

2025 Hydration Station Competitive Grant Program Q & A

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. **Question:** We are a church, and we have a childcare center within our church building. We are considering applying for the Hydration Station Grant. We have two locations we'd like to install hydration units within the childcare and church, and we're looking at a slightly different model of the Elkay Bottle Filling Station. Would you please review the attached Elkay exH2O Bottle Filling Station to see if it meets the specifications for the grant program? We'd choose this model so that we can afford two units, and this model is without the bubbler so that we don't have children placing their lips on the equipment.

Answer: The Minnesota Department of Health cannot approve the Elkay ezH2O Bottle Filling Station Surface Mount Filtered Non-Refrigerated Model LZWSSM for the Hydration Station Grant Program due to the fact that the model is not ADA approved, non-refrigerated, and doesn't include a fountain.

2. **Question:** As we look at the two hydration station options for purchase in the RFP, we realize there is no option that is only a bottle filler and not a drinking fountain. Is there a reason for that or is there any possibility of getting a grant for a bottle filling station only. Those are available from the same manufacturer with the same filtration, etc., for a similar cost.

Answer: The MDH Oral Health and Drinking Water Protection Sections selected the fountain w/bottle filler to attract schools or organizations that serve children.

Applications list the approved models, no others are acceptable.

3. **Question:** While filling out the application, I came across question 1d. and noticed that it only provides two options to choose from; either a daycare or school attended by children. Our organization is a nursing and rehabilitation center and I wanted to reach out to get a better grasp on whether we are eligible to apply for this wonderful opportunity.

Answer: If your organization isn't a daycare or school attended by children, leave it blank. Organizations serving children receive extra points.

4. **Question:** Can an applicant request the full \$3,000 and purchase two hydration stations with the organization paying cost exceeding \$3,000?

Answer: Yes, an applicant can purchase two hydration stations and request \$3,000 from the 2025 Community Hydration Station Competitive Grant Program.

5. **Question:** How much can an organization apply for?

Answer: \$3,000 total request for each applicant.

6. **Question:** I have just seen the info regarding hydration station grants and came up with an idea if possible? I want to help spread the word out there in communities, businesses, orgs, etc. I would even be open to learning how to purchase and install the hydration stations as

an independent contractor this time around will help create such opportunities in this time of need. I just want to offer my assistance and be a part of this project in any way I can.

Answer: Thank you for your interest. Yes, mentioning this opportunity to others is very welcome and would be helpful. While we are not seeking assistance with other activities such as installation at this time, those interested in applying for grants may be interested

7. **Question:** I am a parent volunteer representing a 501(c) (3) elementary school. I have some questions regarding the eligibility of our school for Hydration Station grant. The water supply for the school comes from an in-ground well on school property (no connection to municipal water supply is available as the school is in a rural area). According to the grant requirements, our school would not be eligible because we aren't connected to a municipal water supply and our county isn't in a designated dental health professional shortage area. Yet our needs for a hydration station are very real due to COVID and due to the fact that we are sourced with well water. Are we indeed ineligible for the Hydration Station grant? Are there alternative funding sources that are available to us to meet our needs?

Answer: Eligibility depends on being connected to a municipal community public water system, so your organization would not be eligible if this is not currently true. This is an oral health grant designed to increase availability of drinking water containing optimal fluoride levels and lower lead levels in order to improve oral and developmental health. A better description is located on page 3 of the Program Information and Materials document: "Properly certified hydration stations remove lead and other contaminants associated with plumbing materials. They also maintain optimal fluoride levels in drinking water. Fluoridated drinking water helps prevent tooth decay through direct tooth contact and childhood consumption during tooth formation."

8. **Question:** As a private Catholic school would we be eligible to apply?

Answer: Yes, you would be eligible to apply if you also meet the other requirement of receiving water from a municipal community public water system.

Any Minnesota organization such as schools, Head Start centers, community centers, non-profits, clinics etc. receiving water from a municipal community public water system (PWS) is eligible to apply.

9. **Question:** I am wondering how much the bottled water would be or is it plumbed in?

Answer: The hydration station units are plumbed in on premises.

10. **Question:** I wanted to clarify on the Hydration Station examples in Appendix E. Are those the 'approved' models that must be purchased? Or, are those examples of the types of models that are eligible for purchase under the grant?

Answer: The two hydration stations shown in Appendix E are approved hydration stations. They were reviewed by the MDH Oral Health Program previously, and determined to not remove fluoride from water, yet remove particulate matter (including lead) from water, and to be ADA-compliant designs. While it would make the process much smoother to choose one of the approved hydration stations, I understand it might not always be possible. If that is the case, please send us information about the proposed model, including as much

information about filters and contaminant removal as possible (see www.nsf.org or www.wqa.org for listings of certified products to NSF/ANSI standards 42 and 53 for lead).

11. **Question:** Do counties qualify for this grant? If so, how many grants are available?

Answer: Counties qualify for the Hydration Station Grant Program. At this time \$20,000 is available for grants, depending on the dollar amount being requested will determine how many grants will be given.

12. **Question:** Can churches qualify for the grant?

Answer: Any Minnesota organization such as schools, Head Start centers, community centers, nonprofits, clinics etc. receiving water from a municipal community public water system (PWS) is eligible to apply. Yes, religious organizations can apply for these grants.

13. **Question:** I was wondering if my organization would qualify.

Answer: If your organization receives water from a municipal community public water system.

14. **Question:** The question that I have run into is around the water testing. My understanding is that our water has not been tested before? Is this something I should have done before we apply for the grant?

Answer: Points are awarded in the grant scoring process for lead test results for the installation location. While the testing is not always a requirement, it has been done much more often in the last couple years due to requirements for handling lead in schools: Since the major reasons for these awards include:

- Remove lead, when present, from drinking water
- Provide an additional safeguard to reduce potential lead exposure from drinking water

It would be difficult to determine whether an awarded hydration station will provide any benefits without some prior test result(s) for lead concentrations in the water at the installation site. Test results, if applicable, should be included in the grant application in order to be considered.

15. **Question:** Can cities apply?

Answer: Yes

16. **Question:** Just to be clear, there is \$20,000 available for the whole state. Correct?

Answer: Yes, \$20,000.

17. **Question:** I am looking at the Hydration Station Competitive Grant information and have a quick question. I understand that we can only request up to \$3,000 for a hydration station. Can we make a request for funds for a hydration station for multiple clinics? I currently have three clinics that I would like to apply for.

Answer: Any Minnesota organization that receives water from a municipal community public water system is eligible to apply. An organization may apply for one competitive grant.

18. **Question:** Do I have to have my water tested for lead to apply?

Answer: Points are awarded in the grant scoring process for lead test results for the installation location. While the testing is not always a requirement, it has been done much more often in the last couple years due to requirements for handling lead in schools: Since the major reasons for these awards include:

- Remove lead, when present, from drinking water
- Provide an additional safeguard to reduce potential lead exposure from drinking water

It would be difficult to determine whether an awarded hydration station will provide any benefits without some prior test result(s) for lead concentrations in the water at the installation site. Test results, if applicable, should be included in the grant application in order to be considered.

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To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-4700.