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| Logo  Description automatically generated | **North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality** |  |
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| **Priority Rating System Guidance and Form for Division of Water Infrastructure**  **State Revolving Fund Supplemental Appropriations for Helene/Milton/Hawai’i For Drinking Water and Wastewater** |
|  | (Last updated: July 2025) |

This guidance aids the applicant in understanding and implementing the Priority Rating System (PRS) when applying for the State Revolving Fund (SRF) Supplemental Appropriations for Helene/Milton/Hawai’I (SA-HMW) funding administered by the Division of Water Infrastructure (DWI) for drinking water and wastewater construction projects.

**Use this guidance only for applications seeking funding for drinking water (DW) and wastewater (WW) construction projects through these programs.** Decentralized wastewater treatment systems are covered under a separate guidance.

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**Priority Rating System Guidance**

1. Submittal Requirements

* Request all the priority points you want to receive. DWI does not award unrequested priority points, other than as specified in this guidance document.
* Submit all required supporting documentation for the requested priority points as part of the narrative. DWI will not request additional information or documentation and will determine priority points based solely on the information submitted.
* In the narrative, provide the page number or clear reference to a specific page in the supporting documentation to support the claim for priority points for each line item, if applicable. This enables a more efficient review. Points may not be awarded if documentation cannot be located by reviewers.
* Where the guidance requires summaries in the narrative, provide only additional relevant information. For example, Line Item 3.A requires a summary of a local flood resiliency action plan (FRAP), emergency preparedness, response, or recovery plan (ERP), or Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP). Do not provide the entire FRAP, ERP, or HMP as part of supporting documentation.
* DWI reviews each application as a stand-alone application. DWI will not search other applications from the same applicant for missing information. Provide all relevant information in each application, even if it is submitted in a different application.

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* + - * 1. Priority Rating System Score Sheet

**A completed PRS score sheet form must be submitted with the funding application**. There are two different PRS score sheets at the end of this document. Be sure to use the one that is appropriate for the system type (wastewater or drinking water). To claim points for a particular line item, mark “X” on the score sheet. For each point category, provide the subtotal of points claimed on the score sheet.

* + - * 1. Priority Rating System Narrative

**A PRS narrative, along with supporting documentation as required by this guidance, must also be submitted with the funding application.** The narrative is part of the application. Follow the outline in Table 1 below; the categories correspond to the categories in the Priority Rating System score sheet. Address every applicable line item.

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| **Table 1. Basic Outline for Project Narratives** | |
| Category 1 | Project Purpose |
| Category 2 | Project Benefits |
| Category 3 | System Management |
| Category 4 | Affordability |

* The narrative must be consistent with information in the Division of Water Infrastructure Application for Funding (DWI Application), Water/Sewer Financial Information Form, and other supporting information.
* The narrative must be completed to provide for accurate rating, and concise enough that critical information is not lost in unnecessary text. Text should only provide information related to this PRS (e.g., do not describe other benefits that are not included in the PRS).
* If there are no applicable points in any given category, state that there are no applicable points under that heading.
* When the narrative is supported with additional documentation, please reference a page number, section number, or other clear reference to the page location to aid staff in finding the specific part of the supporting documentation relevant to each line item in the narrative.
* Maps are very useful in determining priority points. Maps should include sufficient labels of geographical references and be at a readable scale. Individual line items may require specific maps as listed below. Include maps in the supporting documentation file.

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1. Priority Rating System Narrative Guidance
   1. **Project Purpose**

An application can earn points in Category 1 based on the Project Purpose as documented in this section. **Although a project may serve several purposes, an application can earn points for only one Project Purpose.** If you are unsure of how to classify the application, please contact DWI staff.

**Important to Remember**

To earn priority points for a Project Purpose, **all parts of the project must serve the claimed Project Purpose**. If any part of the project does not serve the higher-scoring Project Purpose, the application earns only the points for a lower-scoring Project Purpose that all elements of the project serve.

The project narrative must fully describe the proposed project and how each element serves the Project Purpose claimed on the PRS score sheet. The claimed Project Purpose must be consistent with all information provided in the common application (Section 6) and the budget (Section 8).

If the project does not qualify for the line item claimed under Category 1, it will be automatically considered for other project purpose line-item points (e.g., “rolls down”), provided all required documentation is provided. For example, if points are claimed for 1.B but the project does not qualify for those points, then the project will be considered for 1.C points, provided all required information for 1.C is provided.

**Important to Remember**

**Note:** Projects that do not receive Project Purpose points may still be eligible for funding.

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* + 1. Applicant’s System Remains Wholly or Partially Inoperable Due to Sustained Damages from Hurricane Helene

Hurricane Helene ravaged communities across the western part of North Carolina, rendering many water and wastewater systems inoperable. To successfully claim this line item, you will need to demonstrate that your system remains wholly or partially inoperable. “Partially inoperable” is defined as the system does not meet permit requirements that it was meeting prior to Hurricane Helene or critical components of the system is damaged and not functioning or system is operational with temporary measures. Proposed Project must address the component that is not functional to earn these points.

**Points Available**

Wastewater – 50 points

Drinking Water – 50 points

*Required Documentation*

* Provide documentation (e.g., evaluation reports, Assessment report by other agencies, emails) that show your system was initially impacted to the point it was inoperable. This documentation must contain a date.
* Provide the most recent documentation (e.g., phone logs, emails, letters, operator logs, FEMA resource requests) that show your system remains at least partially inoperable. This documentation must contain a date.

**Example Narrative for Line Item 1.A**

**Narrative that IS NOT sufficient:** During Hurricane Helene, the Town of Anytown received 24 inches of rain, which caused the valley where the WWTP is located to flood to the point that the water intake was destroyed. It remains inoperable to this day.

**Narrative that IS sufficient:** During Hurricane Helene, the Town of Bixby received 18 inches of rain in 24 hours, which caused landslides and flooded the valley where the WWTP is located. As a result, the WWTP is now inoperable and remains that way. Appendix A includes a phone log showing the date and time when the Town first made the call to DEQ to notify them that the WWTP was down. Appendix A also contains an email dated August 15, 2025 [for September 30 application date], from the Town Manager that states the WWTP remains inoperable.

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* + 1. Applicant Has an Existing Helene Emergency Bridge Loan with the Division of Water Infrastructure

Several local government units (LGUs) that were impacted by Hurricane Helene have received State Emergency Bridge Loans to help cover repair costs to their water and/or wastewater systems. To successfully claim this line item, you will need to provide evidence that you have received this bridge loan.

**Points Available**

Wastewater – 50 points

Drinking Water – 50 points

*Required Documentation*

* Provide the Executed Funding Offer. This Executed Funding Offer must be sent back to the Division before the application cutoff date.
  + 1. Applicant’s System Is Operational But Has Sustained Damages from Hurricane Helene

Situations may arise where an applicant sustained damages to their water or wastewater structure that did not necessarily render it totally or partially inoperable. To successfully claim points under this line item, an applicant will need to demonstrate that such damage occurred.

**Points Available**

Wastewater – 25 points

Drinking Water – 25 points

*Required Documentation*

Provide the following to successfully claim this line item:

* A general description of the damage that occurred and proposed project including proposed resiliency elements incorporated into the project scope
* Photos showing damage to water or wastewater infrastructure.
* Power outage reports, if applicable
* Assessment/Evaluation reports prepared by other agencies including DEQ and FEMA, if applicable
* Mapping that shows the location of the damage(s) that occurred due to Hurricane Helene. The provided map(s) must include a legend explaining all symbols appearing on the map, the north arrow, and the scale. Map must also show the new infrastructure proposed or to be replaced.

**Example Narrative for Line Item 1.C.**

**Narrative that IS sufficient:** The Town of Small Town received 12 inches of rain during the course of 24 hours when Hurricane Helene passed over the town. As a result, while the WWTP remains operational, the Town sustained damages to three pump stations and lost two force mains. These repairs were made in January 2025; however, the Town does want to build in resilience by making improvements to these pump stations by installing submersible pumps and raising electrical equipment. Appendix A shows photos of the damaged pump stations and force mains. Appendix A also shows a map where the damages occurred.

**Narrative that IS NOT sufficient:** The Town of Anytown received 14 inches of rain during the course of 12 hours when Hurricane Helene struck. Our waterline crossing Mills Creek sustained damage, but the Town was able to make those repairs.

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* 1. **Project Benefits**

To earn points in this section, only a portion of the project must relate to a specific benefit. Applications earn Project Benefits points only when the Applicant identifies a direct connection between the project and the type of expected benefit.

**Important to Remember**

For Category 2 – Project Benefits, the maximum number of points that a project can earn is capped at 40 points, even if the project documents Project Benefits Line Items summing to more than 40 points.

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* + 1. Project Moves Existing Infrastructure from the Floodplains or Fortifies Infrastructure within the Floodplain

The application can earn priority points for providing resiliency for critical treatment and/or transmission/distribution and/or collection system functions located within either the 500- or 100-year floodplain. The application can earn priority points for only one line item under 2.A.

Document these priority points by providing the specific documentation discussed under Line Items 2.A.1 or 2.A.2.[[1]](#footnote-2)

Note that only projects currently situated in 100 year or 500 year flood plain earns these points. However, to be eligible, all project must incorporate resiliency against flood damage risk or

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* + - 1. Project Relocates and/or Improves Infrastructure to Assure Continued Operation During a 500-year Flood Event
      2. Project Relocates and/or Improves Infrastructure to Assure Continued Operation During a 100-year Flood Event

Line Items 2.A.1 and 2.A.2, the application can earn points for relocating from the floodplain or fortifying infrastructure within the floodplain, which reduces the infrastructure’s susceptibility to damage by flooding. Moving underground infrastructure including hydrants is not eligible for this line item but may be eligible for Line Item 2.B.

**Line Item 2.A.1 Points Available**

* Wastewater – 12 points
* Drinking Water – 12 points

**Line Item 2.A.2 Points Available**

* Wastewater – 10 points
* Drinking Water – 10 points

The application can earn points for fortifying or elevating infrastructure within the 100-year or 500-year floodplain by

* Fortifying, including replacing equipment with new equipment not subject to being damaged by submersion (such as submersible pumps or waterproofed manholes).
* Fortifying, including physical barriers (such as levies or floodgates).
* Elevating, including installing electrical equipment on platforms.

Physical barriers and elevating require a minimum of two feet of freeboard above the base flood elevation (BFE).

*Required Documentation*

Document these priority points as follows for infrastructure being moved *from* the floodplain:

* Describe in the narrative the infrastructure that is being relocated outside of the 100- or 500-year floodplain; and
* Provide map(s) that clearly show where the existing and relocated infrastructure lie in relation to the floodplain.

Note: If your project is awarded funding by the State Water Infrastructure Authority, during the Engineering Report/Environmental Information process, you will need to conduct a floodplain analysis (see note on Page 54).

* + The map must clearly show the location of both the existing and proposed infrastructure and
  + The map must clearly show the floodplain boundaries across which the infrastructure will be relocated with the floodplain (100-year and/or 500-year) boundary(ies) clearly demarcated
  + Provided map(s) must use FRIS or FEMA as the source of the data layer or flood elevations used (<https://fris.nc.gov>). The provided map(s) must include a legend explaining all symbols appearing on the map, the north arrow, and the scale; and the map(s) must clearly indicate which side of the boundary line is the floodplain by showing the water body or using shading or other marking.

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| **Important Remember**  The Division will accept the 100-year Floodplain (1% Annual Chance Floodplain) and 500-year Floodplain (0.2% Annual Chance Floodplain) as designated on the North Carolina Flood Risk Information Center available at <https://fris.nc.gov>.The 100-year Floodplain is also designated as the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). SFHA are defined as the area that will be inundated by the flood event having a 1-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. The 1-percent annual chance flood is also referred to as the base flood or 100-year flood. SFHAs are labeled as Zone A, Zone AO, Zone AH, Zones A1-A30, Zone AE, Zone A99, Zone AR, Zone AR/AE, Zone AR/AO, Zone AR/A1-A30, Zone AR/A, Zone V, Zone VE, and Zones V1-V30. The 500-year Floodplain is also referred to as the 0.2% Annual Chance Floodplain, the “area of minimal flood hazard”, Zone C, or Zone X. The 100-Year Floodplain and 500-year Floodplain must be clearly labeled on the map, and the source of the floodplain data must be provided.  The Division may accept other floodplains on a case-by-case basis only if no NFIP base elevation exists for the area. To use an alternate map, applicants must obtain the Division’s approval of the map prior to the application submittal deadline. |

Note: An awarded project within the floodplain must evaluate the option to relocate the infrastructure outside the floodplain before proposing other improvements to allow continued operation during a flood event.

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| **Example Narratives for Line Item 2.A.1**  **Narrative that IS NOT sufficient:** The project will move the existing Flat Creek Pump Station from its current location, which flooded during Hurricane Helene, to a new site two blocks away that did not flood during Hurricane Helene. **(Not sufficient because there is no documentation included showing the current location is located within the 100-year floodplain and that the proposed new location is outside of that floodplain.)**  **Narrative that IS sufficient:** The project will move the existing Flat Creek Pump Station from Location1 (-78.747620, 35.9002375 degrees), which is within the 100-year floodplain to Location2 (-78.748835, 35.902638 degrees), which is outside of the 500-year floodplain. The attached map shows that Location1 is in the 100-year floodplain and that Location2 is outside of the 500-year floodplain. The maps were printed from <https://fris.nc.gov>. |

Document these priority points as follows for infrastructure being fortified within either the 100-year or 500-year floodplain to assure continued operation.

* Determine the BFE from the North Carolina Flood Risk Information System available at <https://fris.nc.gov>;
* Provide map(s) that clearly show where the infrastructure lies in relation to the floodplain and how the BFE was determined:
  + The map must clearly show the location of the infrastructure;
  + The map must clearly show the BFEs at the location of the infrastructure;
  + Provided map(s) must use FRIS or FEMA as the source of the data layer or flood elevations used (<https://fris.nc.gov>);
  + The provided maps must include a legend explaining all symbols appearing on the map, the north arrow, and the scale;
* Describe the vulnerable components of the existing infrastructure that are below the BFE established above;
* Describe how the project will elevate/protect those vulnerable components of the existing infrastructure;
* Describe how the project will achieve the required two feet of freeboard (or higher freeboard as required for local permitting) above the BFE that the elevated infrastructure or the barriers will have; and
* Alternatively, describe how the vulnerable infrastructure is replaced by infrastructure that is not vulnerable to flooding, such as submersible wet-pit/dry-pit pumps.

**Important to Remember**

**Note:** Projects eliminating water supply wells with a water supply outside of the 100-year flood elevation, or projects providing redundant water supply from outside of the 100-year flood elevation are eligible for 2.A.1 or 2.A.2 points.

* Describe how the project improves the system’s ability to assure continued operation of infrastructure located within the 100-year floodplain during flood events.
* Provide map(s) that clearly show where the infrastructure lies in relation to the floodplain:
  + The map must clearly show the location of the infrastructure;
  + Provided map(s) must use FRIS or FEMA as the source of the data layer or flood elevations used (<https://fris.nc.gov>)
* The provided maps must include a legend explaining all symbols appearing on the map, the north arrow, and the scale;

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| **Example Narratives for Line Item 2.A.1 or 2.A.2 points for Infrastructure Fortification**  **Narrative that IS NOT sufficient:** Improvements will be made at the existing Flat Creek Pump Station to replace the electronic control system with a new system constructed on a 10-foot tall platform. **(Not sufficient because the narrative does not demonstrate that the new infrastructure will have at least 2 feet of freeboard above the base flood elevation.)**  **Narrative that IS sufficient:** The control structures and pump motors at the existing Flat Creek Pump Station sit at between 387 and 393 feet MSL. The attached maps printed from <https://fris.nc.gov> show that the base flood elevation is 395 feet. The project will protect the infrastructure as follows:   * The replacement electronic control system will be constructed on a 10-foot tall platform, so that the lowest vulnerable control component will be at 397 feet (two feet above the base flood elevation). * The Westerly Pumps are vertical turbine line-shaft pumps with submerged pump bodies. However, the drive motors are mounted below 393 feet MSL. These pumps will be hardened by installing longer line shafts and re-mounting the drive motors at 397 feet MSL (two feet above the base flood elevation). * The Easterly pumps will be replaced by submersible pumps that are not subject to damage by flooding. The control panels will be elevated to 397 MSL for protection. |

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* + 1. Project Provides Redundancy/Resiliency for Critical Treatment and/or Transmission/Distribution System Functions Including Cybersecurity and/or Backup Electrical Power Source

For another resilient item such as a redundancy, emergency power source, or eligible cybersecurity component:[[2]](#footnote-3)

**Points Available**

* Wastewater – 5 points
* Drinking Water – 5 points
* Include the resilient item in the application’s project description.

*Required Documentation*

Note: If an applicant claims the same component in the project scope for either Line Item 2.A.1 or 2.A.2, they may not claim Line Item 2.B points.

In the narrative, explain how the resilient item provides redundancy and/or resiliency.

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| **Important To Remember**  Replacing or repairing an existing generator or redundant unit does not earn these points. The redundancy or resiliency must be new or increased.However, replacing a portable generator with a fixed generator will earn these points.  Retrofitting existing equipment with backup power qualifies for points; new equipment that requires backup power does not get these points.  Replacing aged (and failure prone) infrastructure in kind does not earn these points.  Adding a hardware firewall to an existing SCADA system and keeping it updated is a cybersecurity component that can earn these points.  By policy, line looping does not earn redundancy points. |

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| **Example Narratives for Line Item 2.B**  **Narrative that is NOT sufficient**: The new waterline loops will allow water to flow from either direction. **(Not sufficient because b*y policy, looping does not earn redundancy points.*)**  **Narrative that is NOT sufficient:** The project will replace the existing broken and unrepairable 25,000 kW generator. ***(Not sufficient because it doesn’t add redundancy; it restores redundancy.)***  **Narrative that IS sufficient:** The project description contains “Rehabilitate existing WTP without expanding capacity including the following: … Install redundant third filter to enable the plant to operate at full capacity with any single filter out of service…” For this particular line item, the narrative would be “The redundant third filter will enable the plant to operate at full capacity with any single filter out of service and will not increase capacity.”  **Narrative that IS sufficient:** The project description contains “Rehabilitate existing WTP without expanding capacity including the following: … provide backup power to the high service pumps…” For this particular line item, the narrative would be “The plant currently has emergency power for the treatment train and necessary controls. The plant hydraulics allow water to flow through the plant and into the clearwell. Without the ability to pump water from the clearwell, however the plant cannot provide additional water to the town once the power fails. The project will provide backup power to the high service pumps enabling the plant to provide water to the town during an extended outage.”  **Narrative that IS sufficient:** Rehabilitate existing WTP without expanding capacity, including installation of redundant third filter to enable the plant to operate at full capacity with any single filter out of service.  **Narrative that IS sufficient: The project will expand the plant from 10 to 12 MGD and increase the backup power available.** The plant currently has emergency power for the treatment train and necessary controls. The plant hydraulics allow water to flow through the plant and into the clearwell. Without the ability to pump water from the clearwell, however, the plant cannot provide additional water to the town once the power fails. The expanded generators will not only provide backup power sufficient to operate the expanded plant, but they will retrofit backup power to the existing high service pumps enabling the plant to provide water to the town during an extended outage. |

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* + 1. Project Includes System Merger or Regionalization

The Applicant may qualify for only one of the following sub-line items (Line Items 2.C.1 or 2.C.2):[[3]](#footnote-4)

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* + - 1. System Merger

An application may earn points if the project will merge systems. In this context, a *merger* can include either a physical consolidation of systems into a single regional system with one owner or a merger of ownership and operation without a physical consolidation of systems. Mergers can include local governments, non-profit water corporations, investor-owned utilities, or other utility ownership models as long as the Applicant is eligible to receive DWI funding. Decentralized systems to be owned, operated and maintained by the Applicant can qualify under this Line Item.

**Points Available**

* Wastewater – 10 points
* Drinking Water – 10 points

*Required Documentation*

To document these points, do the following:

**Important to Remember**

* An applicant is eligible for these merger points up to two years after the date of merger. Such an applicant must provide documentation showing date of merger.
* Interconnectivity alone (e.g., providing only regionalized treatment) does not qualify for points under this Line Item.
* Identify the systems. Clearly identify the systems by name and include the PWSID Number if applicable (drinking water systems). State that the Applicant is the owner of the system; and
* Describe the regionalization of the system and how it is managed; and
* Describe the type of merger. The narrative must describe how the project will result in a merger and characterize the merger (for example, as a consolidation, operational or management merger).
* Describe the current and proposed relationship between the systems, including the transfer of ownership of system.
* Describe the agreements between the owner and other LGUs or utilities.
* Submit an interlocal agreement between the systems, stating the intent to merge. An interlocal agreement conditional upon other work being completed prior to the merger is acceptable. A draft interlocal agreement may also be accepted.
* Other documentation, such as a memorandum of understanding, will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

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* + - 1. System Regionalization and/or System Partnerships

An application may earn points under this line item if the project will regionalize systems or result in a partnership between two or more systems that retain separate ownership. In this context, a regionalization or partnership can include the physical interconnection of wastewater systems for the purposes of regional wastewater treatment or the physical interconnection of a drinking water system with another drinking water system under separate ownership for the purposes of providing a regional water supply. System partnerships may include agreements to manage, operate, or provide staff or resources to partnering systems while not consolidating ownership of the systems.

**Points Available**

* Wastewater – 5 points
* Drinking Water – 5 points

*Required Documentation*

To document these points, do the following:

**Important to Remember**

An applicant is eligible for these regionalization points up to two years after the date of regionalization. Such an applicant must provide documentation showing date of the agreement.

* Identify the systems. Clearly identify the systems by name and include the PWSID Number if applicable (drinking water systems only). State who owns each system;
* Describe the regionalization of the system and how it is managed; and
* Describe the type of regionalization. The narrative must describe how the project will result in a regionalization.
* Describe the current and proposed relationship between the systems, including any physical interconnections, agreements to share capacity or services or staff.
* Describe the agreements between the owners of each system.
* Submit an interlocal agreement (ILA) between the systems, stating the intent to regionalize or partner with systems on a long-term basis. An ILA conditional upon other work being completed prior to the partnership or regionalization taking effect is acceptable. A draft ILA may also be accepted.
* Other documentation, such as contractual agreements or a memorandum of understanding (MOU) or Board resolution of intent to regionalize or partner with another system, will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
* If a project is requesting SRF-EC funds, describe how the partnership will help address the existing PFAS contamination issue.

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* + 1. Project Will Result in Reducing Water use or Energy Use at Least by 20%

A project is eligible for these points if the project at the WWTP (including lift stations, landfill leachate collection/treatment systems) or water treatment plant (WTP) is intended to achieve at least a 20 percent reduction in energy or potable water use associated with the specific process or equipment being replaced/rehabilitated, or to produce energy, or eliminate one or multiple pump stations (see more below), the project qualifies for three points.

**Points Available**

* Wastewater – 3 points
* Drinking Water – 3 points

The energy reduction calculations must be based on how the existing equipment is currently being operated, not on what the reduction would be if equipment were operated at a greater capacity than current typical usage. Energy improvements achieved by repairing malfunctioning equipment cannot be included in energy reduction calculations.

Elimination of pump stations may qualify depending on the impact to downstream facilities. If the sewer flow from the eliminated pump station has to be re-pumped by downstream pump station(s), calculations must be provided demonstrating at least a 20 percent reduction in overall energy usage considering all impacted pump stations. If a pump station is being eliminated solely via gravity sewer to the receiving WWTP, then no calculations are required.[[4]](#footnote-5)

Water usage reduction relates to use of potable water at the applicant’s infrastructure facilities. To successfully claim these points, the applicant must show a 20% reduction in potable water usage.

*Required Documentation*

For energy usage, the narrative must:

* Describe and support the expected energy reductions and/or energy production, and
* Include calculations that document the 20 percent reduction in energy use.

For potable water usage, the narrative must:

* Describe the measures taken to reduce potable water usage at the applicant’s infrastructure.
* Show the potable water usage before the project and after the project.
* Provide calculations to support at least 20 percent reduction in potable water usage.

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| **Example Narratives for Line Item 2.D**  **Narrative that is NOT sufficient:** The replacement of the pumps at the Main Street Pump Station will reduce energy consumption. **(Not sufficient because details about existing and proposed energy consumption and supporting calculations are not provided).**  **Narrative that is NOT sufficient:** The Main Street Pump Station will be replaced by a new gravity sewer that will deliver wastewater to the Chestnut Road Pump Station, thereby eliminating all energy use at the Main Street Pump Station. (**Not sufficient since the Chestnut Road Pump Station will experience an increase in flow and an increase in energy usage, and no calculations were provided to document a 20% reduction.)**  **Narrative that IS sufficient:** The replacement of pumps at the Main Street Pump Station will reduce energy consumption by 30% as follows: Current energy usage is 150 MWatt\*hour/month. After installation of the new pumps, the energy usage is expected to be only 105 MWatt\*hour/month. The energy reduction is therefore 150 -105 = 45 MWatt\*hour/month which equals a 30% reduction. Supporting calculations are provided and were based upon the efficiency and horsepower of the proposed pumps.  **Narrative that IS sufficient:** A town’s WWTP activated sludge basin currently uses coarse air bubble diffusers. The project will replace the diffuser system with fine bubble diffusers, and the air blowers will be replaced high efficiency blowers. Calculations provided demonstrate a 28% reduction in the energy consumption for the aeration system. |

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* + 1. More than 50% of the Project Construction Costs are to Replace, Rehabilitate, or Improve Infrastructure Damaged by Hurricane Helene

An Applicant may qualify for Line Item 2.E points if the majority (more than 50 percent) of the infrastructure that is part of the project was damaged by Hurricane Helene. This line item is intended to provide priority to those projects that are in Helene-impacted areas and sustained damage to their infrastructure.

**Points Available**

* Wastewater – 10 points
* Drinking Water – 10 points

*Required Documentation*

If 100% of the costs to replate/ rehabilitate/repair infrastructure damaged by Helene Helene, state as such in the narrative.

To receive points for this line item, the Applicant must describe the infrastructure damaged by Hurricane Helene.

In Section 7a of the budget, differentiate between budget line items that will replace, rehabilitate, or improve infrastructure damaged by Hurricane Helene and those that will not. The infrastructure that replaces, rehabilitates, and/or improves infrastructure damaged by Hurricane Helene must be great than 50 percent of the project construction costs (not including closing fee). Take percentages out to the tenth decimal place (e.g., 60.8%)

Note: If 100 percent of the project construction costs are to replace/rehabilitate/improve infrastructure damaged by Hurricane Helene, please state as such in your narrative.

**Example Narrative for Line Item 2.E.**

**Narrative that is NOT sufficient:** The Anytown Main Street pump station was damaged during Hurricane Helene because it was flooded. Costs to repair and replace these components are listed in the budget.

Table

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

**Narrative that IS sufficient:** Dogtown’s Center Street Pump Station was completely flooded out and lost all of its pumps and most of its electrical equipment. This project will install submersible pumps and redo all electrical equipment **100%** of the project costs will replace infrastructure damaged by Hurricane Helene.

**Example Narrative for Line Item 2.E. (cntd.)**

The Town of Dogtown plans to replace an 8-inch gravity sewer where part of it cross the 100-year floodplain near Deep Creek. This portion will be realigned into to the 500-year floodplain and constitutes **86.8%** of the costs. The project will also relocate Dog Paw Pump Station, which was damaged during Hurricane Helene.

Table

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

* 1. System Management
     1. Flood Resiliency Action Plan

An Applicant may quality for Line Item 3.A points if they have created a flood resiliency action plan (FRAP) to mitigate future environmental and land use changes. This guidance is intended only for the purpose of determining if the applicant qualifies for points under Line Item 3.A of the PRS score sheet. This guidance is not intended to be an exhaustive resource for the development of FRAPs, and there are many aspects of the FRAP that may tie into a system owner’s plan that are not evaluated for the purpose of determining qualification for points.

**Points Available**

* Wastewater – 5 Applicable
* Drinking Water – 5 points

*Required Documentation*

To receive points under this line item, the application must include a narrative that explains how the FRAP addresses each of the four key areas described in this guidance. The narrative must include a specific section that addresses each of the following three key areas that comprise the Applicant’s FRAP. This narrative can be written directly into the application narrative, or it can be attached as a supporting document with a reference to the document in the application narrative. A copy of the FRAP is not a substitute for this narrative. Each of these areas must be addressed in the narrative. They are as follows:

1. Inventory of assets exposed to flooding;
2. Prioritized actions for achieving flood resilience; and
3. Consideration of future flood impacts.

Please provide a map where described below.

**1. Inventory of Assets Exposed to Flooding.** The inventory must include all assets that are exposed to flooding such as pump stations, unsealed manholes, lift stations, and treatment plant components. Additionally, the inventory must include mapping that shows these components in relation to all floodplains within the area. The 500-year and 100-year floodplain boundaries must be clearly demarcated. Floodplain mapping sources that can be used include [FEMA](https://hazards-fema.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8b0adb51996444d4879338b5529aa9cd), [FRIS](https://fris.nc.gov/), and [NCEM Advisory](https://flood.nc.gov/advisoryflood/Home/Index) datasets. Please provide a copy of this map.

**2. Prioritized actions for achieving flood resilience.** The summary should discuss how the Applicant plans to prioritize is actions to achieve flood resilience. This should include a description of how each action will work toward flood resilience as well as cost estimates that should include planning, engineering and design, construction, and operations and maintenance. These actions must include the project discussed in the application. Highlight the project on the map discussed above.

**3. Consideration of future flood impacts.** The summary should also briefly discuss how the FRAP considers future flood impacts. These impacts should be related to sea level rise, other environmental changes, and land use changes.

* + 1. Emergency Preparedness, Response, or Recovery Plan

An Applicant may qualify for Line Item 3.B points if they have created and implemented an Emergency Response Plan (ERP) or Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) to prepare for and respond to emergencies at wastewater or drinking water utilities. This guidance is intended only for the purpose of determining if the applicant qualifies for points under Line Item 3.B of the PRS score sheet. This guidance is not intended to be an exhaustive resource for the development of ERPs, and there are many aspects of the ERP that may tie into a system owner’s plan that are not evaluated for the purpose of determining qualification for points. For more information on developing ERPs for drinking water and wastewater systems, please see the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (USEPA’s) website about [developing and updating ERPs](https://www.epa.gov/waterutilityresponse/develop-or-update-emergency-response-plan).

**Points Available**

* Wastewater – 5 points
* Drinking Water – 5 points

Please note that an applicant may earn these points if the proposed project is in the plan or proposed project components are identified as critical in the plan.

An applicant can also earn these points, if the project scope includes preparation of such a plan. Make sure project narrative, description and budget contains this item, if claiming points.

*Required Documentation*

* When using an ERP,
  + To receive points under this line item, the application must include a narrative that explains how the ERP addresses each of the five key areas described in this guidance:

1. Completion of a risk and resilience assessment;
2. Discussion of resilience strategies;
3. Discussion of emergency plans and procedures;
4. Discussion of mitigation actions; and
5. Discussion of detection strategies.

Provide mapping where described below.

**1. Completion of a risk and resilience assessment (RRA).** The RRA is the backbone of any ERP and provides information about threats from malevolent acts and natural hazards that may impact water or wastewater utilities. The USEPA has more information about [how to conduct an RRA](https://www.epa.gov/waterresilience/small-system-risk-and-resilience-assessment-checklist). This summary should discuss when the RRA was conducted and what the results were.

**2.** **Discussion of resilience strategies.** Briefly summarize the resilience strategies within your plan. These should include emergency response roles and responsibilities; incident command system roles; communication (internal, external, critical customers, communication equipment inventory); media outreach and risk communication, and public notification templates.

**3. Discussion of emergency plans and procedures.** Summarize the core response procedures (e.g., access, physical security, cybersecurity, power loss, emergency alternate water or wastewater sources, sampling and analysis, and family and utility personnel well-being) and incident response procedures.

**4. Discussion of mitigation actions.** Summarize mitigation actions. These can include alternative source water options and interconnected utilities for drinking water, storage and treatment mitigation actions for wastewater, cybersecurity mitigation actions, and other mitigation actions. Note: To receive points for this line item, the proposed project described in the application must be part of these mitigation actions.

**5. Discussion of detection strategies.** Summarize the detection strategies your water or wastewater utility will implement to prevent unauthorized entry into utility facilities, water contamination (drinking water), wastewater contamination (wastewater), cyber intrusion, hazardous chemical release, natural hazards, and power outages.

* + Include documentation that shows the plan that covers the applicant is current to within five years. Documentation may include a resolution by the applicant adopting the ERP, a screenshot of the cover showing the date of update and that it is final, or other documentation that shows it is current to within five years.
* When using a HMP,
  + To receive points under this line item, the application must include a narrative that explains how the HMP addresses each of the five key areas described in this guidance:
    - 1. Definition of planning area.

1. Natural hazards description within planning area
2. Probability of future events
3. Vulnerability of water / wastewater infrastructure to identified hazards
4. Mitigation strategy to protect water / wastewater infrastructure
5. **Definition of planning area.** Briefly describe the planning area as defined in your HMP. The planning area may be your own jurisdiction, or your jurisdiction may be a part of a multi-jurisdictional HMP.
6. **Natural hazards description within planning area.** Describe the natural hazards within your HMPs’ planning area that could cause harm to your water and/or wastewater infrastructure (e.g., flood, fire). Describe the extent of the anticipated intensity of the identified hazards (e.g., flooding may occur at XX feet above base flood elevation).
7. **Probability of future events.** Discuss the probability of future events for each identified hazard (e.g., flood at XX feet above base flood elevation has a 3 percent chance of occurring within the next five years, fire has a 10 percent chance of occurring within the next five years).
8. **Vulnerability of water / wastewater infrastructure to identified hazards.** Discuss which water and/or wastewater infrastructure may be vulnerable to the identified hazards. For example, the WWTP and intake force main may be vulnerable to the flooding hazard. Aerial crossings may be vulnerable to stream flooding.
9. **Mitigation strategy to protect water / wastewater infrastructure.** Describe the mitigation actions that your jurisdiction has implemented or will plan to implement to mitigate the risk. For example, at a WWTP located within the 100-year floodplain, an LGU planned to install flood gates and construct a solid wall around the WWTP.

* Include documentation that shows the plan that covers the applicant is current to within five years. Documentation may include a resolution by the applicant adopting the ERP, a screenshot of the cover showing the date of update and that it is final, or other documentation that shows it is current to within five years.
  1. Affordability

Category 4 provides points related to affordability. Additionally, the affordability criteria are required to determine principal forgiveness (PF) eligibility and, if eligible, the percentage of loan/PF mix.

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* + 1. Residential Connections

An Applicant may qualify for **only one** of the following sub-categories (Line Items 4.A.1-4.A.3) based on the number of residential connections that you reported on the DWI Application.

**Points Available**

* Wastewater – 2-8 points
* Drinking Water – 2-8 points
  + - 1. Less than 10,000 residential connections (2 Point); OR
      2. Less than 5,000 residential connections (4 Points); OR

**Important to Remember**

For wastewater applications, count only sewer connections. For drinking water applications, count only drinking water connections.

* + - 1. Less than 1,000 residential connections (8 Points).

To determine residential connections, list on the DWI Application the number of residential connections *in the utility’s entire service area*. For utilities with multiple water or wastewater systems, include the sum of all service connections under the same rate structure supporting the cost of the project.[[5]](#footnote-6)

Some systems serve additional customers yet record flow through a bulk connection. If this is the case, then all residential connections served by the bulk connection must be considered. Please see the supplemental guidance available at <https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-infrastructure/i-need-funding/application-forms-and-additional-resources>. Use these residential connections in Line Item 4.A of the Priority Rating System for water and wastewater projects.

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| **Example for Line Item 4.A**  The Bixby-Hadley Water and Sewer Authority serves two towns, the Town of Bixby and the Town of Hadley. Bixby has 12,500 residential connections in their sewer system while the Town of Hadley has 8,000 residential connections. They wish to complete a collection system rehabilitation and replacement project. Due to the number of residential connections within the service area of the Bixby-Hadley Water and Sewer Authority (20,500), they are eligible for a 100% loan. (If ARPA funds are available, they would be eligible for grant funding). |

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* + 1. Current Monthly Utility Bill at 5,000 Gallons

An Applicant may qualify for **only one** of the following sub-categories (Line Items 4.B.1-4.B.4) based on the current monthly combined water and sewer utility rate at 5,000 gallons as shown on the rate sheet submitted with the application.

**Points Available**

* Wastewater – 4-10 points
* Drinking Water – 4-10 points
  + - 1. Greater than 50th Percentile ($89) (4 Points) OR
      2. Greater than 70th Percentile ($107) (6 Points) OR
      3. Greater than 85th Percentile ($126) (8 Points) OR
      4. Greater than 95th Percentile ($145) (10 Points).

Use the lowest in-town rate. Provide rate sheets and show all calculations.[[6]](#footnote-7)

* If you are a single-utility water provider, estimate the combined utility bill by dividing the water rate for 5,000 gallons by 0.4.
* If you are a single-utility sewer provider, estimate the combined utility bill by dividing the sewer rate for 5,000 gallons by 0.6.

*Required Documentation*

To document this line Item, provide the following:

* A copy of the most recent official water and sewer rate sheets in effect at the time of the application as part of the supporting documentation in Section 4 of the priority points narrative.
  + An “after-the-fact” application that earns priority under Line Items 1.A and 2.F can use the official rate sheet for the consolidated system that was in effect on the date of consolidation.
* A clear calculation or description of how the bill for monthly use of 5,000 gallons is calculated.

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| **Important to Remember**  In the narrative and calculation, use the same values entered in the Division application for System Parameters (Section 2).   * **Include the official rate sheet.** * Using the lowest residential rate available (typically, the “inside rate”) calculate the residential monthly utility bill for 5,000 gallons for water and sewer service. Show all calculations. * Report the results as “Monthly Rate for 5,000 Gallons” on the Division application for System Parameters (Section 2). |

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* + 1. Local Government Unit Indicators

An Applicant may qualify for **only one** of the following sub-categories (Line Items 4.C.1-4.C.3) based on the local government unit (LGU) economic indicators reported on the DWI Application: [[7]](#footnote-8)

**Points Available**

* Wastewater – 3-7 points
* Drinking Water – 3-7 points
  + - 1. 3 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark (3 points) OR
      2. 4 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark (5 points) OR

**Important to Remember**

Applicants will not be awarded both LGU indicator and disadvantaged area sub-categories. If an application is eligible for both 4.C.1-4.C.3. and 4.C.4, the highest scoring line item will be awarded.

* + - 1. 5 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark (7 points) OR

These indicators show whether or not an Applicant is faring better or worse in terms of these indicators than the state benchmark. (Values equal to state benchmarks are not considered “worse than” benchmarks for scoring purposes.) The indicators that the Division utilizes for this determination are as follows:

**Important to Remember**

Applicants may consider and submit alternative population if population data does not appear accurate. Refer to ‘Percent Population Change’ (1) below for instructions to submit alternative population data.

* Percent population change
* Poverty rate
* Median household income
* Unemployment
* Property valuation per capita

To assist in determining whether LGU economic indicators are better or worse than the state benchmarks, DWI has developed a table that is available on the [Division application webpage](https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-infrastructure/i-need-funding/application-forms-and-additional-resources#additional-resources). This table is available for use in completing the information for affordability criteria. These tables must be used in completing information for population change, poverty rate, median household income, and unemployment except as specifically noted below when the applicant determines that the data in the tables is not accurate.

**Important to Remember**

For municipalities that cross multiple counties, use the average of the unemployment rates. The Affordability calculator does this for you.

Additionally, this information may also be found in the Affordability Calculator that is available on the Division’s website at <https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-infrastructure/i-need-funding/application-forms-and-additional-resources#additional-resources>.

List each LGU indicator in Section 2 on the Application for Funding.

Some situations may occur in which alternate data may be utilized. These are listed below.

*Percent Population Change*

The Division has historically used population data from American Community Survey (ACS) and allowed Applicants to provide data from the North Carolina Office of State Budget (OSMB) as an alternative. Beginning with the Fall 2025 application round, the Division has updated the table for LGU indicators and the Affordability Calculator to include population data from both ACS and OSBM. The applicant should review the numbers provided from each data source and select the data set that is most advantageous for them. Supporting documentation is not required to use the OSBM data.

1. Some cases may exist where a resident institution such as a prison, juvenile hall, or nursing home facility may open and impact the population during the five-year period under consideration for percent population change. If such a situation exists in an LGU, then the institutional population may be deducted from the most recent population before the calculation for percent change in population is made. Provide supporting documentation that shows the facility name, the number of the institutionalized population, and the year the facility opened.

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| **Example for Line Item 4.C (Population Change)**  In 2020, the Town of Klondike opened a juvenile detention facility that houses 400 residents. According to the ACS data, the Town in 2017 had a population of 16,500 residents and now in 2021 had a population of 17,400 residents, resulting in a percent population change of 5.45% change in population, which would put them at better than the state benchmark. However, removing the resident population of the detention center resulted in a population change of 500 people (3.03%), which put them at worse than the state benchmark. To receive credit, the Town included supporting documentation that showed the number juvenile residents when the facility opened and the fact that the facility opened in 2020. |

*Property Valuation per Capita*

In many cases, utilize the total taxable property value reported in the most current audit for the LGU. Use the total taxable property value and divide it by the population of the LGU found on the Division’s data sheets referenced above to calculate property valuation per capita.

**Important to Remember**

If the Applicant does not have an audit that is current and on file with the LGC, then the Applicant does not get credit for the property valuation per capita indicator. In its analysis, DWI staff will count that particular parameter as better than the state benchmark.

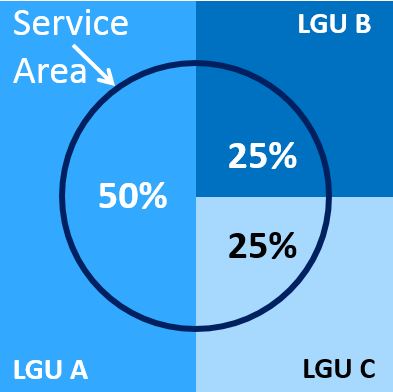
If the service area is outside of a municipality, then three options exist.

1. The county property valuation per capita figure may be used.
2. If the service area is in a defined area such as a Census Data Place (CDP), then the Applicant may utilize tax maps to determine the total taxable property value within the defined area. That result would then be divided by the population in the CDP. As supporting documentation, provide a map that shows the boundaries of the CDP and service area. Additionally, provide a copy of the spreadsheet used to calculate the CDP’s total taxable property value and property valuation per capita. This may be supplied either in hard copy or on CD.
3. For a service area such as a subdivision that is not in a defined CDP, the Applicant may utilize tax maps to determine the total taxable property value of the area. Estimate the population of the area by determining the total number of houses and using the persons per household figure for the county. This information may be found in the [ACS data available online](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/HCN010217). Look at the table under the topic of Family and Living Arrangements. Persons per Household is listed on the second row under that topic.
4. Supply as part of the Section 4 documentation a map showing the total number of houses in the service area, a spreadsheet of the total taxable property value calculation, the persons per household for the county from the ACS, and the calculation of the service area population as well as property valuation per capita.

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| **Example for Line Item 4.C (Property Valuation per Capita)**  Landry County has a wastewater project that will run sewer to the Newcomb subdivision, a large subdivision of 500 homes that has been on failing septic systems. The property valuation per capita of Landry County is $105,000, which is over the state benchmark. Based on local knowledge, county staff know that the subdivision is more impoverished than the rest of the county. Using a GIS, they determined the total taxable property within the subdivision to be $114,475,000. To estimate the population within the subdivision, they utilized the ACS persons per household estimate for the county (2.41 persons per household) and derived an estimated population of 1,205 people. Dividing a total taxable property value by the estimated population yields a property valuation per capita of $95,000. This is worse than the state benchmark. The county submitted supporting documentation for the calculation and received credit for the LGU economic indicator. |

*Weighted Averaging*

There may be situations that arise where a system such as a water and sewer authority or a water system covers multiple LGUs. Figure 4 shows a graphical example of a system’s service area that crosses multiple jurisdictions. If this occurs, then use a weighted average based on the percentage of users to determine each of the economic indicators.



**Figure 4. Graphical Example of Multiple Service Areas**

The Affordability Calculator contains four columns that can be used to calculate using weighted averages. If more than four columns are needed, please complete the calculations by hand and show your work.

If calculating economic parameters across multiple jurisdictions, for each indicator, show the calculations that led to the data entered into the affordability portion of the application. Note that the calculator allows up to four different areas to be entered and will calculate the LGU parameters.

**Important to Remember**

Outside-rate customers are not to be considered when conducting weighted averaging.

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| **Example for Line Item 4.C (Weighted Averaging)**  The Town of Central is a regionalized system that serves the entire town (60 percent of the service area) as well as the Town of Bixby (30 percent of the service area) and part of the county (10 percent of the service area). The Town determined population changes for each of the areas as follows:   * Central: 5.5 percent * Bixby: 5.0 percent * County: 8.5 percent   Using the following calculation, they determined the percent population growth for their service area to be 5.65 percent by using the following equation:  PopGrowthTotal= (0.6\*5.5%) + (0.3\*5.0%) + (0.1\*8.5%) = 5.65%  That would place the Town at better than the state benchmark. |

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* + 1. Loss of Water or Wastewater Volumetric Usage

**Points Available**

* Wastewater – 8 points
* Drinking Water – 8 points

Damages from Hurricane Helene may include loss of customers, which can equate to loss of revenue via loss of volumetric sales. To successfully claim this points, the Applicant must show a loss of volumetric water sales of 20% or greater due to Hurricane Helene.

*Required Documentation*

* Provide copies of volumetric water or wastewater sales (depending upon the type of project for which you have applied) for the most recent three billing cycles.
* Provide copies of volumetric water or wastewater sales (depending upon the type of project for which you have applied) for the same three billing cycles prior to Hurricane Helene.
* Provide calculations to show the volumetric water or wastewater loss post-Helene.

**Example for Line Item 4.D.**

**Narrative that IS sufficient:** The Town of Anytown received severe damage from Hurricane Helene and lost 750 of its 1,000 customer accounts, including 3 industrial accounts, which lowered water usage from 100,000 gpd to 60,000 gpd after the storm. Appendix A shows usage records from March 2024, as compared to usage records in March 2025. When calculated, the volumetric water loss is 40,000 gpd, which is a 40% volumetric water loss.

**Example Narrative that is NOT sufficient:** the Town of Lost-And-Found suffered severe damage to residential and commercial establishments during hurricane Helene, which included many residents who have been forced to move. Volumetric water loss is greater than 40% (100,000 gpd to 55,000 gpd).

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**Priority Rating System Score Sheet for Drinking Water Projects**

| **2025 SRF SA-HMW Funding PRIORITY RATING SYSTEM for Drinking Projects** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Instructions: For each line item, mark “X” to claim the points for that line item. Be sure that your narrative includes justification for every line item claimed. At the end of each category, provide the total points claimed for each program in the subtotal row for that category. Then add the subtotals from each category and enter the Total of Points for All Categories in the last line. Note that some categories have a maximum allowed points that may be less than the total of individual line items.* | | | |
| **Line Item #** | **Category 1 – Project Purpose**  *(Points will be awarded for only one Project Purpose; note that the project must be eligible for SA-HMW Funds)* | **Claimed**  **Yes/No** | **Points** |
| **1.A** | Applicant’s system remains wholly or partially inoperable due to sustained damages from Hurricane Helene **OR** |  | 50 |
| **1.B** | Applicant has an existing Helene emergency bridge loan with the Division of Water Infrastructure **OR** |  | 50 |
| **1.C** | Applicant’s system is operational but has sustained damages from Hurricane Helene |  | 25 |
| **Maximum points for Category 1 – Project Purpose** | | | **50** |
| **Subtotal claimed for Category 1 – Project Purpose** | | |  |
| **Line Item #** | **Category 2 – Project Benefits** | **Claimed**  **Yes/No** | **Points** |
| **2.A** | Project moves existing infrastructure from the floodplain or fortifies infrastructure within the floodplain |  |  |
| 2.A.1 | Project relocates and/or improves infrastructure to assure continued operation during a 500-year flood event **OR** |  | 12 |
| 2.A.2 | Project relocates and/or improves infrastructure to assure continued operation during a 100-year flood event |  | 10 |
| **2.B** | Project provides redundancy/resiliency for critical treatment and/or transmission/distribution system functions including cybersecurity and/or backup electrical power source |  | 5 |
| **2.C** | Project includes system merger or regionalization |  |  |
| 2.C.1 | Project includes system merger **OR** |  | 10 |
| 2.C.2 | Project includes system regionalization and/or system partnerships |  | 5 |
| **2.D** | Project will result in reducing water use or energy use at least by 20% |  | 3 |
| **2.E** | More than 50% of the project construction costs are to replace, rehabilitate or improve infrastructure that was damaged by Hurricane Helene |  | 10 |
| **Maximum points for Category 2 – Project Benefits** | | | **40** |
| **Subtotal claimed for Category 2 – Project Benefits** | | |  |
| **Line Item #** | **Category 3 – System Management** | **Claimed**  **Yes/No** | **Points** |
| **3.A** | Applicant has completed a local flood resiliency action plan with the proposed project included in the plan |  | 5 |
| **3.B** | Applicant has an emergency preparedness, response or recovery plan and the assets in the proposed project are covered in the plan, or proposed project will develop an emergency preparedness, response or recovery plan |  | 5 |
| **Maximum points for Category 3 – System Management** | | | **10** |
| **Subtotal claimed for Category 3 – System Management** | | |  |
| **Line Item #** | **Category 4 – Affordability** | **Claimed**  **Yes/No** | **Points** |
| **4.A** | Residential Connections |  |  |
| 4.A.1 | Less than 10,000 residential connections **OR** |  | 2 |
| 4.A.2 | Less than 5,000 residential connections **OR** |  | 4 |
| 4.A.3 | Less than 1,000 residential connections |  | 8 |
| **4.B** | Current Monthly Combined Utility Bills at 5,000 Usage |  |  |
| 4.B.1 | Greater than the 50th Percentile **OR** |  | 4 |
| 4.B.2 | Greater than the 70th Percentile **OR** |  | 6 |
| 4.B.3 | Greater than the 85th Percentile **OR** |  | 8 |
| 4.B.4 | Greater than the 95th Percentile |  | 10 |
| **4.C** | Local Government Unit (LGU) Indicators |  |  |
| 4.C.1 | 3 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark **OR** |  | 3 |
| 4.C.2 | 4 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark **OR** |  | 5 |
| 4.C.3 | 5 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark |  | 7 |
| **4.D** | System experienced a loss of at least 20% of water or wastewater volumetric usage as a result of Hurricane Helene± |  | 8 |
| **Maximum points for Category 4 – Affordability** | | | **30** |
| **Subtotal claimed for Category 4 – Affordability** | | |  |
| **Total of Points for All Categories** | | | **130** |

**Priority Rating System Score Sheet for Wastewater Projects**

| **2025 SRF SA-HMW Funding PRIORITY RATING SYSTEM for Wastewater Projects** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Instructions: For each line item, mark “X” to claim the points for that line item. Be sure that your narrative includes justification for every line item claimed. At the end of each category, provide the total points claimed for each program in the subtotal row for that category. Then add the subtotals from each category and enter the Total of Points for All Categories in the last line. Note that some categories have a maximum allowed points that may be less than the total of individual line items.* | | | |
| **Line Item #** | **Category 1 – Project Purpose**  *(Points will be awarded for only one Project Purpose; note that the project must be eligible for SA-HMW Funds)* | **Claimed**  **Yes/No** | **Points** |
| **1.A** | Applicant’s system remains wholly or partially inoperable due to sustained damages from Hurricane Helene **OR** |  | 50 |
| **1.B** | Applicant has an existing Helene emergency bridge loan with the Division of Water Infrastructure **OR** |  | 50 |
| **1.C** | Applicant’s system is operational but has sustained damages from Hurricane Helene |  | 25 |
| **Maximum points for Category 1 – Project Purpose** | | | **50** |
| **Subtotal claimed for Category 1 – Project Purpose** | | |  |
| **Line Item #** | **Category 2 – Project Benefits** | **Claimed**  **Yes/No** | **Points** |
| **2.A** | Project moves existing infrastructure from the floodplain or fortifies infrastructure within the floodplain |  |  |
| 2.A.1 | Project relocates and/or improves infrastructure to assure continued operation during a 500-year flood event **OR** |  | 12 |
| 2.A.2 | Project relocates and/or improves infrastructure to assure continued operation during a 100-year flood event |  | 10 |
| **2.B** | Project provides redundancy/resiliency for critical treatment and/or transmission/distribution system functions including cybersecurity and/or backup electrical power source |  | 5 |
| **2.C** | Project includes system merger or regionalization |  |  |
| 2.C.1 | Project includes system merger **OR** |  | 10 |
| 2.C.2 | Project includes system regionalization and/or system partnerships |  | 5 |
| **2.D** | Project will result in reducing water use or energy use at least by 20% |  | 3 |
| **2.E** | More than 50% of the project construction costs are to replace, rehabilitate or improve infrastructure that was damaged by Hurricane Helene |  | 10 |
| **Maximum points for Category 2 – Project Benefits** | | | **40** |
| **Subtotal claimed for Category 2 – Project Benefits** | | |  |
| **Line Item #** | **Category 3 – System Management** | **Claimed**  **Yes/No** | **Points** |
| **3.A** | Applicant has completed a local flood resiliency action plan with the proposed project included in the plan |  | 5 |
| **3.B** | Applicant has an emergency preparedness, response or recovery plan and the assets in the proposed project are covered in the plan, or proposed project will develop an emergency preparedness, response or recovery plan |  | 5 |
| **Maximum points for Category 3 – System Management** | | | **10** |
| **Subtotal claimed for Category 3 – System Management** | | |  |
| **Line Item #** | **Category 4 – Affordability** | **Claimed**  **Yes/No** | **Points** |
| **4.A** | Residential Connections |  |  |
| 4.A.1 | Less than 10,000 residential connections **OR** |  | 2 |
| 4.A.2 | Less than 5,000 residential connections **OR** |  | 4 |
| 4.A.3 | Less than 1,000 residential connections |  | 8 |
| **4.B** | Current Monthly Combined Utility Bills at 5,000 Usage |  |  |
| 4.B.1 | Greater than the 50th Percentile **OR** |  | 4 |
| 4.B.2 | Greater than the 70th Percentile **OR** |  | 6 |
| 4.B.3 | Greater than the 85th Percentile **OR** |  | 8 |
| 4.B.4 | Greater than the 95th Percentile |  | 10 |
| **4.C** | Local Government Unit (LGU) Indicators |  |  |
| 4.C.1 | 3 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark **OR** |  | 3 |
| 4.C.2 | 4 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark **OR** |  | 5 |
| 4.C.3 | 5 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark |  | 7 |
| **4.D** | System experienced a loss of at least 20% of water or wastewater volumetric usage as a result of Hurricane Helene± |  | 8 |
| **Maximum points for Category 4 – Affordability** | | | **30** |
| **Subtotal claimed for Category 4 – Affordability** | | |  |
| **Total of Points for All Categories** | | | **130** |

1. Line Item 2.A is identical to Line Item 2.N in the drinking water/wastewater PRS guidance. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Line Item 2.B is identical to Line Item 2.T in the drinking water/wastewater PRS guidance. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Line Item 2.C is identical to Line Item 2.F in the drinking water/wastewater PRS guidance. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Line Item 2.D is identical to Line Item 2.R in the drinking water/wastewater PRS guidance. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. This line item is identical to Line Item 4.A in the drinking water / wastewater PRS guidance. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. This line item is identical to Line Item 4.B in the drinking water / wastewater PRS guidance. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. This line item is identical to Line Item 4.C in the drinking water / wastewater PRS guidance. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)