

# NSW Emergency Relief for Securing Regional Town Water Supplies

---

## Grant Guidelines

December 2025



Grant Program Details	
Opening date and time	1/01/2026 12:00 AM
Closing date and time	30/06/2033 5:00 PM
Decision-maker	Deputy Secretary Water
NSW Government Agency	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
Type of grant opportunity	Closed, non-competitive
Grant value	<p>The Emergency Relief for Securing Town Water Supply Grant Program will run as a rounds-based grant program, aligned with financial years.</p> <p>Each round will be open subject to funding availability for that financial year.</p> <p>Funding amounts will be determined based on the proposed project value, assessed against the grant application criteria.</p>
Enquiries	<a href="mailto:sswp@dpie.nsw.gov.au">sswp@dpie.nsw.gov.au</a>

# Contents

Overview of grant program .....	5
<b>1 Overview of grant program.....</b>	<b>6</b>
1.1 Purpose and objectives.....	6
1.1.1 Emergency Financial Grant Assistance.....	6
1.1.2 Emergency Infrastructure Grants .....	7
1.2 Grant value.....	7
1.2.1 Emergency Financial Grant Assistance.....	7
1.2.2 Emergency Infrastructure Grants .....	7
<b>Selection criteria .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>2 Selection criteria .....</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 Eligibility criteria .....	9
2.2 Assessment criteria .....	9
2.2.1 Emergency Financial Grant Assistance.....	9
2.2.2 Emergency Infrastructure Grants .....	10
<b>Application process.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>3 Application process.....</b>	<b>13</b>
3.1 How to apply .....	13
3.1.1 Steps to apply.....	13
3.2 Support available to applicants .....	13
<b>Assessment process .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>4 Assessment process .....</b>	<b>15</b>
4.1 Assessment of grant applications .....	15
4.1.1 Decision .....	15
4.2 Notification of application outcome .....	15
4.3 Publication of grants information .....	16
<b>Successful grant applications.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>5 Successful grant applications.....</b>	<b>18</b>
5.1 Grant agreement.....	18
5.2 Grant payment.....	18
5.3 Unspent funds .....	18
5.4 Reporting and acquittal requirements.....	18
5.5 Evaluation.....	19

<b>Additional information and resources.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>6 Additional information and resources.....</b>	<b>21</b>
6.1 Feedback or Complaints.....	21
6.1.1 Handling complaints.....	21
6.2 Access to information.....	21
6.2.1 Privacy Policy .....	21
6.2.2 GIPA Act.....	22
6.3 Ethical conduct.....	22
6.3.1 Conflict of interest management .....	22
6.3.2 Provision of false or misleading information.....	23
6.3.3 Confidentiality .....	23
6.4 Administration of these program guidelines .....	24
6.4.1 Approval .....	24
6.5 Further information.....	24

---

# 1

Overview of grant program

# 1 Overview of grant program

The Water Group is part of the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (**DCCEE**) ('the department'), it oversees the management of state water resources. The NSW Government, through the department, supports regional communities during emergencies to ensure access to water. The Water Group collaborates with NSW Regional Local Water Utilities (**LWU**), Water Supply Authorities and/or Joint Organisations that are responsible for water supply to regional towns and villages, providing technical assistance, advice and support, and financial assistance.

The 'Emergency Relief for Securing Regional Water Supplies' policy outlines:

- eligible organisations,
- types of assistance available, and
- the procedures for organisations seeking support.

This includes financial assistance for water carting or bottled water during emergencies and water supply works during periods of emergency.

The NSW Emergency Relief for Regional Town Water Supplies program is a closed, non-competitive grant program under the NSW Grants Administration Guide. This grant program is intended to be available to specific LWUs to address issues within a limited timeframe with each grant assessed individually without comparing to other applications. This assessment process aligns with the emergency nature of funding requests and the diverse purposes for which funding is sought.

Risks will be managed according to the department's risk management systems and these guidelines.

Applicants are encouraged to read all details in these guidelines before applying.

---

## 1.1 Purpose and objectives

The grant program is aimed to support regional communities where regional water supplies are threatened by circumstances that could not be reasonably planned for, to ensure critical human water needs are met. It aligns with the 'Emergency Relief for Securing Regional Water Supplies' policy, offering two types of support through Emergency Financial Grant Assistance and Emergency Infrastructure Grants.

### 1.1.1 Emergency Financial Grant Assistance

- The grant only applies to essential domestic, commercial, industrial and institutional purposes in urban areas, or to essential domestic purposes in non-urban areas.
- Water cartage or bottled water is only for critical human needs and not for commercial purposes.
- Cartage costs or bottled water will be calculated according to existing assessment measures, as specified in the 'Emergency Relief for Securing Regional Water Supplies'

policy, and eligible organisations will provide evidence of water carting and bottled water costs.

- The grant duration is limited to address the current crisis for these residents.

## **1.1.2 Emergency Infrastructure Grants**

- Emergency capital works are identified as the most cost-effective means of maintaining essential water supply.
- 

## **1.2 Grant value**

### **1.2.1 Emergency Financial Grant Assistance**

The amount of funding assistance available for water carting or bottled water will be limited to 90% of eligible costs, unless financial hardship can be demonstrated.

### **1.2.2 Emergency Infrastructure Grants**

The amount of funding assistance available for emergency capital works will usually be limited to a percentage based on the department's grants program subsidy band limits (or equivalent based on population serviced for town water supply authorities in unincorporated areas), unless financial hardship can be demonstrated.

The amount of funding assistance available for standpipes will not exceed \$25,000 per high-flow standpipe.

---

# 2

Selection criteria

## 2 Selection criteria

---

### 2.1 Eligibility criteria

To be eligible, you must be one of the following entities:

- Local councils and County Councils, as identified under the Local Government Act 1993 (providing water supply and/or sewerage services under Section 56)
  - Water supply authorities (as identified in the Water Management Act 2000)
  - Joint organisations (as defined by the Office of Local Government)
  - Unincorporated area water supply organisations.
- 

### 2.2 Assessment criteria

#### 2.2.1 Emergency Financial Grant Assistance

Criteria	Response considerations and evidence
Criterion 1: The proposal meets the objectives of the emergency grant program.	<p>Detail how the grant will support regional communities where regional water supplies are threatened by circumstances that could not be reasonably planned for, to ensure critical human water needs are met.</p> <p>Ensure that grant funding will only apply to essential domestic, commercial, industrial and institutional purposes in urban areas, or to essential domestic purposes in non-urban areas.</p> <p>Residents will use water cartage or bottled water for critical human needs and not for commercial purposes.</p> <p>Cartage costs or bottled water will be calculated according to existing assessment measures, as specified in the 'Emergency Relief for Securing Regional Water Supplies' policy, and eligible organisations will provide evidence of water carting and bottled water costs.</p> <p>The grant duration is limited to address the current crisis for these residents</p>
Criterion 2: The proposal sufficiently details how the emergency event has or is likely to impact their community.	<p>Provide a concise summary of the event (i.e. drought, flood, water quality event).</p> <p>Include timing, scale and severity (e.g. Dates, affected areas, official declarations).</p> <p>Detail impacts on the community (i.e. Physical Impacts: damage to infrastructure, water quality or security concerns; Economic</p>

Criteria	Response considerations and evidence
	Impacts: Council response so far, financial ability to respond; Social Impacts: displacement, disruption, health concerns.
Criterion 3: The applicant has the capacity, experience and expertise to deliver the project within budget and timeframes.	Demonstrates that the applicant (or their sub-contractors) has sufficient capacity and resources to deliver the project  Demonstrates the capability of the applicant to deliver the project within the timeframe identified and to a high standard.  Evidence of delivery performance of other projects.
Criterion 4: The proposal details the emergency plan with sufficient detail.	Provides detail or evidence of planning, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consideration, or steps taken towards, establishing an emergency supply from another source</li> <li>• the location of source of water to be used, the method of cartage proposed, the number of loads and frequency</li> <li>• the likely cost of purchase and transportation of water</li> <li>• copies correspondence with transport contracts regarding cartage, where available</li> </ul>

## 2.2.2 Emergency Infrastructure Grants

Criteria	Specific information and evidence required
Criterion 1: The proposal meets the objectives of the emergency grant program.	Emergency capital works are identified as the most cost-effective means of maintaining essential water supply.
Criterion 2: The proposal sufficiently details how the emergency event has or is likely to impact their community.	Provide a concise summary of the event (i.e. drought, flood, water quality event).  Include timing, scale and severity (e.g. Dates, affected areas, official declarations).  Detail impacts on the community (i.e. Physical Impacts: damage to infrastructure, water quality or security concerns; Economic Impacts: Council response so far, financial ability to respond; Social Impacts: displacement, disruption, health concerns.
Criterion 3: The applicant has the capacity, experience and expertise to deliver the project within budget and timeframes.	Demonstrates that the applicant (or their sub-contractors) has sufficient capacity and resources to deliver the project  Demonstrates the capability of the applicant to deliver the project within the timeframe identified and to a high standard.  Evidence of delivery performance of other projects.

Criteria	Specific information and evidence required
<p>Criterion 4: The proposal includes required documentation.</p>	<p>You should demonstrate this through providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a copy of the technical report</li> <li>• a full description of the proposed works, stating their location, whether or not they are permanent, and the quantity, quality and security of supply they will provide</li> <li>• an estimate of the capital cost of works</li> <li>• planned dates of commencement and completion.</li> </ul>

# 3

Application process

## 3 Application process

---

### 3.1 How to apply

To apply, eligible organisations must submit a detailed emergency plan or equivalent addressing the assessment criteria.

In cases requiring extremely urgent funding approval, an exchange of emails is sufficient to initiate an emergency response, with the formal funding agreement to be finalised afterward. This will be handled on a case-by-case basis by an authorised officer.

Applications are to be submitted through SmartyGrants – the NSW Government’s Grant Management System (GMS) – or by email to [sswp@dpie.nsw.gov.au](mailto:sswp@dpie.nsw.gov.au).

#### 3.1.1 Steps to apply

1. Complete the application form on the GMS.
2. Provide all requested information.
3. Address all eligibility and assessment criteria.
4. Attach all required supporting documents.
5. Submit your completed application in the GMS.

We will acknowledge that we have received your application after you submit it through the GMS.

You should keep a copy of your application and any supporting documents.

If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should contact us immediately at [sswp@dpie.nsw.gov.au](mailto:sswp@dpie.nsw.gov.au).

If we find an error or information is missing, we may ask for clarification or additional information from you.

---

### 3.2 Support available to applicants

Further information on [water emergency assistance](#) can be found on the department’s website.

Local water utilities are encouraged to contact their local department representative to discuss funding opportunities, or the department’s Local Water Utilities Regional Managers for further information.

For questions about eligibility, or assistance with submitting your application, please email [sswp@dpie.nsw.gov.au](mailto:sswp@dpie.nsw.gov.au).

# 4

Assessment process

## 4 Assessment process

---

### 4.1 Assessment of grant applications

The grant will be managed and acquitted by the department in accordance with section 6.6.2 of the Grant Administration Guide. The assessment process is summarised as follows:

1. Applications received.
2. Applications reviewed, in order received, by Technical Program Officers against eligibility and assessment criteria. Further information may be sought if required.
3. Recommendation made to decision maker for approval.
4. Applicants notified of outcome.

Once approved by the decision maker, LWUs must sign a funding agreement before receiving funds. Complete applications will be assessed in the order they are received.

The department reserves the right to request additional information from eligible organisations to assist in assessing the application and verifying any information provided. Failure to provide such information may result in the department declining the application.

#### 4.1.1 Decision

- The decision maker for this grant program is the Deputy Secretary Water.
- The decision maker for award of grants is the delegated officer detailed in the delegations under the *Government Sector Finance Act 2018* (NSW).
- The program will be administered by the department's Water Grant Office.
- All decisions in the recommendation and approval process must be documented. A decision to approve or decline an application for a grant must be recorded in writing. All records must be managed in accordance with the requirements of the *State Records Act 1998* (NSW).

---

### 4.2 Notification of application outcome

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application in writing, via email.

If your application is successful, we will invite you to enter into a funding deed with the department. You will have 30 business days to sign and return the funding deed from the date we send it to you.

If you do not return the agreement within the allocated time, we may withdraw your funding offer.

The funding deed needs to be signed by someone with the authority to enter into contracts on behalf of your organisation. The funding deed is not binding until signed by both parties.

---

## 4.3 Publication of grants information

The Grants Administration Guide requires that certain information is published in relation to grants awarded no later than 45 calendar days after the grant agreement takes effect (see section 6.5 of the Guide and Appendix A to the GAG). This information is also open access information under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW) (GIPA Act)*, which must be made publicly available unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure of the information.

In accordance with these requirements, relevant information about the grants awarded will be made available on the NSW Government Grants and Funding Finder as soon as possible after the grant funding is approved or declined.

All records in relation to this decision will be managed in accordance with the requirements of the *State Records Act 1998 (NSW)*.

The Grants Administration Guide also requires that certain information about emergency relief grants is provided to the Auditor-General within 3 months of the grant agreement taking effect or, if there is no grant agreement, no later than 3 months after the first payment is paid to the grantee. This information includes:

- the grants information required to be published on the NSW Government Grants and Funding Finder under GAG 6.5 *Publishing grant information*
- grants information required to be reported by NSW agencies to the Commonwealth under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements 2018.

# 5

Successful grant  
applications

## 5 Successful grant applications

---

### 5.1 Grant agreement

Before any funds are issued, the grantee must sign a deed agreeing to the funding terms and conditions.

The grantee must comply with record keeping, reporting and acquittal requirements as set out in the funding deed.

Funding for works already started may be considered, provided they are directly connected to the emergency project and align with its stated purpose and objectives.

While requests for variations to the funding deed may be considered, the department has limited capacity to carry funds over into future financial years. Any variation to the funding deed will only be approved in accordance with the terms and conditions of the funding deed.

---

### 5.2 Grant payment

Grants will be paid following assessment of milestone payment claims.

Grantees must submit evidence within the specified timeframes to verify the milestone payment claims.

An example of evidence is an invoice or report from financial systems showing that water carting or bottled water was purchased during the emergency period, and that the purchase was endorsed by the organisation's financial delegate.

Payments will be payable on submission of satisfactory evidence to support milestone achievement.

Grantees must use the funds for the stated purpose for which the funding was awarded unless written permission has been obtained from the department.

---

### 5.3 Unspent funds

Grant funds can only be spent on eligible activities, as outlined in the executed funding deed. All costs outside of these are the grantee's responsibility to pay.

The NSW Government requires that any unspent funds must be returned to the department, in accordance with the deed.

---

### 5.4 Reporting and acquittal requirements

The grantee must comply with record keeping, reporting and acquittal requirements that are set out in the funding deed.

---

## 5.5 Evaluation

The department will evaluate this grant program against its stated purpose and objectives, following section 6.7 of the Grant Administration Guide. The evaluation will assist in the improvement of the program and the design of future grant opportunities.

We will evaluate this program to determine how funded projects have contributed to the program's objectives. We may also interview you or ask you for more information to help us understand how the grant impacted you and to evaluate how effective the funding was in achieving its objectives.

Without limiting any specific reporting or evaluation requirements (or similar) set out in any funding deed you execute with the department, we may contact you up to five years after completion of your project for more information to assist with this evaluation.

You consent to the use of your information for this purpose by:

- the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
- the Minister or Minister's office
- the NSW Ombudsman and Audit Office of NSW
- the department's staff, consultants, and advisors
- any agency or body of the NSW Government, or any other organisation or individual considered by the department to have a need or an entitlement to know what information (including any federal, state, or territory agency or body), where that need or entitlement to know that information arises out of or in connection with the purpose above.

# 6

Additional information and  
resources

# 6 Additional information and resources

---

## 6.1 Feedback or Complaints

If you have general feedback or a complaint about this grant program or grant decisions, please email [sswp@dpie.nsw.gov.au](mailto:sswp@dpie.nsw.gov.au). Your feedback will be sent to the department's Water Grant Office for action.

### 6.1.1 Handling complaints

The NSW Government is committed to ensuring transparency, fairness, and accountability in its programs. Complaints will be managed promptly and professionally, with all concerns reviewed in line with established procedures. Applicants and stakeholders can expect clear communication, respectful engagement, and appropriate action where necessary to resolve issues. When submitting a complaint, please include:

- a brief description of your concern and what happened
- the person, agency, or area of NSW DCCEEW involved
- relevant dates, locations, and any reference numbers
- what you would like us to do to resolve your complaint
- your contact details: name, postal address, and phone number
- if you prefer your complaint to be handled confidentially.

If your complaint is not resolved satisfactorily, the NSW Ombudsman can be contacted for external review of the administrative actions of the department. The Ombudsman will not usually investigate a complaint unless you have already raised the matter directly with the relevant department.

---

## 6.2 Access to information

### 6.2.1 Privacy Policy

The department must comply with the NSW *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1988* (Privacy Act). We collect the minimum personal information given voluntarily to allow us to contact the organisation and to assess the merits of an application.

Any information you give will be stored on a database that will only be accessed by authorised personnel and is subject to privacy restrictions. The information will only be used for the purpose for which it was collected.

Applicants must ensure that people whose personal details are supplied in applications are aware that the department is receiving this information and how the department will use this information.

The department may be required by law to disclose information provided by an applicant, including but not limited to under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW) or in response to a request by a House or a Committee of the Parliament of New South Wales or the Commonwealth of Australia

## 6.2.2 GIPA Act

The Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (GIPA Act) provides for the proactive release of government information by agencies and gives members of the public an enforceable right to access government information held by an agency (which includes Ministerial offices). Access to government information is only to be restricted if there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.

The NSW Legislative Council has the power to order the production of State papers by the Executive Government. Standing Order 52 provides that the House may order documents to be tabled by the Government in the House. The Cabinet Office coordinates the preparation of the papers – that is, the return to order. The return to order may contain privileged and public documents. Privileged documents are available only to members of the Legislative Council.

Note that documents submitted as part of a grant application may be subject to an application under the GIPA Act or an order for papers under Standing Order 52.

---

## 6.3 Ethical conduct

The department will be guided by independent probity advisors on integrity, fairness, and accountability throughout the grant process. These probity advisors will make recommendations on issues that may arise around prioritising risks and issues, assessing submissions, awarding grants, and administering funding agreements. Their involvement assists to ensure decisions are made with integrity, fairness and accountability to deliver value for money for NSW.

### 6.3.1 Conflict of interest management

#### 6.3.1.1 Conflicts of interest for the applicants

You and any project partners must disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest as part of your application or, if successful, as they arise during project implementation. Conflicts of interest are any factors that could (actually or by perception) compromise the judgement, decisions, or actions of a person or group of people. Such conflicts may relate to (without limitation):

- engaging consultants to assist you with the application who have advised or are currently advising the department
- procurement or employment
- direct negotiations
- sponsorships
- partnerships
- any other situations which could lead to unfavourable advantage.

The fact that you wish to engage, or have engaged, an existing department consultant or service provider, does not automatically preclude you from engaging the same consultancy, however you must request from your consultants whether they have advised the department, and notify the department immediately.

The department will consider whether it considers there to be a conflict of interest and notify you as the applicant of the outcome. You must follow the directions of the department with respect to the

conflict of interest, including procuring assurances from the consultant, otherwise the department may elect not to proceed with your application.

You should be cautious with respect to any conflicts of interest, and we recommend you contact the department if you are unsure whether something constitutes an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest.

### **6.3.1.2 Conflicts of interest for the department**

The department will adhere to its conflict-of-interest procedures and all personnel involved in administering or assessing this program will be required to declare their interests. All advisors engaged by the department are required to disclose any conflict of interests they may have in relation to applicants. They may also be excluded from partaking in discussions on those projects.

Mitigation measures are in place to ensure conflicts of interest that may arise during any stage of this grant initiative are adequately addressed. This ensures the grant process is equitable.

### **6.3.2 Provision of false or misleading information**

The department takes fraud very seriously. It is an offence to provide false or misleading information to the department. If an individual or organisation provides any information, or makes any representations to the department that is or may be inaccurate, intended to mislead, deceptive, deceitful, or otherwise fraudulent, the department may take the following actions against the individual or organisation:

- refuse to consider its application
- refuse to accept or consider any further applications from it
- withdraw its funding offer
- require the return of any received payment that the department determines the individual or organisation was not entitled to receive in accordance with these guidelines and the terms of the funding deed
- report the matter to the NSW Police.

### **6.3.3 Confidentiality**

#### **6.3.3.1 Confidentiality for the applicants**

Successful applicants will be required to keep the outcome of their application confidential until the department makes a public announcement.

#### **6.3.3.2 Confidentiality for the department**

Unless otherwise stated, any confidential information provided by you as part of, or in connection with an application or negotiation process will be treated confidentially by the department. We may disclose confidential information provided by you to the following parties:

- the Minister or Minister's office
- the NSW Ombudsman and Audit Office of NSW
- the department's staff, consultants and advisors
- other parties where authorised or required by law

- any agency or body of the NSW Government, or any other organisation or individual considered by the department to have a need or an entitlement to know that information. The need or entitlement to know the information must arise out of connection with the department's assessment, verification or due diligence of any aspect of an application.

We will reasonably attempt to ensure the confidentiality of any received information which is marked 'Commercial-in-confidence' or 'Confidential'. However, all information in or relating to your application will remain subject to the GIPA Act. If we disclose confidential information to any of the above parties, we will inform the party that the information is strictly confidential. We will otherwise only disclose confidential information provided by you with your consent.

## 6.4 Administration of these program guidelines

The department will review these guidelines every 12 months or as otherwise required and, subject to approval by the Deputy Secretary Water, make necessary updates.

### 6.4.1 Approval

Version	Name	Role	Date
1	Amanda Jones	Deputy Secretary Water	

## 6.5 Further information

Further information on [water emergency assistance](#) can be found on the department's website.

Local water utilities are encouraged to contact their local department representative to discuss funding opportunities, or the department's Local Water Utilities Regional Managers for further information.

For questions about eligibility, or assistance with submitting your application, please email [sswp@dpie.nsw.gov.au](mailto:sswp@dpie.nsw.gov.au).