-133: "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations"

Section 6: The Solid Waste Management Grant Program

6.1 Introduction
Solid Waste Management systems are basic and vital to both health and economic development. With dependable facilities, rural communities can attract families and businesses that will invest in the community and improve the quality of life for all residents. Without dependable facilities, the communities cannot sustain economic development.

The Rural Utilities Service (RDUP) supports the sound development of rural communities and the growth of our economy without endangering the environment. RDUP provides financial and technical assistance to help communities bring environmentally sound waste disposal facilities to rural Americans in greatest need.

The Solid Waste Management (SWM) Grant Program has been established to assist communities through free technical assistance and/or training provided by the grant recipients. Qualified organizations will receive SWM grant funds to reduce or eliminate pollution of water resources in rural areas, and improve planning and management of solid waste sites in rural areas.

In this guide, you will find information to help you:

- Assess your eligibility for RDUP grant assistance
- Understand how and when to apply
- Create a successful application

6.2 Authorization
On November 2, 1987, the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) (predecessor of RDUP) published 7 CFR part 1942, subpart J, Solid Waste Management Grants, as a final rule in the Federal Register (52 FR 41950) implementing a new grant program. On February 5, 1992, FmHA published 7 CFR part 1942, subpart J, Solid Waste Management Grants, as a final rule in the Federal Register (57 FR 4357) revising the regulation to implement another new grant program. In 1994 when RDUP assumed the functions of the Water and Waste Disposal programs from the former FmHA and the Rural Development Administration (RDA), RDUP changed the Solid Waste Management (SWM) and Solid Waste Management (SWM) grants regulations from 7 CFR 1942, subpart J, to 7 CFR 1775.

Should any differences result in the interpretation of these guidelines and 7 CFR Part 1775, the regulation will take precedence over information contained in this guide. This guide is to be used in conjunction with 7 CFR Part 1775.

6.3 Available funding for FY 2012
The amount available for Fiscal Year 2012 will be determined when the budget is approved by Congress.

6.4 SWM Program Contacts

The Water and Environmental Programs (WEP) staff will administer the SWM Program. We encourage you to contact the WEP staff early in the application process with any questions or ideas concerning your proposal. The staff will answer your questions about the application process and program requirements.

> Telephone: 202-720-9589
> Fax: 202-690-0649
> E-mail: water@wdc.usda.gov

6.5 SWM Resources on the Web

Visit our Web site at http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/swm.htm

Section 7: General Considerations for a SWM Grant

7.1 Eligible Organizations

An organization is eligible to receive a SWM grant if it:

a. Is a private, non-profit organization that has tax-exempt status from the United States Internal Revenue Service (IRS);

b. Is a Public body;

c. Is a federally acknowledged or State-recognized Native American tribe or group;

d. Is an Academic institution;

e. Is legally established and located within one of the following:

- a state within the United States
- the District of Columbia
- the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
- a United States territory

f. Has the legal capacity and authority to carry out the grant purpose;

g. Has a proven record of successfully providing technical assistance and/or training to rural areas;

h. Has capitalization acceptable to the Agency, and is composed of at least 51 percent of the outstanding interest or membership being citizens of the United States or individuals who reside in the United States after being legally admitted for permanent residence;

i.   Has no delinquent debt to the Federal Government or no outstanding judgments to repay a Federal debt;

j.   Demonstrates that it possesses the financial, technical, and managerial capability to comply with Federal and State laws and requirements.

k.   Contracts with a nonaffiliated organization for not more than 49 percent of the grant to provide the proposed assistance.

7.2 Eligible Grant Purposes

The following activities are authorized under the SWM statute:

Grant funds must be used to capitalize a Solid Waste Management program for the purpose of:

a.   Evaluating current landfill conditions to determine threats to water resources.

b.   Providing technical assistance and/or training to enhance operator skills in the operation and maintenance of active landfills.

c.   Providing technical assistance and/or training to help communities reduce the solid waste stream.

d.   Providing technical assistance and/or training for operators of landfills which are closed or will be closed in the near future with the development and implementation of closure plans, future land use plans, safety and maintenance planning, and closure scheduling within permit requirements.

7.3 Ineligible Grant Purposes

Grant funds may not be used to pay any of the following:

a.   Recruit applications for the Agency's water and waste loan and/or any loan and/or grant program;

b.   Duplicate current services, or replace or substitute support normally provided by other means, such as those performed by an association's consultant in developing a project, including feasibility, design, and cost estimates.

c.   Fund political or lobbying activities.

d.   Purchase real estate or vehicles, improve or renovate office space, or repair and maintain privately owned property.

e.   Pay the costs for construction, improvement, rehabilitation, modification or operation and maintenance of water, wastewater, and solid waste disposal facilities.

f.   Construct or furnish a building.

g.   Intervene in the Federal regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings.

h. Sue the Federal Government or any other government entities.

i. Pay for technical assistance which duplicates assistance provided to implement an action plan funded by the Forest Service (FS) under the National Forest-Dependent Rural Communities Economic Diversification Act (7U.S.C. 6601 note) for five continuous years from the date of grant approval by the FS. To avoid duplicate assistance, coordinate with the <u>State Rural Development office</u> and the <u>Forest Service</u> before submitting an application.

j. Pay for any other costs that are not allowable under OMB Circular A-87, OMB Circular A-110, OMB Circular A-102 or OMB Circular A-122.

7.4 Security Requirements
A grant agreement will be executed between the Grantee and the Agency.

Section 8: Application Submission Process

8.1 Two Ways of Filing Applications
You may file an application in either paper or electronic format. Send or deliver paper applications by the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) or courier delivery services to the RDUP receipt point. File an application electronically through Grants.gov, the official Federal Government website at <u>http://www.grants.gov</u>. RDUP will not accept applications by fax or e-mail.

8.2 DUNS Number Requirement
Whether you file a paper or an electronic application, you will need a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number. You must provide your DUNS number on the SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance."

To verify that your organization has a DUNS number or to receive one at no cost, call the dedicated toll-free request line at 1-866-705-5711 or access the Web site <u>http://www.dunandbradstreet.com</u>. You will need the following pieces of information when requesting a DUNS number:

- Legal Name
- Headquarters name and address of the organization
- Doing business as (dba) or other name by which the organization is commonly recognized
- Physical address
- Mailing address (if separate from headquarters and/or physical address)
- Telephone number
- Contact name and title
- Number of employees at the physical location

8.3 Paper Applications

Mail or ensure delivery of an original paper application (no stamped, photocopied, or initialed signatures) and two copies by the deadline date of December 31, 2011.

If your grant application will service **only one** state, please forward your application to your **local USDA Rural Development Office**. The address and contact information for each state's USDA Rural Development Office can be accessed by clicking on the following link: http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/states/usamap.htm

If the grant application will service **more than one state**, please forward the application to:

> Assistant Administrator
> Water and Environmental Programs
> Rural Utilities Service
> 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
> STOP 1548, Room 5145 South
> Washington, DC 20250-1548

The application and any materials sent with it become Federal records by law and cannot be returned to you.

8.4 Electronic Applications

You may file an electronic application at the web site:

www.grants.gov.

You must be registered with Grants.gov before you can submit a grant application. If you have not used Grants.gov before, you will need to register with the Central Contractor Registry (CCR) and the Credential Provider. You will need a DUNS number to access or register at any of the services. The registration processes may take several business days to complete. Follow the instructions at Grants.gov for registering and submitting an electronic application. RDUP may request original signatures on electronically submitted documents later.

The CCR registers your organization, housing your organizational information and allowing Grants.gov to use it to verify your identity. You may register for the CCR by calling the CCR Assistance Center at 1-888-227-2423 or you may register online at: http://www.ccr.gov.

The Credential Provider gives you or your representative a username and password, as part of the Federal Government's E-Authentication to ensure a secure transaction. You will need the username and password when you register with Grants.gov or use it to submit your application. You must register with the Central Provider through Grants.gov: https://apply.grants.gov/OrcRegister.

All electronic documents must be submitted using one of the following formats:

- Excel
- Word
- PDF

8.5 Deadlines for Grant Applications

Applications will be accepted from _October 1 through December 31_ of each calendar year. Applications may be hand-delivered to the State Office by close of business December 31, postmarked, or time-stamped electronically by the filing deadline of midnight December 31 to be considered submitted on time. Applications received after December 31 will NOT be considered in that year's review and will be returned to the applicant.

Paper applications must show proof of mailing or shipping consisting of one of the following:

- A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service (USPS) postmark
- A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the USPS
- A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier

> **Note: Packages arriving at USDA via the USPS are irradiated, which can damage the contents.** RDUP encourages you to consider the impact of this procedure in selecting your application delivery method. Also, if there is a disruption in mail delivery service, we strongly encourage you to submit applications via express mail or commercial delivery to our office.

If a receipt date falls on a weekend or on a Federal holiday, it will be extended to the next business day.

Section 9: Requirements for a Completed Grant

9.1 Preparing the Application

To be considered for support, you must be an eligible entity and must submit a complete application by the deadline date. You should consult the cost principles and general administrative requirements for grants pertaining to their organizational type in order to prepare the budget and complete other parts of the application. You also must demonstrate compliance (or intent to comply), through certification or other means, with a number of public policy requirements.

Completed Application

1. Standard application forms
2. A proposal
3. A work plan
4. A budget and budget justification
5. Evidence of legal existence and legal authority
6. A list of directors and officers
7. Other specified information

19

9.2 Required Forms
Applicants must complete and submit the following forms to apply for a SWM grant:

- Standard Form 424, "Application for Federal Assistance"
- Standard Form 424A, "Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs"
- Standard Form 424B, "Assurances—Non-Construction Programs"
- Standard Form LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activity"
- Form RD 400-1, "Equal Opportunity Agreement"
- Form RD 400-4, "Assurance Agreement (Under Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964

* Note: The following information has been updated to include new formatting guidelines:

9.3 Project Proposal
The project proposal should outline the project in sufficient detail to provide the reader with a complete understanding of how the proposed project will work. Explain what your project will accomplish utilizing the grant funds. Demonstrate the feasibility of the proposed project in meeting the objectives of this grant program. Proposals should be no more than 20 pages single sided using a font size of 12 points (Times New Roman font style preferred). The proposal should cover the following elements:

1. Project Summary

Present a brief project overview. Explain the purpose of the project, how it relates to RDUP' purposes, how you will carry out the project, what the project will produce, and who will direct it.

2. Needs Assessment

Describe why the project is necessary. Demonstrate that eligible entities need grant funds. Quantify the number of prospective communities or provide statistical or narrative evidence that a sufficient number of communities will exist to justify the grant award. Describe the service area, including population and median household income (MHI). Address community needs.

3. Project Goals and Objectives

Clearly state your project goals. Your objectives should clearly describe the goals and be concrete and specific enough to be quantitative or observable. They should also be feasible and relate to the purpose of the project.

4. Project Narrative

The narrative should cover in more detail the items briefly described in the Project Summary. It should establish the basis for any claims that you have substantial expertise in providing effective Solid Waste Management technical assistance and/or training. In describing what the project will achieve, you should tell the reader if it also will have broader influence. The narrative should address the following points:

- Document your ability to administer Solid Waste Management in accordance with the provisions of 7 CFR Part 1775.

- Document that, to establish a Solid Waste Management, project you can commit financial resources your organization controls. This documentation should describe the sources of funds other than the SWM grant that will be used to pay your operational costs and provide financial assistance for projects.

- Demonstrate that you have secured commitments of significant financial support from other funding sources, if appropriate.

5. Work Plan

The work plan must describe the tasks and activities that will be accomplished with available resources during the grant period. It must show the work you plan to do to achieve the anticipated outcomes, goals, and objectives set out for the SWM Program. The plan must include:

- The benefits of the technical assistance and/or training.

- Brief description of how the service will be provided and whether currently employed personnel or contracted personnel will be used.

6. Budget and Budget Justification

The written justification for projected costs should explain how budget figures were determined for each category. It should indicate which costs are to be covered by grant funds and which costs will be met by your organization or other organizations. The justification should account for all expenditures discussed in the narrative. It should reflect appropriate cost-sharing contributions. The budget justification should explain the budget and accounting system proposed or in place. The administrative costs for operating the budget should be expressed as a percentage of the overall budget. The budget justification should provide specific budget figures, rounding off figures to the nearest dollar. Applicants should consult OMB Circular A-122: "Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations" for information about appropriate costs for each budget category.

7. Area(s) to be Served

Describe the areas to be served, including population, non-metropolitan median household income information, and the name of association(s) or type of association(s) that will be served. Also describe the method used to select the association(s) that will receive the service.

8. Summary of Experience

Give a brief summary of experience of the applicant to provide the proposed service. More details, including experience of key staff members, resumes, and person(s) providing the technical assistance and/or training, may be included in an appendix.

9. Evaluation Method(s

Describe the evaluation method(s) to determine if objective(s) or the proposed activity is being accomplished.

10. Duration of Project/Service

Briefly describe the duration of the project or service, and the estimated time from grant approval to beginning of project or service, not to exceed 12 months. The grant period begins October 1 of each year and ends September 30 of the following year.

11. Sustainability

Briefly describe the plans for increased self-sustainability for the project/service in future years.

9.4 Required Information Not Found on Standard Application Forms
In addition to completing the standard application forms, you must submit supplementary materials:

1. Evidence of Legal Existence

Demonstrate that your organization is legally recognized under State and Federal law. Satisfactory documentation includes but is not limited to, certificates from the Secretary of State, or copies of state statutes or laws establishing your organization. Letters from the IRS awarding tax-exempt status are not considered adequate evidence.

2. List of Directors and Officers

Submit a certified list of directors and officers with their respective terms.

3. IRS Tax exempt Status

Submit evidence of tax exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service.

4. Debarment and Suspension Rules

You must disclose debarment and suspension information required in accordance with 7 CFR, Part 3017, subpart 3017.335, if it applies. (The section heading is "What information must I provide before entering into a covered transaction with the Department of Agriculture?" It is part of the Department of Agriculture's rules on Government-wide Debarment and Suspension.)

5. Drug-free Workplace Requirements

You must identify all of your organization's known workplaces by including the actual address of buildings (or parts of buildings) or other sites where work under the award takes place. Workplace identification is required under the drug-free workplace requirements in accordance with 7 CFR, Part 3021, subpart 3021.230. (It is part of the Department of Agriculture's rules on Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance. The section heading is "How and when must I identify workplaces?")

6. Audit
Submit the most recent audit of your organization.

7. Financial statements
Submit the following financial statements:

- A pro forma balance sheet at start-up and for at least three additional years;

- Balance sheets, income statements, and cash flow statements for the last three years. If the applicant organization has been formed less than three years, the financial statements should be submitted for the periods from inception to the present.

8. Other Organizational Documents

If contracting with an affiliated organization, please provide the contract and/or legal documents that illustrate the affiliation between the contractor and your organization. For further information, contact the WEP staff at (202)720-9589.

9.5 Optional Information Not Found on Standard Application Forms

You may present additional information to support and describe your plan for achieving the grant objectives. The information may be regarded as essential for understanding and evaluating the project such as letters of support, resolutions, policies, etc. The supplements may be presented in appendices to the proposal.

Section 10: Application Review Process

10.1 Receipt Acknowledgment

RDUP will acknowledge the application's receipt by letter within 30 days of receiving your application. Your application will be reviewed for completeness to determine if you included all of the items required. If your application is incomplete or ineligible, RDUP will return it to you with an explanation.

10.2 Evaluating the Application

A review team, composed of at least two members, will independently evaluate all applications and proposals. They will make overall recommendations based on factors such as eligibility, clarity, detailed information, application completeness, and conformity to application requirements. They will score the applications based on criteria in the next section.

10.3 Scoring Criteria

All applications that are complete and eligible will be ranked competitively based on the following scoring criteria:

1	Applicant Status: National Organization	10 points
	Public Body	5 points
	Non-profit Organization	2 points
2	Applicant experience at developing and implementing successful technical assistance and/or training programs:	
	More than 10 years	5 points

	Six to ten years	2 points
	Up to five years	0 points
3	Applicant resources – organizational staff versus contract personnel to carry out the technical assistance and/or training:	
	At least 75% staff	10 points
	50% to 75% staff	5 points
	Less than 50% staff	**Ineligible**
4	Population of proposed area(s) to be served:	
	Less than 2,500	Up to 15 points
	Less than 5,500	Up to 10 points
	5,500 or more	0 points
5	MHI of proposed area(s) to be served:	
	Less than 80% of the SNMHI (State Non-metropolitan Median Household Income)	Up to 10 points
	80% to 100% of the SNMHI	Up to 5 points
	More than 100% of the SNMHI	0 points
6	Project Duration:	
	Projects providing technical assistance and/or training that accomplish the objective within a 12 month or less time frame	5 points
	Over 12 months	0 points
7	Needs Assessment - The problem/issue(s) being addressed is clearly defined, supported by data, and addresses the need.	Up to 15 points
8	Goals and objectives are clearly defined, tied to the need as defined in the work plan, and are measurable.	Up to 15 points
9	Work plan - Clearly articulates a well thought out approach to accomplishing objectives; clearly identifies who will be served by project.	Up to 40 points
10	Actual assistance provided:	
	Applicant is providing "hands on" technical assistance and/or training primarily to solid waste management systems managers/operators.	Up to 20 points or
	Applicant is providing technical assistance primarily through the distribution of educational materials and other outreach methods.	Up to 10 points or
	Applicant is providing technical assistance through a demonstration project.	Up to 5 points
11	Evaluation methods are specific to the activity, clearly defined, measurable, with expected project outcomes.	Up to 20 points
12	In-Kind Support:	
	Demonstrated commitment of non-federal	10 points

	resources of more than 25% of total budget.	
	Demonstrated commitment of non-federal resources 10- 25% of total budget.	5 points
	Less than 10% of non-federal resources.	0 points
13	Sustainability: Applicant demonstrates ability to sustain project without federal award using a thorough financial analysis to include: cash on hand, projected revenues, outside source contributions, and show a steady increase to sustainability within 5 years.	Up to 10 points
14	Prior Grant/Years Funded:	
	Applicant has not received a prior SWM grant	15 points
	Applicant has received past SWM grant (1-3 years)	10 points
	Applicant has received past SWM grant (4-5 years)	5 points
	Applicant has received past SWM grant (more than 5 years)	0 points
15	Administrator Discretion: RDUP Administrator may provide additional points based on the following factors: geographic, economic, agency priority issues.	Up to 15 points

10.4 Application Selection

RDUP will rank all qualifying applications by their final score. Applications will be selected for funding, based on the highest scores and the availability of funding for SWM grants. **Each applicant will be notified in writing of whether or not the pre-application has been selected for funding.**

> **Note:** Applicants selected for funding must register and maintain a current Central Contractor Registration (CCR). The Grantee must maintain the currency of your information in the CCR until you submit the final financial report required under this award and all grants funds under this award have been disbursed or de-obligated, whichever is later. This requires that you review and update the information at least annually after the initial registration, and more frequently if required by changes in your information or another award term. Recipients can register on-line at (https://www.bpn.gov/ccr/). You as the recipient may not make a sub-award to an entity unless the entity has provided its Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to you. Sub-recipients with sub-awards of $25,000 or more must also have and maintain a current CCR registration. You as the recipient must report each first tier sub-awards of $25,000 or more in non-Recovery Act funds to http://www.fsrs.gov no later than the end of the month following the month the obligation was made.

10.5 Possible RDUP Actions on the Application

In making its decision about your application, RDUP may determine that your application is:

- Eligible and selected for funding,
- Eligible but offered fewer funds than requested,
- Eligible but not selected for funding, or
- Ineligible for the grant.

10.6 Appeals Process

In accordance with 7 CFR Part 1900, subpart B, you generally have the right to appeal adverse decisions. Some adverse decisions cannot be appealed. For example, if you are denied RDUP funding due to a lack of funds available for the grant program, this decision cannot be appealed.

However, you may make a request to the National Appeals Division (NAD) to review the accuracy of our finding that the decision cannot be appealed. The appeal must be submitted within the proper timeframe, in writing and filed at the appropriate Regional Office, which can be found at http://www.nad.usda.gov/offices.htm or by calling (703) 305-1166.

Appendix—Rules and Regulations

These rules and regulations have been mentioned throughout the text of the guidelines, but are listed in one place for easy reference. The Code of Federal Regulations is located at http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html; the OMB circulars are located at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/index.html.

- Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 7, Part 1775: "Solid Waste Management Grant Program"
- CFR, Title 7, Part 3017, "Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement)"
- CFR, Title 7, Part 3021, "Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-free Workplace (Financial Assistance)"
- CFR, Title 7, Part 1900, subpart B, "Adverse Decisions and Administrative Appeals"
- CFR, Title 7, Part 3015: "Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations"
- CFR, Title 7, Part 3019: "Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations"
- OMB Circular A-122: "Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations"
- OMB Circular A-133: "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations"