



## DO YOURSELF A FAVOR

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This article is targeted toward the 130ish wastewater systems that discharge into surface waters and currently do not disinfect their effluent. The rest of you are free to turn the page. As I noted, there are 130 or so surface water discharge wastewater systems that currently do not disinfect their effluent. Over the next few years this is going to change. Some of you may have already received a letter from DEC indicating you **WILL** disinfect by a certain date. That letter contained a compliance schedule and an invitation to apply for the Water Quality Improvement Project (WQIP) for funding assistance. Others may have received a letter stating that in the near future you will be required to install disinfection facilities. That letter included an invitation to apply for the Engineering Planning Grant (EPG) for funding assistance for the engineering of disinfection facilities. The rest of you will be receiving letters over the next few years.

The number of letters that go out depends on the amount of money allocated to the WQIP and EPG in a given year. Both programs use the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA). Applications are not accepted until the CFA is announced, usually in mid to late spring, and have filing deadlines. Disinfection projects will be given priority and funded first. There is another source for funding engineering studies and the construction of disinfection facilities, Rural Development (RD). RD administers a Pre-Development Planning Grant (PPG) program as well as their Water and Environmental Programs (WEP) funding. Applications

can be submitted at any time since there are no filing deadlines. Both the CFA and the RD programs have eligibility requirements which I will not go into here. Contact your regional Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC) or RD office for more details.

Currently there is a ton of money out there for studies and construction projects. I don't have a crystal ball; I just wonder how long this will last. At some point the money will begin to dry up. Unfortunately, the requirement to disinfect will still be there. It is for this reason I say "do yourself a favor". Don't wait until you get a letter to begin the process. Apply for the EPG or the PPG and get the engineering out of the way. If you are considering submitting an application for a project, be sure it includes disinfection facilities. While you can't begin disinfecting until DEC modifies your permit, you will be ready to proceed when the letter comes.

Do yourself another favor. Disinfection facilities are currently designed to meet a fecal coliform standard. In the near future that standard is going to change to either E.coli or entero. Instruct your engineer to evaluate disinfection facilities for the current fecal standard as well as how effective it will be on E.coli and entero. Will the designed disinfection process be effective against E.coli or entero with minor and inexpensive modifications?

Disinfection isn't a bad thing. New York is one of the few states that still has systems that don't disinfect. Don't fight it. Take advantage of the funding opportunities while they still exist. 💧💧