

# 2018 Maine Water Quality Bond

*Question 2: Bond Issue (Public Law 425)  
Do you favor a \$30,000,000 bond issue to improve water quality, support the planning and construction of wastewater treatment facilities and assist homeowners whose homes are served by substandard or malfunctioning wastewater treatment systems?*



- If approved, this \$30,000,000 bond will fund three wastewater infrastructure /water quality grant programs at DEP that provide grants to upgrade municipal/ quasi-municipal wastewater infrastructure (treatment plants, pump stations, sewer systems), remove overboard discharges and repair/replace malfunctioning septic systems that impact surface water.
- There are approximately **\$1 billion of known needs** to upgrade Maine's wastewater infrastructure.
- All three programs create jobs, improve water quality, and protect and/or open shellfish areas.
- These bond funds will be combined with other federal and state funds to facilitate important wastewater infrastructure projects. An estimate of the leveraging potential is 150% or more, resulting in approximately \$71,475,000 of wastewater infrastructure projects.
- Although bonds for these programs were approved from 1992 through 2010, there have been none since 2010.

Program	Bond Amount	Purpose / Benefits
Municipal Wastewater Infrastructure Grants	\$27,650,000	Municipal and quasi-municipal wastewater infrastructure projects including combined sewer overflow (CSO) abatement.
Small Community Grant Program	\$2,000,000	Repair or replacement of failed septic systems impacting surface water.
Overboard Discharge Removal Grant Program	\$350,000	Removal of commercial and residential overboard discharges (OBDs) with goal to open shellfish areas.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$30,000,000</b>	



## Jobs

It is estimated that 540 jobs (such as construction and engineering related jobs) will be created or sustained from the bond funds and 1,287 total jobs will be created or sustained from the combined bond and leveraged state and federal funds.<sup>1</sup>

Shellfish harvesting jobs: In addition to the jobs noted above, abating combined sewer overflows, removing overboard discharges, and repairing/replacing malfunctioning septic systems all have the potential to open closed shellfish areas so they can be harvested.

## Water Quality

Maintenance and upgrading of this “invisible”, yet essential, infrastructure is **critical to protect public health, to protect water quality, and support economic growth.**

The Maine Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) **rated Maine with a grade of D+** for Municipal Wastewater Infrastructure. The lack of funding for infrastructure investment and proper maintenance adversely affects Maine’s ability to protect water quality and public health.<sup>2</sup>

## Potential Projects

There are approximately \$1 billion of known needs to upgrade Maine’s municipal wastewater infrastructure. Wastewater infrastructure (wastewater treatment facilities, pump stations, and sewer systems) is typically the highest value asset a community owns and in some circumstances, cannot be affordably sustained solely through local rate payers. Based on current known needs there are numerous projects that are good potential candidates for grant funding.

DEP will solicit detailed project requests to determine how the grants will be awarded. Project requests will be evaluated using longstanding DEP criteria including economic need, shellfish area protection and improvement, abatement of combined sewer overflows, water quality improvement, regionalization, and leveraging bond funds with other state and federal funding sources.



---

<sup>1</sup>“How Infrastructure Investments Support the U.S. Economy: Employment, Productivity and Growth” Political Economy Research Institute, January 2009, p. 25. Table 3.1 estimates 18 jobs created per \$1 million infrastructure investment.

<sup>2</sup><http://maineasce.org/2016ReportCard.htm>