

BUDGET

The State's budget for the fiscal year from October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024 ([House Bill 4437](#)) was passed. This budget provides continued support for the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) programs, additional full-time equivalents (FTE), and large one-time investments for contaminated site cleanups, groundwater data collection, renewable energy, and infrastructure financing. The additional FTEs represent a 6.6% increase from fiscal year (FY) 2023 but an overall 31% increase in staffing levels since 2019.

Drinking Water and Environmental Health Division (DWEHD) is anticipating 13 new FTEs overall. Planning is taking place as to where the greatest needs are in the division.

Since the budget was done early, DWEHD Administration is working to attempt to get local health department (LHD) 2024 Grants out before the beginning of the FY.

Residential Water Wells

DWEHD was able to hire a student, Jake Lawrence, to assist at the EGLE Drinking Water Laboratory as part of the \$5 million private residential well sampling initiative. The sampling initiative will begin in August 2023 with a webinar style kick off for local health, EGLE, Department of Health and Human Services, and laboratory staff prior to the launch. See July 3, 2023 for more information from Sara Pearson, via Jodie Shaver.

Onsite Wastewater Program

The Onsite Wastewater Program is reviewing the 2nd draft of the bills referred to as the Statewide Sanitary Code (received 7/10/2023). We are preparing written comments to brief Travis Boeskool. Program staff are interested in participating in meetings with LHDs and others to discuss these bills.

A contract was signed with Michigan Saves for the \$35 Million Failing Septic Loan Program. EGLE will be meeting with Michigan Saves at the end of the month to kick off the process and discuss coordination with LHD. EGLE is working towards hiring a limited term employee to work within the Onsite Wastewater Program to manage this contract. The scope of the contract includes:

"This Contract will support EGLE in establishing a loan program that makes resources available to homeowners in need of assistance and coordinates with local public health departments that oversee septic systems within their communities. Loans will only be available for the replacement of existing failing or near-failing septic systems, as well as for existing occupied homes with plumbing fixtures lacking a drain field, the source of an illicit discharge, or similar condition.

EGLE will provide guidance regarding minimum system requirements necessary to qualify for a loan. Loans will only be available for septic systems that meet program guidelines and are permitted by local health departments in compliance with the local regulations or applicable state criteria.

The Contractor will collect and share with EGLE information regarding the program, such as number of applicants, source of the referrals, number of loans finalized, nature of the failure, and the number and nature of any partnerships entered into by the Contractor.

Tier 1 – Income-limited households The Contractor will work with authorized lenders to create a custom, unsecured loan product that can be accessed through the Loan Application and Origination System (LOS). Tier 2 – Households above income limits set in Tier 1 The Contractor will use a market-based approach with a loan loss reserve under which they would work with other lending institutions to make loans available to eligible participants and EGLE through the Contractor would reimburse lenders for a portion of unpaid loans if borrowers were unable to make requisite payments under their loans.”

Noncommunity Public Water Supply Program

New training position

EGLE currently has posted an Environmental Quality Specialist 13 position to specialize and coordinate training associated with the Noncommunity Public Water Supply (NCWS) Program. LHD’s identified this need in the Michigan Association for Local Environmental Health Administrators Fall 2022 NCWS funding recommendations report. [Environmental Quality Specialist 13 - Training Coordinator | Job Details tab | Career Pages \(governmentjobs.com\)](#).

Inventory corrections

Routine updates of water supply activity status and billing information are needed by August 9, 2023, so that preparation for annual fee invoicing can be made. Instructions were distributed to coordinators via email from Samantha Jaworski on July 14, 2023.

Non-routine inventory (Wssn) adjustment, involving verification of a list shared with coordinators by their assigned EGLE Type II representative, **is needed by July 28, 2023**. The list identifies candidate Wssns that might need to be separated into multiple Wssns. The information needed: Do multiple water systems, each meeting the definition of a Type II system, exist at the site currently grouped under a single Wssn? If so, provide new Wssn(s) and system names so this problem can be addressed while setting up the Safe Drinking Water Information System (SDWIS). EGLE is planning a direct communication to owners of affected water supplies, as this affects annual fee invoicing.

IT Transition Update

Purpose: To share information regarding the NCWS Program's transition to SDWIS* and Safe Water Inspection F Tool (SWIFT)*.

Related feedback EGLE receives from LHDs:

- SDWIS and SWIFT are much more complicated than WaterTrack.
 - Screens in SDWIS have many more fields and navigating among screens is confusing.
 - Screen layout and appearance is old-fashioned by today's standards.
 - Why are there two databases to replace one?
 - Answer: SWIFT, an electronic field inspection tool, interfaces with SDWIS. SWIFT and a few other Global Environmental Consulting (GEC) tools will display SDWIS data more conveniently for daily work. While SDWIS will be replaced in a few years, SWIFT and other GEC tools are here to stay.
- Some people are feeling stressed about falling behind due to field work priorities.
 - "Homework" may be adding to stress.
 - EGLE acknowledges this is a very bad time of year to be learning new data systems.

Why is EGLE required to adopt and use SDWIS now?

- WaterTrack is a serious cybersecurity threat (December decommissioning is mandatory).
- WaterTrack falls further into obsolescence with every new rule, Laboratory Information Management System, and analytical method.
- It is required for adoption of the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Compliance Monitoring Data Portal (CMDP) – electronic sample data flow from private labs and, in a few years, required for adoption of the SDWIS replacement (called DW-SFTIES*).
- EPA requires Community Water Supplies and NCWS's to coexist in one instance of SDWIS before CMDP and DW-SFTIES.
- Federal reporting deficiencies identified in EPA audits, can only be addressed by adopting SDWIS.

What is EGLE doing to help LHD staff learn SDWIS and SWIFT?

- EGLE NCWS staff, also learning SDWIS and SWIFT, are saying the user screens are less overwhelming as you become familiar with them.
- We welcome opportunities SDWIS offers to get past some limitations in WaterTrack's design.
- There have been five of nine scheduled virtual trainings by GEC (number six to be conducted on July 26, 2023, at 10:00 a.m.).
 - These sessions are recorded and distributed, with homework to all LHDs.

- Late summer and September may afford opportunities for catching up on training.
- Trainings focus on just the main topics and later will cover things that apply to few supplies.
- Office hours and step-by-step desk guides are being prepared (some already available).
 - First office hour is Monday July 24, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. – review of sample data entry.
 - Desk guides are available in [EGLE-Teams-DWEHD-NCWS-Coordinators SDWIS State channel](#) .
- 2-day workshop in Mt. Pleasant October 4-5, 2023. Please [Register Here](#) (<https://EGLE.IDLoom.Events/LHD-NCWS-Conference>) for the training.
- EGLE expects there to be much learning after the October 20, 2023 cutover (WaterTrack to SDWIS).
- We are all learning to use these databases, how to set them up, and administrate them.
- Please keep communicating your needs through your EGLE NCWS representative or reach out to Dan Dettweiler directly thru email at DettweilerD@Michigan.gov; or by telephone at 517-614-8644.

*SDWIS – Safe Drinking Water Information Systems, Federal legacy system used by most states.

*SWIFT – Safe Water Inspection F Tool, by Global Environmental Consulting (GEC).

*DW-SFTIES – Drinking Water State-Federal-Tribal Information Exchange System, EPA's replacement for SDWIS within a few years.