



National Environmental Performance Partnership System (NEPPS)

About NEPPS

EPA, states, and Tribes share responsibility for protecting human health and the environment. The unique relationship between EPA, states, and Tribes is the cornerstone of the nation's environmental protection system. Working together, EPA, states, and Tribes have made enormous progress protecting our air, water, and land resources.

Since 1995, EPA and states have been implementing [the National Environmental Performance Partnership System](#) (NEPPS). NEPPS is a performance-based system of environmental protection designed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of EPA partnerships with states, territories, and Tribes. By focusing resources on the most pressing environmental problems and taking advantage of the unique capacities of each partner, performance partnerships can help achieve the greatest environmental and human health protection.

Performance Partnership Agreements and Grants

One of the main ways EPA and states implement performance partnerships is by negotiating Performance Partnership Agreements (PPAs). These agreements set out jointly-developed priorities and protection strategies and how EPA and the state or Tribe will work together to address priority needs. States and Tribes can also choose to combine funds from multiple federal environmental program grants into Performance Partnership Grants (PPGs) which allow them to direct resources where they are needed most or try innovative solutions to environmental problems.

PPAs should have a strong underpinning of strategic thinking based on:

- An assessment of environmental conditions and program implementation needs;
- Analysis of approaches and tools that are most likely to bring about the greatest environmental results; and
- Jointly developed goals and priorities that are translated into plans at the operational level.

Joint planning opportunities exist for all states and Tribes, even those that do not negotiate formal PPAs with their EPA regional offices. In these cases, the goals and priorities are articulated in grant work plans or other agreements.

EPA provides financial assistance to states and Tribes to help them develop and implement environmental programs. For many years, states and Tribes wanted greater flexibility in how they use and manage the grant funds they receive from EPA. In 1996, Congress responded by authorizing EPA to award PPGs. States, certain interstate agencies, and Tribes can now choose to combine two or more environmental program grants into a single PPG.

With PPGs, states and Tribes can:

- Reduce administrative costs through streamlined paperwork and accounting procedures;
- Direct EPA grant funds to priority environmental problems or program needs; and
- Try multi-media approaches and initiatives that were difficult to fund under traditional categorical grants.

State participation in performance partnerships is voluntary. There are many variations in the scope and content of Performance Partnership Agreements (PPAs) and how they are funded by Performance Partnership Grants (PPGs) and other grant funds. Individual PPAs can range from a general statement about how the state and EPA will work together as partners (perhaps identifying joint priorities that will be addressed) to comprehensive, multi-program documents that detail each party's roles and responsibilities.

Some PPAs meet relevant statutory and regulatory requirements and also serve as the work plans for PPGs or other EPA grants. In a few cases, the PPA contains a more general discussion of the working relationship between EPA and the state rather than a discussion of priorities and programs.

Elements of Effective PPAs

Successful PPAs typically include the following key elements:

- A description of environmental conditions, priorities, and strategies;
- Performance measures for evaluating environmental progress;
- A process for jointly evaluating how well the PPA is working and an agreement to implement any needed improvements;
- A description of the process for mutual accountability, including a clear definition of the roles of each party in carrying out the PPA and an overview of how resources will be deployed to accomplish the work; and
- A description of how the priorities in the PPA align with those in EPA's Strategic Plan and the state's own strategic (or other related) plan.

Most states have unique environmental priorities and program implementation needs. Each EPA-state partnership negotiation takes into account the particular capacities, needs, and interests of that state.

Benefits of a PPG

Under traditional environmental program grants, sometimes called "categorical" grants, states receive funds to implement various water, air, waste, pesticides, and toxic substances programs. Environmental program grant funds can only be spent on activities that fall within the statutory and regulatory boundaries of that program. By combining two or more of their environmental program grants into a PPG, states and Tribes are able to perform and report on the grant activities under one workplan.

PPGs are a type of assistance agreement where recipients may combine funds from categorical grants to accomplish their public health and environmental priorities, so long as recipients meet the award requirements of each categorical grant that is to be combined into the PPG. The 19 categorical grants eligible for PPGs are a mixture of continuing environmental program grants and competitive project grants. Eligible recipients can combine two or more of the following 19 categorical grants programs identified in EPA's State and Tribal Assistance Grants (STAG) appropriation into a PPG.

Regulations governing all state and Tribal environmental program grants including PPGs are published in [40 CFR Part 35](#). By entering into a PPG, states and Tribes can take advantage of a range of flexibility in administering their grant, such as:

- Reducing administrative burden by allowing states and Tribes to meet match requirements as a whole rather than by individual program, streamlining paperwork and accounting requirements, and allowing funding of cross-cutting projects;
- Fostering joint planning and priority setting by requiring consideration of EPA and state or Tribe priorities in developing grant work plans;
- Allowing grant work plans to be organized by environmental program area or by function (permitting, monitoring, inspections, etc.); and
- Promoting results-oriented environmental programs by recognizing that both outcome and output measures are needed for management purposes.

There are currently 19 environmental program grants eligible for inclusion in a PPG. Those grants are:

| EPA Office | CFDA Number | Environmental Program Grant |
|--|-------------|---|
| Office of the Administrator | 66.204 | Multipurpose Grants to States and Tribes |
| Office of Air and Radiation | 66.001 | Air Pollution Control Program Support |
| | 66.032 | State Indoor Radon Grants |
| Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention | 66.707 | TSCA Title IV State Lead Grants Certification of Lead-Based Paint Professionals |
| | 66.708 | Pollution Prevention Grant Program |
| Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance | 66.700 | Consolidated Pesticide Enforcement Cooperative Agreements¹ |

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| | 66.701 | Toxic Substances Compliance Monitoring Cooperative Agreements |
| Office of International and Tribal Affairs | 66.926 | Indian Environmental General Assistance Program (GAP) |
| Office of Land and Emergency Management | 66.801 | Hazardous Waste Management State Program Support |
| | 66.804 | Underground Storage Tank Prevention, Detection, and Compliance Program |
| | 66.812 | Hazardous Waste Management Grant Program for Tribes |
| | 66.817 | State and Tribal Response Program Grants |
| Office of Mission Support | 66.608 | Environmental Information Exchange Network Grant Program and Related Assistance |
| Office of Water | 66.419 | Water Pollution Control State, Interstate, and Tribal Program Support |
| | 66.432 | State Public Water System Supervision |
| | 66.433 | State Underground Water Source Protection |
| | 66.460 | Nonpoint Source Implementation Grants |
| | 66.461 | Wetland Program Development Grants |
| | 66.472 | Beach Monitoring and Notification Program Implementation Grants |
| ¹ Pesticide cooperative enforcement (section 23(a)(1) of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act(FIFRA)), pesticide applicator certification and training (section 23(a)(2) of FIFRA), and pesticide program implementation (section 23(a)(1) of FIFRA) fall under this assistance listing. | | |

In the past, there have been other EPA grant programs that were eligible for inclusion in a PPG. Due to those programs being discontinued or inactive, they were excluded in the table above. Examples include:

- Multimedia Sector Program Grants
- Water Quality Cooperative Agreements (CWA §104(b)(3))

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Frequent Questions

Which entities are eligible to take part in NEPPS?

All state agencies, including environmental, health, and agriculture agencies, interstate agencies, and Tribes are eligible to take part in NEPPS.

What is a PPG?

A PPG is a grant that combines two or more eligible programs into one overall grant.

What EPA grant programs are eligible for inclusion in a PPG?

There are currently 19 PPG-eligible grant programs at EPA. Please visit the "Implementing Performance Partnerships" tab to view a list of all 19 programs.