

EMERGING CONTAMINANTS FUNDING FACT SHEET

FY26 FUNDING AVAILABLE: \$4,352,000.00

WHAT IS AN EMERGING CONTAMINANT?

Emerging contaminants refer to substances and microorganisms, including manufactured or naturally occurring physical, chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear materials, which are known or anticipated in the environment, that may pose newly identified or re-emerging risks to human health, aquatic life, or the environment. These substances, microorganisms, or materials can include many different types of natural or manufactured chemicals and substances – such as those in some compounds of personal care products, pharmaceuticals, industrial chemicals, pesticides, and microplastics.

Contaminants with water quality criteria established by EPA under CWA section 304(a), except for PFAS, are not considered emerging contaminants. This includes nutrients (e.g., ammonia, nitrogen, and phosphorus), certain organics, and certain metals.

PRINCIPAL FORGIVENESS

Funding provided to address emerging contaminants through the Infrastructure and Investment Jobs Act (IIJA) law is 100% principal forgiveness, meaning that no repayment is required. This represents a significant investment in the protection of public health and the environment.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

The Virginia Clean Water Revolving Loan Fund (VCWRLF) provides low-interest loans to support a wide range of projects that improve water quality. The VCWRLF funds eligible projects that aim to address emerging contaminants in Virginia.

Eligible project types include but are not limited to:

- Planning and design for capital projects including preconstruction and preliminary engineering, when combined with the capital project
- Development and implementation of treatment technologies to remove or reduce emerging contaminants in drinking water, surface water, or wastewater (e.g., granulated activated carbon, reverse osmosis, or ion exchange)
- Development and implementation of best management practices to reduce the release of emerging contaminants to the environment

INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

- Project components not specific to emerging contaminants
- Operation and maintenance
- Water quality monitoring activities (including monitoring associated with NPDES permit or pretreatment requirements) at POTWs

FEDERAL BABA REQUIREMENTS APPLY:

The Build America, Buy America (BABA) Act requires that all iron, steel, manufactured products and construction materials used in infrastructure projects that receive federal funding be manufactured in the United States. This includes certain projects funded by the VCWRLF. The EPA has released guidance which provides several options for projects that are unable to meet the BABA requirements, including:

- **Waivers:** The EPA may grant a waiver to a project if it can demonstrate that meeting the BABA requirements would be impracticable, unnecessary, or excessively burdensome.
- **Alternatives:** The EPA may approve the use of alternative materials or products if they are determined to be of equal quality and performance to domestically manufactured products.

The EPA's guidance is intended to provide flexibility to project sponsors while still ensuring that the BABA requirements are met. BABA guidance is available on the EPA's website.

For more information on the VCWRLF, emerging contaminants projects, and funding eligibility requirements, please visit the [VCWRLF website](#).