

The **OUTREACH**

Montana's Source for Brownfields Information

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Welcome to The Outreach!



The Old Holy Rosary Hospital in Miles City is a brownfields site that will be turned into low-to-moderate income housing. DEQ is currently conducting a targeted brownfields assessment at the site due to asbestos laden materials strewn throughout the buildings from an illegal asbestos abatement project. The Miles City Housing Authority received grant funding for renovation of the buildings and plans to apply for an EPA cleanup grant.

Here's the latest information on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's competitive grants, training programs, conferences, and targeted brownfields assessments. In addition, we've listed contact information for brownfields experts at the Montana Department of Environmental Quality and EPA.

Our main focus this issue is the upcoming 2005 brownfields competitive grants. We have information on grants, grant applications and deadlines, as well as a few grant-writing tips. And because this is Montana's first brownfields newsletter, we've included background on EPA's and Montana's Brownfields Programs.

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Brownfields...What Are Brownfields?

Brownfields are real property, the expansion, redevelopment or reuse of which is complicated by real or perceived contamination. Prospective purchasers, real estate developers, and lenders are often reluctant to acquire brownfields sites because they might incur cleanup liability. However, cleaning up and reinvesting in these properties increases local tax bases, facilitates job growth, and utilizes existing infrastructure. In addition, re-using brownfields takes development pressures off open land and protects the environment by cleaning up sources of contamination.

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Brownfields...What Are Brownfields? - *continued from page 1*



DEQ conducted a targeted brownfields assessment at the former Berg Lumber Mill site in Lewistown and found pentachlorophenol and dioxin in soils throughout the site. The city of Lewistown plans to take ownership of part of the property after cleanup to provide public fishing access.

EPA's Brownfields Program

To assist in revitalizing brownfields, EPA developed a Brownfields Program in 1995. Since its inception, EPA's Brownfields Program has changed the way contaminated property is perceived, addressed, and managed. In 2002, President Bush signed the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act, which expanded EPA's program by providing new tools for the public and private sectors to promote sustainable brownfields cleanup and reuse. Grants serve as the foundation of EPA's Brownfields Program. Please see our article, "Grants Provide the Green," in this issue of The Outreach for information on EPA's competitive grant program.

In addition to its competitive grant program, EPA offers grant funding to states and tribes to assist them in developing and maintaining State and Tribal Response Programs.

The Brownfields Federal Partnership consists of over 20 federal agencies committed to supporting brownfield initiatives. Watch for additional information on this partnership in future issues of The Outreach.

Montana's Brownfields Programs

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
DEQ operates its Brownfields Program with grant funds awarded annually by the EPA. Three sections within DEQ use this funding: the Site Response Section (SRS), the Petroleum Release Section (PRS), and the Hazardous Waste Section (HWS).

The following list identifies where these sections are located within DEQ and their respective programs each administers:

- Remediation Division
 - Hazardous Waste Site Cleanup Bureau
 - SRS administers the Montana State Superfund and Voluntary Cleanup programs.
 - PRS administers the Montana Petroleum Release Program.
- Permitting and Compliance Division
 - Waste and Underground Tank Management Bureau
 - HWS administers the Montana Hazardous Waste Program

Projects funded by EPA's grant include contaminated site inventories; publicly available geographic information system mapping systems; and databases providing information on brownfields, state superfund, voluntary cleanup sites, and petroleum release sites; inventorying hazardous school laboratory chemicals; and school lab safety training for middle and high school science teachers and administrators.

As a part of the Montana programs, DEQ section staff oversee and enforce cleanup of contaminated sites; respond to information requests regarding brownfields and other regulatory issues; and conduct targeted brownfields assessments. In addition, DEQ staff provide technical assistance, review and endorsement of brownfields grant proposals prepared by various entities within the state. Staff also provide outreach throughout the state to assist local communities in preparing competitive brownfield assessment, revolving loan fund, job training, and cleanup grants.

Another important part of DEQ's programs is enhancing staff expertise. Grant funding is also used for staff medical monitoring; CPR/first aid training, and respirator fit testing.

Tribal Programs

A number of Native American tribes in Montana also have brownfields response programs. These tribes are the Blackfeet Nation, Fort Belknap Indian community, For Peck tribes and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai tribes. Look for more information about these tribes and their programs in upcoming issues of The Outreach. ■

Grants Provide The Green

EPA awards Brownfields grant funding to communities throughout the United States. These grants support revitalization efforts by funding environmental assessment, cleanup, and job training activities. Brownfields Assessment Grants provide funding for brownfield inventories, planning, environmental assessments, and community outreach. Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund Grants provide funding to capitalize loans and grants used to clean up brownfields. Brownfields Job Training Grants provide environmental training for residents of brownfields communities. Brownfields Cleanup Grants provide direct funding for cleanup activities with emphasis on properties with planned green space, recreational, or other nonprofit uses. Consideration is given to communities with an inability to draw on other sources of funding for environmental cleanup because of their small population or low income.

These grants are awarded through a competitive process administered by the EPA. Eligible applicants must submit a grant proposal that addresses all the requirements detailed in EPA's proposal guidelines. Proposal guidelines can be found at: <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields>. Proposals are

evaluated and ranked by evaluation panels. These panels evaluate each proposal according to set criteria. The highest-ranking proposals are then awarded grants.

EPA awards separate grants for assessment and cleanup of properties that have been contaminated with hazardous substances and those properties that are contaminated with petroleum products. Examples of hazardous substances include asbestos, solvents, controlled substances such as methamphetamine, and metals. Petroleum-contaminated properties are commonly abandoned gas stations with underground storage tanks, as well as properties with aboveground storage tanks, such as bulk plants. Some properties may be contaminated with a mix of both hazardous substances and petroleum contamination. Communities can apply for a hazardous substance grant for co-mingled contaminants.

A detailed explanation of the grant application process can be found on EPA's website at: http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/pg/guidelines_2005.htm#process.

Who Can Apply?

The following table outlines entities eligible to receive Brownfields grant funding:

Type of Applicant	Assessment	RLF	Cleanup	Job Training
Local Governments	X	X	X	X
Land clearance authority or other quasi-governmental entity that operates under the supervision and control of, or as an agent of, local government	X	X	X	X
Government entity created by state legislature	X	X	X	X
Regional Councils	X	X	X	X
Redevelopment agencies sanctioned by the State of Montana	X	X	X	X
The State of Montana	X	X	X	X
Indian Tribes	X	X	X	X
Nonprofit Organizations			X	X

Competitive Grant Types

Revolving Loan Fund

Eligible entities may apply for grant funding to establish a revolving loan fund. An RLF works by lending money to public and private borrowers to finance cleanup at brownfields properties. Loan payments of the principal and interest are then paid back into the RLF loan fund pool by the borrowers. An RLF may be capitalized for up to \$1 million and the performance period is five years.

In addition to loans, a portion of the loan pool may be used for subgrants to eligible entities and nonprofit organizations. These subgrants do not require repayment to the loan pool. RLF subgrant applicants must own the site for which they are seeking funding by the time the award is made. RLF loans and subgrants may only be used for cleanup activities at eligible brownfields sites.

Assessment Grants

Assessment grants provide funds for inventory, characterization and assessment of brownfields properties. Assessment grant funds may also be used to develop cleanup plans and conduct community involvement related to brownfield properties. Assessment grants may not be used for actual cleanup. Assessment grants may be used to address sites contaminated by either petroleum or hazardous substances, including hazardous substances co-mingled with petroleum. An entity may apply for a community-wide or site-specific grant. Community-wide assessment grant funding can be used to conduct a number of assessments on more than one property. Site-specific grant funding can only be used on the site identified in the grant application. The performance period for these grants is three years.

Assessment grant applicants may apply for up to \$200,000. Applicants may seek a waiver of this limit and request up to \$350,000. Such waivers must be based on the anticipated level of contamination, size of the site or status of ownership.

Cleanup Grants

Cleanup grants provide funding to carry out cleanup activities at brownfield sites. An eligible entity may apply for up to \$200,000 per site. According to EPA

no entity should apply for more than five cleanup grants. For this year, cleanup grant applicants must also own the site for which they are seeking funding by June 30, 2006. Cleanup grants may be used to address sites contaminated by petroleum or hazardous substances, including hazardous substances co-mingled with petroleum. The performance period for these grants is three years.

Cleanup grants require a 20 percent cost share of the amount of funding provided by EPA. The cost share may be in the form of a contribution of money, labor, material, or services, and must be for eligible and allowable costs. The cost share cannot include administrative costs or be matched by other federal grant funds. A cleanup grant applicant may request a waiver of the 20 percent cost share requirement based on hardship.

Job Training Grants

Training grants provide funding for environmental job training programs that will prepare trainees for further employment in the environmental field and facilitate cleanup at brownfields sites. To help ensure that economic benefits derived from brownfields revitalization efforts remain in local neighborhoods, EPA requires that job training grant applicants propose to serve a community that currently receives, or has received financial assistance from EPA's other brownfields competitive grants. Training grants are intended to foster employment of trainees from socio-economically disadvantaged communities, provide quality worker-training, and give local residents an opportunity to qualify for jobs developed in environmental fields as a result of brownfields efforts.

An eligible entity may apply for up to \$200,000. The project must be completed within 12 to 24 months.

Deadlines for Grant Review and Submittal

December 14, 2005 is this year's submittal date for grants. If you would like DEQ to review your grant application before submitting it to EPA, please submit it to DEQ prior to December 5, 2005. Please contact DEQ as soon as possible if you are interested in applying for a grant. ■

Grant Scoring

EPA uses two judging categories, *threshold criteria* and *ranking criteria*, to evaluate grant proposals.

Threshold criteria are base standards that must be met in order for the proposal to be ranked for grant funding. Examples of threshold criteria would be whether the site and applicant meet eligibility requirements. The criteria are evaluated on a pass/fail basis. If a grant application passes all threshold criteria, the application is evaluated and ranked according to the ranking criteria.

Ranking criteria are measures that describe the “who, what, why and how” of the funding proposal.

Examples of ranking criteria are proposal budget, community need, and reduction of health and environmental threat. Each ranking criterion is assigned a maximum point value. The proposal responses to each criterion are evaluated and given a numeric score based on the maximum point value. Scores on each ranking criterion are totaled to determine proposal rankings. Grant proposals receiving the highest scores are awarded funding.

DEQ representatives can answer questions and give guidance on both *threshold criteria* and *ranking criteria*. However, EPA representatives can only answer questions and give guidance on *threshold criteria*. ■

Brownfields Resources

EPA Resources

At the top of the available resources list for brownfields programs is the EPA. The EPA provides training, grants, assessments and a huge selection of guidance documents regarding brownfields. The EPA conducts training throughout the year on a wide range of brownfields issues. The EPA also provides grants to entities around the country every year through a competitive process. You can apply for assessment, cleanup, revolving loan fund, and job-training grants. The EPA also conducts targeted brownfields assessments. These assessments may encompass one or more of the following: Phase I assessment, Phase II assessment, or establishment of cleanup options including cleanup costs. Projects should provide a community benefits. EPA conducts these assessments on a first-come, first-serve basis as funding allows.

EPA has extensive resources available on its website (www.epa.gov/brownfields). Guidance documents are available for everything from environmental insurance and institutional controls to the basics of brownfields.

DEQ Resources

DEQ also provides resources to the public including outreach, assistance with grant applications and targeted brownfields assessments. In addition, DEQ staff is available to answer your questions, present

information at meetings, and help those interested in the brownfields program exchange ideas.

- **Outreach:** DEQ conducts outreach to communities and other entities throughout Montana on brownfields grants and other brownfields information. If you or your group would like to discuss brownfields with DEQ, please contact us.
- **Targeted Brownfields Assessments (TBAs):** A TBA is an environmental assessment of a brownfields site. A TBA may consist of a Phase I site assessment; a Phase II site assessment; and/or development of cleanup plans, including cost estimates. DEQ receives limited funds to conduct TBAs. If you or your group would like to discuss TBAs with DEQ, please contact us.
- **Grant Assistance:** DEQ also provides assistance to groups or individuals applying for EPA’s brownfields competitive grants. In addition to answering questions concerning the competitive grant process, DEQ will review grant applications before grant submittal to EPA.

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Brownfields Resources - *continued from page 5*

DEQ is developing three tools to help keep you informed about brownfields in Montana.

- **The Outreach** newsletter, published semi-annually.
- DEQ's website at <http://www.deq.mt.gov>. In addition to a brownfields webpage, DEQ's website provides access to databases containing information on contaminated sites and an interactive mapping service for potential brownfield sites in Montana. Links to these webpages are located on the far left side of the brownfields webpage. Please let us know

if you have any comments on the site or wish to add a link.

- A brownfields list server, which provides an electronic forum for exchanging ideas. List servers allow any member to send a message to an entire group. Subgroups will be added to the list server as needed. For example, a subgroup could be created for everyone who plans to apply for an assessment grant this fall. Let us know if you have any questions or have an idea for a subgroup. We will have more information on our Brownfields list server in the next issue of The Outreach. ■

Changes to Expect in This Year's Grant Guidelines

In this year's grant guidelines you will see five main changes. The changes are as follows:

1. In the past, entities could apply for site-specific Revolving Loan Funds. This year EPA will only accept RLF grant applications for community-wide RLF grants.
2. For cleanup grants, the property must be acquired by June 30, 2006 and an entity must have sole ownership of the site. No exceptions will be given.
3. The performance period for assessment and cleanup grants has been extended to three years.
4. A phase two assessment must be underway, or complete, at the time a cleanup grant application is submitted. ■

Grants Awarded in Montana

Assessment Grants

- Beartooth RC&D Area, Inc. (Joliet)
- Blackfeet Tribe
- Crow Nation
- Fort Belknap Indian Community
- Great Falls Development Authority
- City of Missoula
- Great Northern Development Corporation (Wolf Point)

Revolving Loan Fund

- Missoula County
- Great Falls Development Authority

Cleanup Grants

- City of Shelby

Job Training Grants in Montana

- Fort Belknap Indian Community
- Montana Tech of the University of Montana

For more information on these grantees, please visit EPA Region 8 Brownfields Pilots/Grants website:

<http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/reg8.htm#mt> ■

Grant Writing Do's and Don't's

Do

- **Plan your project well.** A grant proposal is the written version of your planning process.
- **Ask questions** of EPA and DEQ Brownfields programs, but start early.
- **Read the application thoroughly.** Highlight the most important parts and mark anything you don't understand, then call the EPA or DEQ brownfields programs and get clarification.
- **Allow enough time.** Make sure you leave enough time to develop your application, including gathering data, developing partnerships, involving the community, and developing your budget. Remember, planning can take months; writing the proposal is only the last step.
- **Write clearly and concisely.** Have someone unfamiliar with your project review the proposal and tell you if they understand it.
- **Write your executive summary AFTER you write the proposal,** it's easier to put together.
- **Use grammar-check and spell-check.** This should be obvious, but we forget to do it.
- **Get your application in on time.** Make sure to check whether the due date is the actual receipt of the application or the post-marked date.
- **Seek feedback if your application isn't successful.** Contact EPA for constructive feedback on why your application wasn't funded, and use that information to improve your next application.

Don't

- **Chase the money by writing a grant to start a new project you don't really need** just to bring funding to your community.
- **Download the wrong grant application** (out-of-date version or wrong program).
- **Add unnecessary fluff or filler.** Keep to the point.
- **Be incomplete.** Be sure you respond to all questions and get all required signatures.
- **Use a former proposal without updating it.** At least update the dates, budget, letters of support, community notification, etc.
- **Incur expenses before getting the grant award.** Pre-award expenses may not be reimbursable.





Montana Department of
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Advice From Successful Grantees

I believe a determining factor in Shelby receiving a brownfields grant was the help and advice from the LDEQ. I was able to write several drafts, with Kelly reviewing it and helping me clarify points, emphasizing others and thoroughly answering each question.

Lorette Carter, City of Shelby

It is important to follow the ranking criteria listed in the grant application or guidelines. Be specific, but only discuss or explain what the criteria are asking under each bullet.

Sherry Bishop

Fort Belknap Brownfields Program

Go to the regional conferences; network with others. Call others who have similar grants when you have questions. Use your Program Officer as a resource. Work with a consulting firm with brownfields experience, including grantsmanship. Try to build a

team that can serve as resources. Spend some time on EPA brownfields web sites. Work with the state brownfields coordinator.

Jenifer Blumberg

Missoula Office of Planning and Grants

Grant application writers should focus on the big picture. Maybe visualize four to five years ahead of the initial grant period. Having a plan always helps.

Brian Crawford

Blackfeet Brownfields Program

Hire a good consultant company. Ask for referrals from other successful applicants. Use the success of others to help with your grant applications. I've done it and had good results and am willing to help others. The EPA Region 8 Montana Office has a tremendous staff that is always willing to assist.

Lea Roberson

Great Falls Development Authority ■

Helpful CONTACTS

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Mailing Address: P.O Box 200901 • Helena, MT 59620-0901

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Hazardous Substance Brownfields

Kelly Schmitt

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Petroleum Brownfields

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DEQ BROWNFIELDS WEBSITE

<http://www.deq.state.mt.us>

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