REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS
WATER CONSERVATION GRANT PROGRAM
WATER CONSERVATION RESEARCH

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Harris-Galveston Subsidence District ("District") is seeking applications from Qualified Applicants for grant funds for research projects intended for water conservation efforts. Funds can be requested for projects to evaluate and analyze the effectiveness of water-saving technology, data analysis of local aquifers, or other projects that will support the District's mission of enhancing water conservation efforts to prevent subsidence.

Examples of successful grant applications for water conservation research include 1) determining the cost-benefit ratio of specific conservation measures to support modifications to drought contingency plans and 2) developing a land-use based model in geographic information systems (GIS) software to identify indoor and outdoor measures to achieve water savings. For additional information on awarded grants, please see the District's website.

The schedule for the application process is **open year-round**. A running list of frequently asked questions will be posted on the District's website (https://hgsubsidence.org/water-conservation/grant-program/) and updated periodically.

BACKGROUND

The District was created in 1975 with the mandate to cease and prevent subsidence within Harris and Galveston Counties by regulating the use of groundwater. Subsidence has been a long-standing problem in Harris, Galveston, and surrounding counties, with total subsidence near Galveston Bay reaching over ten feet. Subsidence can contribute to flooding, infrastructure damage, and faulting.

Since 1975, groundwater regulation implemented by the District has resulted in increased aquifer water-levels and slowing or cessation of subsidence in regulatory areas closest to the Gulf of Mexico. However, the western-most regulatory area is still progressing towards conversion to alternative sources of water and consequently subsidence continues to occur.

The objective of the Water Conservation Grant Program ("Grant Program") is to support the District's mission in enhancing water conservation education and water conservation measures. Priority projects include the development and implementation of residential, commercial, and other irrigation best management practices that improve water efficiency. Additionally, projects may be considered within industrial and agricultural sectors.

QUALIFIED APPLICANTS

In order to qualify for the Grant Program, Qualified Applicants (Applicants) must be one of the following:

A. A water utility in good standing with the District. A water utility, including a water supply corporation, general law or home-rule city, a special utility district, a municipal utility district or any other entity included in the definition of a retail public utility in Section 13.002, Texas Water Code, whose defined service area, or a majority portion thereof, lies within the boundaries of the District;

B. A private entity (industrial, commercial/institutional, residential, agricultural or other) whose property, or a majority portion thereof, is within the District;

C. A 501(c) non-profit organization with an environmental purpose located within Harris County or Galveston County;

D. A public entity (school district, management district, improvement district or similar entity) whose property, or a majority portion thereof is within the District; or

E. A research University located within the State of Texas.

GRANT FUNDING

Grants may be awarded to reimburse Qualified Applicants up to fifty percent (50%) of the cost of an approved project. The size and number of projects to be funded will be determined based on the available funding. Funding support for this request for applications may be authorized by the Board of Directors within the budget assigned for the Fiscal Year, which follows the calendar year.

APPLICATION SUBMITTAL

Applications shall be submitted electronically via email to **contracts@subsidence.org** with subject line labeled "Water Conservation Grant Program RFA 2023-02."

All applications **must be complete** and include the requested information. Applications **may not exceed ten (10) pages** in length including attachments except as specified in the application requirements. Applications should be prepared with 8 ½" by 11" pages with not less than 1-inch margins, and not less than 11-point font.

The Applicant may include any additional information, within the page limitations of the application, to help the District evaluate the application. Additional information may also be requested by the General Manager or the District after submission of the application.

Please call the District office at 281-486-1105 for questions regarding preparation of an application.

APPLICATION RANKING CRITERIA

The following criteria will be used to evaluate applications. This Request for Applications does not commit the District to enter into a contract, nor does it obligate it to pay any costs incurred in the preparation and submission of the application or subsequent discussions, interviews, or presentations in the evaluation process.

A. The District reserves the right to:
   a. Reject any and all Applications received;
   b. Accept or reject a portion of the project which is the subject of any application;
   c. Consider the geographic location and water use sector of the project which is the subject of any application;
   d. Consider the status of the applicant as a water conservation school program sponsor;
   e. Cancel the entire Request for Applications;
   f. Remedy technical errors in the Request for Applications;
   g. Negotiate with any, all, or none of the Applicants;
   h. Waive informalities and irregularities;
   i. Modify the evaluation process; and
   j. Modify the qualifications, requirements, or criteria.

B. Application Ranking:
   Applicants will be evaluated and ranked as provided in this section. Grants shall be awarded based on rankings and the number of grants awarded will be based on available funds. The evaluation criteria and the corresponding maximum point score associated with each evaluation criteria are as follows:

Criteria	Possible Points
Project's emphasis on conservation of water	50 points
Thoroughness of the project scope of work, schedule, and budget	20 points
Completeness and organization of submitted application package	20 points
Use of EPA WaterSense labeled products	5 points
Creativity of proposed project	5 points
Total	*100 points*

Criteria explanations are provided below for additional clarity on application ranking:

Project's emphasis on conservation of water

- Description of the project's water conservation benefits or how the project will contribute to the body of knowledge regarding water conservation within the District.
- The amount of quantifiable water conservation that will be achieved by the project and justification of calculations provided.
- The degree to which the project achieves the Water Conservation Grant Program's goal to support projects that can achieve quantifiable water conservation, especially those projects that correlate to implementing irrigation best management practices and water efficiency measures.

Thoroughness of project scope of work, schedule, and budget

- The thoroughness and clarity of the project scope of work and schedule as well as detail provided in the project budget.
- The ability to implement the proposed project and a list of contractor(s) who would support the project, as applicable.

Completeness and organization of submitted application package

- The completeness of all items requested in the appropriate sections of this request for applications (RFA).
- Organization of the content in the submitted application package based on the RFA structure.

Use of EPA WaterSense labeled products

- Describe any EPA WaterSense labeled products that will be used or evaluated for the project.
- Please see https://lookforwatersense.epa.gov/products/ for a list of products provided by EPA WaterSense.

Creativity of project approach or methodology to providing services

- The creativity and innovative aspects of the project.