



Fund Water Infrastructure & Prioritize Communities Most in Need

The Alliance for the Great Lakes urges the Trump Administration and Congress:

- 💧 The Administration should propose \$9.3 billion for the Clean Water (\$4.9 billion) and Drinking Water (\$4.4 billion) State Revolving Funds (SRFs) in its FY 2026 President’s Budget. Congress should appropriate this amount in full, as it is the authorized level of funding. Congress should make some portion of these funds available to communities experiencing outsize pollution and financial burdens as grants or forgivable loans.
- 💧 The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency should ensure that states accepting federal funds from the IJA are increasing funding and technical assistance for communities bearing the greatest financial and pollution burdens during the SRF selection process.
- 💧 Congress should set aside at least 20 percent of the Clean Water State Revolving Fund as grants for green infrastructure projects such as green roofs, permeable pavement, and additional green spaces in cities.
- 💧 Congress should enact a federal ban on residential water shutoffs due to nonpayment and require the reconnection of water service.
- 💧 Congress should enact legislation to permanently establish and fund a low-income water assistance program to ensure that every household has access to safe, affordable drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater services.

Great Lakes States Infrastructure Needs at a Glance

(\$ in billions)

	Drinking Water	Wastewater, Stormwater, Nonpoint Source, & Decentralized Wastewater Treatment	Total
Illinois	\$ 22.2	\$ 11.4	\$ 33.6
Indiana	\$ 11.8	\$ 10.1	\$ 21.9
Michigan	\$ 16.3	\$ 15.1	\$ 31.4
Minnesota	\$ 10.2	\$ 6.7	\$ 16.9
New York	\$ 35.1	\$ 53.9	\$ 89.0
Ohio	\$ 16.1	\$ 20.6	\$ 36.7
Pennsylvania	\$ 24.3	\$ 12.8	\$ 37.1
Wisconsin	\$ 11.8	\$ 12.0	\$ 23.8
Total	\$ 147.7	\$ 142.6	\$ 290.3

Source: EPA



Background: Access to clean, safe drinking water and freedom from flooding and sewage impacts are basic needs that should be affordable to all. Yet, communities across the Great Lakes region continue to grapple with antiquated and otherwise inadequate water infrastructure. Issues include exposure to lead in drinking water from lead service lines, sewage backups into homes, old and failing septic systems, and chronic flooding.

These harms are compounded by the growing unaffordability of water and sewer services to households, driven in part by the rising costs of maintaining water infrastructure to address such challenges. Burdens fall especially hard on households served by small water utilities in rural areas, communities with a declining customer base, less-wealthy households, and communities with longtime disinvestment rooted in historical redlining or other forms of discrimination. At the national level, 20% of households are in debt to their water utility. For tribal communities, that increases to 32% of households, according to the Department of Health and Human Services.¹

Significantly, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law or “BIL”) authorizes billions of dollars for state governments to invest in drinking water and wastewater infrastructure through the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds and other programs.

Although Congress in recent years has appropriated additional funding to Great Lakes States for water infrastructure beyond historic levels through BIL, including funds to replace lead service lines and address contaminants, we know more investment is needed. Based on the 7th Drinking Water Needs Information and Assessment survey and the 2022 Clean Watersheds Needs Survey, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimated that Great Lakes states need at least \$290.3 billion in water infrastructure investment over the next 20 years. We continue to request growth in funding for water infrastructure and that grant funds are prioritized for communities facing the most significant pollution and health burdens, and the least ability to pay for improvements to protect public health.

¹ Department of Health and Human Services, *Understanding Water Affordability Across Contexts, LIHWAP Water Utility Affordability Survey Report*, March 2024. Retrieved from: <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2024/03/21/lihwap-water-affordability-report.html>

