



# Fact Sheet: Emerging Contaminants

## Background:

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law passed in November 2021 provides \$5 billion nationally through the Drinking Water and Clean Water State Revolving Fund programs to reduce people's exposure to perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and other emerging contaminants (EC) through their drinking water and to help address discharges through wastewater and, potentially, nonpoint sources. The EC funding is part of Oregon's CWSRF program, administered by Oregon DEQ, to address the challenges posed by emerging contaminants focusing on wastewater, stormwater, and nonpoint source pollution control to protect water quality.

Oregon's CWSRF program receives EC funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to address challenges caused by emerging contaminants. The CWSRF program focuses on wastewater, stormwater, and nonpoint source pollution control to safeguard water quality. Applicants interested in EC funding should contact the CWSRF program to learn more about how this funding will be made available to communities. Details about how to contact CWSRF staff can be found on our website, [linked here](#).

## General use:

CWSRF will use emerging contaminants funding to support projects and activities focused on identifying, monitoring, treating, and preventing emerging contaminants in wastewater, stormwater and other nonpoint sources of pollution.

Generally, CWSRF anticipates EC projects or activities may be part of a larger CWSRF eligible project and the EC funding will be included as part of the larger project award. See below for more information.

## Emerging Contaminants definitions and examples:

Emerging contaminants refer to substances that are not commonly regulated but have the potential to pose risks to public health and the environment. Except for PFAS, projects that address contaminants with water quality criteria established by EPA under Clean Water Act section 304(a), are *not eligible* for CWSRF Emerging Contaminants funds.

Emerging contaminants refer to substances and microorganisms, including manufactured or naturally occurring physical, chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear materials, which are known or anticipated in the environment, that may pose newly identified or re-emerging risks to human health, aquatic life, or the environment. These substances, microorganisms, or materials can include many different types of natural or manufactured chemicals and substances – such as those in some compounds of personal care products, pharmaceuticals, industrial chemicals, pesticides, and microplastics.

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The table below contains examples of emerging contaminants generally eligible to address with EC funding.

| Emerging Contaminant                                | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pharmaceuticals and Personal Care Products (PPCPs)  | Prescription and over-the-counter medications, personal care products                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS and PFOS) | Industrial chemicals resistant to heat, water, and oil                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 6PPD; 6PPD-Quinone (6PPD-Q)                         | A chemical compound that is commonly used as an antioxidant in the rubber industry that has been found to possess toxic properties and has adverse effects on aquatic organisms.                                                                 |
| Endocrine Disruptors                                | Chemicals that interfere with hormone regulation                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Microplastics                                       | Tiny particles of plastic (<5mm)                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Microorganisms                                      | Tiny living organisms that can be seen only with the aid of a microscope.                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Pesticides and Herbicides                           | Chemicals used in agriculture for pest and weed control                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Nanomaterials (NM)                                  | A class of substances that have structural components < 100 nanometers (nm). Engineered NMs are used in a wide variety of applications, including environmental remediation, pollution sensors, photovoltaics, medical imaging and drug delivery |
| Fire Suppressants                                   | Chemicals used in various products for fire resistance                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| UV Filters                                          | Chemicals used in sunscreens and personal care products for UV protection                                                                                                                                                                        |

\*Please note that this table provides a general overview and may not include all emerging contaminants. The categorization is based on the general classification of these contaminants.

### Eligible activities:

All proposed emerging contaminants projects must meet existing CWSRF eligibilities as defined by section 603(c) of the Clean Water Act and one of the purposes must be to address identified emerging contaminants with a potential capital project.

Emerging contaminants funding may cover various project-related expenses, such as planning, design, construction, and/or equipment acquisition.

A list of CWSRF project eligibilities can be found on the CWSRF home page, [linked here](#), under the CWSRF Project Eligibilities header.

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Ideally, proposed activities would:

- Address emerging contaminants of concern as a primary focus or as part of a larger strategy.
- Reasonably lead to a capital project and/or outcomes to address emerging contaminants.
- Demonstrate technical feasibility in terms of ability to effectively monitor, mitigate, and/or treat emerging contaminants, and
- Provide substantial environmental and public health benefits by reducing or eliminating the presence of emerging contaminants in water systems.
- Purchasing of monitoring equipment that would determine treatment needs for addressing emerging contaminants.

\*Please note this is not an exhaustive list, to go over the specifics of a potential project to see if it is eligible for emerging contaminants funding, please contact CWSRF staff and complete a [Loan Information Request Form](#).

## **CWSRF Emerging Contaminants Case Studies from the EPA:**

[Clean Water State Revolving Fund Emerging Contaminants | US EPA](#)

### **Identification of Emerging Contaminants**

The evaluation of the identification of EC can be quantitative or qualitative assessments. The quantitative assessment is the traditional sampling and analysis from either the drainage area or the waterbody where discharge is collected. Qualitative assessments can include observation and identification of the emerging contaminant within the drainage area or management area.

- For PFAS, qualitative assessments can include upstream presence of facilities known or suspected to discharge PFAS interest, e.g., confirmation of an active discharger falling within the ELG industry categories that likely formulate PFAS.
- For stormwater, the emerging contaminant(s) must be identified within the drainage area or the management area.

### **Funding opportunity:**

- The Oregon CWSRF program will have access to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law emerging contaminant capitalization grant funds annually for a period of five years beginning Federal FY2022.
- EPA has allocated approximately \$2.4 million for the Oregon CWSRF program for emerging contaminants in Federal fiscal year 2023 (FFY23) and has not yet announced the FFY24 allotments.
- Oregon CWSRF intends to apply for future EC funds and to award these funds to projects addressing emerging contaminants included in future Intended Use Plans.
- EC loan funds awarded are 100% forgivable and will not need to be repaid.

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## **Funding requirements:**

- Federal regulations such as Build America, Buy America apply to all EC projects.
- Potential borrowers interested in receiving EC funds must be ready to proceed within one year of the EC capitalization grant award from EPA to Oregon CWSRF.

## **More information:**

For more information, please contact the CWSRF program analysts Alli Miller, [alli.miller@deq.oregon.gov](mailto:alli.miller@deq.oregon.gov), or Noosh Pouya [noosheen.pouya@deq.oregon.gov](mailto:noosheen.pouya@deq.oregon.gov), for specific questions regarding emerging contaminants funding.

For more general inquiries about the CWSRF program, please submit a [Loan Information Request Form](#).

## **Non-discrimination statement**

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