

Pritzker Administration Announces Over \$16.8 Million In Grants For New Wastewater Infrastructure

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ALTO PASS — Governor JB Pritzker and Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Director John J. Kim today announced \$16,878,529 in grants have been awarded to five communities across the state through IEPA's Unsewered Communities Construction Grant Program (UCCGP). Made possible through the governor's bipartisan Rebuild Illinois capital plan, the project will allow underserved communities to have a safe and dependable wastewater collection and treatment system. The

announcement was made at the Village of Alto Pass, where a total of \$4.4 million in state funding from IEPA and the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity was awarded to replace the failing infrastructure within the community.

“Alto Pass is the first recipient of the EPA’s Unsewered Communities Construction Grant in Illinois – but many more communities will follow. Thanks to Rebuild Illinois, we are making \$100 million available to build wastewater collection and treatment facilities for communities without them,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “We also have provided an additional grant program to help communities plan their future design so they can build the solution that works best for them – over 30 communities have already received these planning grants earlier this year.”

In the fall of 2020 Illinois EPA [announced](#) \$20 million in funding available to assist communities with inadequate or nonexistent wastewater collection and treatment facilities through the Unsewered Communities Construction Grant Program (UCCGP). Through Governor Pritzker’s bipartisan Rebuild Illinois Capital Plan, Illinois EPA is making \$100 million available over the next five years through construction grants for wastewater collection and/or treatment facilities for such communities. Additionally, the Unsewered Communities Planning Grant Program ([UCPGP](#)) provides \$1M annually in smaller-scale grants to help communities develop construction plans. 2021’s recipients can be found [here](#).

Illinois EPA estimates there are more than 200 Illinois communities that have inadequate or nonexistent wastewater collection and treatment facilities. These communities rely on individual septic tank systems or patchwork systems that result in illegal surface discharges that have negative environmental impacts. Affordability of appropriate systems is the greatest obstacle for unsewered communities. The UCCGP provides an opportunity to receive grant funds which would help finance the corrective action needed to address issues with wastewater collection and treatment.

“This grant will prevent the potentially unhealthy conditions and likely negative environmental impacts from the current failing system,” said IEPA Director John J. Kim. “This project will allow for the construction of new, reliable wastewater infrastructure that will benefit residents, businesses, and the environment.”

Alto Pass is a small community in Union County with a population of just over 300 residents. The Village currently has failing septic tanks for the collection and treatment of sanitary sewer waste. The Village applied and was approved for a UCCGP that will be used for the construction of a new wastewater treatment system with chlorination, and a septic tank effluent pump wastewater collection system consisting of approximately 160 new septic tanks and pumps at each residence and business in the community. A necessary force main will also be constructed along with the installation

of air release valves, cleanouts, and a backup generator. The removal and replacement of pavement and other improvements will also be included as part of the project.

In addition to EPA funding, Alto Pass is also receiving \$500,000 from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and more than \$2.2 million from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Loan/Grant Funds to help fund the project. The total project cost is estimated to be \$6.622 million. The Village anticipates starting construction in January 2022 and completing construction in December 2022.

“When we invest in real, tangible infrastructure, we are doing the work we are elected to do,” said State Representative Paul Jacobs (R-Paloma). “I am thrilled Southern Illinois is receiving the attention we deserve on this crucial piece of infrastructure for our people. This project will also mean good-paying jobs for the hard-working men and women of Southern Illinois while ensuring basic needs continue to be met.”

In addition to the UCCGP (construction) and UCPGP (planning) programs, the state is investing in additional environmental infrastructure through Governor Pritzker’s historic Rebuild Illinois capital plan. Those programs include the Green Infrastructure Grant Opportunities program, which is investing \$25 million in capital funds to construct green infrastructure best management practices to prevent, eliminate, or reduce water quality impairments. Through Rebuild Illinois, IEPA also received an additional \$100 million to fund wastewater and drinking water infrastructure projects through the State Revolving Fund loan program as well as a \$50 million hazardous waste remediation program to ensure hazardous wastes do not negatively impact the health of Illinois residents or their communities.

Other communities that are receiving UCCGP Grants include:

- City of Freeport in Stephenson County will receive \$2,244,529 to provide sewer service to the Oakhill Subdivision residences that are currently utilizing private septic systems.
- Village of Westfield in Clark County will receive \$5,000,000 to construct a wastewater treatment plant with UV disinfection to serve approximately 558 residents of the unsewered community.
- City of East Dubuque in Jo Daviess County will receive \$2,222,000 to extend the sanitary sewer to 84 residential single-family households in the Indian Hills and Kneable Court residential subdivisions that are currently on private systems.
- Northern Moraine Water Reclamation District/Village of Holiday Hills in McHenry County will receive \$3,495,000 for the Phase 1 portion of the extension of sanitary

sewer service from Northern Moraine Wastewater Reclamation District to the 276 single-family residences in the Village of Holiday Hills and 29 homes in the Le Ville Vaupell Subdivision.

For more information about the Unsewered Communities Construction and Planning Grant Programs, please visit <https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/grants-loans/unsewered-communities/Pages/default.aspx>.