

Appendix NN: EPA Region 2/HUD 1990 Sole Source Aquifer MOU

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN

THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
REGION II, NEW YORK, NEW YORK

AND

THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION II, NEW YORK, NEW YORK

PURPOSE and GOAL

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is established to assist the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region II, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Region II, in meeting the Sole Source Aquifer (SSA) project review requirements of Section 1424(e) of the 1974 Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) PL 93-523.

The MOU establishes a formal agreement of each agency's responsibilities and the procedures to be followed in evaluating the potential groundwater impact of projects/activities submitted for HUD Federal financial assistance which are located within the project review area of a designated SSA in Region II.

Under Section 1424(e), an aquifer may be designated by EPA as a SSA if it is determined that the aquifer is the sole or principal source of drinking water for an area and, if contaminated, would create a significant hazard to public health. Following designation, no commitment of Federal financial assistance may be entered into for any project/activity within the SSA project review area which the EPA Administrator determines may contaminate the aquifer so as to create a significant hazard to public health.

The overall goal is to ensure that each project/activity receiving Federal financial assistance in a SSA project review area is designed and constructed in a manner that will prevent the introduction of contaminants into the SSA in quantities that may create a significant hazard to public health.

GEOGRAPHIC AREAS AFFECTED

This MOU applies to HUD federal financially assisted projects/activities in the project review area of all current and future designated SSAs in Region II.

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Attachment 1, Designated SSAs in Region II, lists the designated SSA areas within the states of New York and New Jersey in EPA, Region II; the date of designation; and the Federal Register Notice citation. Attachment 1 also provides a map of the SSA project review area boundary for each of the designated aquifers. When any other SSAs are designated in Region II, EPA will notify HUD in writing.

DEFINITIONS

Significant Hazard to Public Health:

A level of contaminant which causes or may cause the aquifer to:

- (a) Exceed any (1) maximum contaminant level set forth in any promulgated National Primary Drinking Water Standard; (2) state standard where more stringent than the Federal standard; (3) public health advisory level for currently unregulated contaminants; at any point where the water may be used for drinking purposes, or
- (b) May otherwise adversely affect the health of persons, or
- (c) May require a public water system to install additional treatment to prevent such adverse effect.

Federal Financial Assistance:

Financial benefits provided directly as aid to a project by a department, agency, or instrumentality of the federal government in any form including contracts, grants and loan guarantees. Actions or projects carried out by the federal government itself do not involve federal financial assistance.

Actions performed for the federal government by contractors should be distinguished from contracts entered into specifically for the purpose of providing financial assistance, and will not be considered programs or actions receiving Federal financial assistance.

Federal financial assistance is limited to benefits earmarked for a specific project or action and directly awarded to the project or action. Indirect assistance, e.g., in the form of a loan to a developer by a lending institution which in turn receives federal assistance not specifically related to the project in question is not federal financial assistance under Section 1424(e).

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SSA Project Review Area:

The area within which federal financially assisted projects/activities will be reviewed, which includes the designated area and may include all or a portion of the streamflow source area(s). The designated area can include the area above the aquifer, the area which recharges the aquifer (possibly including all or a portion of the streamflow source area) and the area where the population served by the aquifer resides. Streamflow source zone is defined as the upstream headwaters area of losing streams (streams contributing to recharge to Ground Water) that drain into the recharge area. The extent of the SSA project review area is outlined in the Federal Register designation notice for that SSA. Attachment 1 lists the Federal Register Notice citation and provides a map of the SSA project review area.

MOU ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Designated SSAs in Region II
- Attachment 2: A. Non-Housing Initial Screen Criteria
B. Housing Initial Screen Criteria
- Attachment 3: SSA Preliminary Review Information Requirements
- Attachment 4: Hazardous Constituents

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW RESPONSIBILITY

Pursuant to Section 1424(e) of the SDWA, EPA is responsible for designating SSAs and reviewing federal financially assisted projects/activities within SSA project review areas.

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other provisions of law, HUD is responsible for environmental review and decision making except in those cases delegated by law such as with Community Development Block Grant Program (CPD). Environmental responsibility includes compliance with Section 1424(e) of the SDWA.

EIS EARLY NOTIFICATION/SCOPING

If an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is prepared for a project/activity in a SSA project review area, HUD or its grant recipients that assume by law environmental responsibilities and EPA shall coordinate at the earliest possible time so that the draft EIS contains EPA's SSA review determination. This is to ensure that any possible groundwater contamination has been considered.

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This early notification will serve to initiate consultations with the developer to determine the scope of study that may be necessary if any formal groundwater quality assessment is required.

REVIEW PROCESS:

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT (CPD) and HOUSING PROGRAM

The general procedures to be followed by HUD, its delegated agencies and EPA in reviewing HUD federal financially assisted activities and determining their potential impact on the SSA are outlined below. The overall goal is to ensure that each project/activity receiving federal financial assistance is designed and constructed in a manner that will prevent the introduction of contaminants into the SSA in quantities that may create a significant hazard to public health. Two levels of potential review are: (1) Initial Screen/Preliminary Review, and (2) Formal Section 1424(e) Review.

I. Excluded Projects/Activities

EPA and HUD mutually agree that the following list of project/activity categories would not create a significant hazard to public health:

- Construction of individual new residential structures containing from one to four units
- Funding of planning grants
- Rehabilitation of residential units
- Funding of all other grants for non-construction projects/activities
- Projects identified as exempt in 24 CFR 58.34

These categories of projects/activities are therefore excluded from the Initial Screen/Preliminary Review requirements as outlined in Sections II and III below. Potential CPD recipients; states; other delegated agencies and HUD are responsible for making this determination for their respective programs. EPA may request information on these projects/activities and conduct a review if EPA determines it to be necessary.

II. CPD Applications/Final Statements

A. Initial Screen/Preliminary Review

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HUD shall notify all potential CPD recipients, including states that are administering HUD programs (Non-Entitlement Small Cities Program, etc.) and other delegated agencies with jurisdiction in SSA project review areas of the SSA review requirements under Section 1424(e) and of their responsibility as outlined in this MOU.

Potential CPD recipients shall conduct an initial screen of CPD projects/activities proposed for HUD federal financial assistance prior to submission of an application or final statement to HUD. Attachment 2.A, Non-Housing Initial Screen Criteria, shall be used for CPD projects/activities that do not involve housing; and Attachment 2.B, Housing Initial Screen Criteria, for CPD projects/activities involving housing only.

EPA shall be notified of any projects/activities which result in a positive response to one of the criteria questions in Attachment 2. Where a project/activity meets one of the criteria in Attachment 2, the information in Attachment 3, SSA Preliminary Review Information Requirements, shall also be completed and forwarded to EPA along with applicable project/final statement information.

Upon receipt of the above, EPA will conduct it's Preliminary Review. If additional information is required, EPA will inform the potential CPD recipient and HUD. The potential CPD recipient shall be responsible for submitting to EPA any additional information requested in a timely manner.

Based on the information provided, EPA will make its determination on whether to complete its review at this stage and provide SSA review clearance, or proceed to a Formal Section 1424(e) Review. The project/activity may be cleared as is, or with modifications.

B. Timeframe for Preliminary Review and Notification

Within fifteen calendar days of EPA's receipt of the project's final statement, Attachment 2 and Attachment 3, EPA will notify the potential CPD recipient and HUD of one or more of the following:

- the project/activity has received SSA review clearance
- the project/activity requires modifications to receive SSA review clearance
- additional environmental information is required
- additional time to review the project, is required
- the project/activity raises major environmental concerns requiring interagency consultation
- a Formal Section 1424(e) Review is required

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If EPA does not notify HUD within 15 days of receipt of the project, HUD should proceed with its project review.

HUD shall not authorize a release of funds until all outstanding issues with regard to the subject project/activity have been resolved.

C. Formal Section 1424(e) Review

Should a Formal Section 1424(e) Review be required, EPA shall formally notify the potential CPD recipient and HUD of this decision. If additional information is required, the potential CPD recipient shall be responsible for submitting the requested information to EPA in a timely manner. EPA may also schedule a public hearing to gather additional information.

Based on the information provided, EPA shall make a determination to either approve the project/activity, request more information, suggest modifications or disapprove the project/activity.

III. Housing Program Applications

A. Initial Screen/Preliminary Review

HUD shall notify all of its field offices of the SSA review requirements under Section 1424(e) and of their responsibilities as outlined in this MOU.

HUD shall conduct an initial screen of housing projects proposed for HUD Federal financial assistance. Attachment 2.B, Housing Initial Screen Criteria, shall be used for this review. EPA shall be notified of any projects which result in a positive response to one of the criteria questions in Attachment 2.B. Where a project meets one of the criteria in Attachment 2.B, the information in Attachment 3, SSA Preliminary Review Information Requirements, shall also be completed and forwarded to EPA along with the applicable project information.

Upon receipt of the above, EPA will conduct its Preliminary Review. If additional information is required, EPA will inform the HUD field office who shall then be responsible for submitting to EPA the requested information in a timely manner.

Based on the information provided, EPA will make its determination on whether to complete its review at this stage and provide SSA review clearance or proceed to a Formal Section 1424(e) Review. The project may be cleared in its existing form, or with modifications.

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B. Timeframe for Preliminary Review and Notification

Within fifteen calendar days of EPA's receipt of the pertinent environmental information from the housing application, Attachment 2 and Attachment 3, EPA will notify HUD of one or more of the following:

- the project has received SSA review clearance
- the project requires modifications to receive SSA review clearance
- additional environmental information is required
- additional time to review the project is required
- the project raises major environmental concerns requiring interagency consultation
- a Formal Section 1424(e) Detailed Review is required

The project environmental clearance needed for project approval shall not be considered complete (appropriate sign-offs) until outstanding SSA issues with regard to the subject project have been satisfactorily resolved.

If EPA does not notify HUD within 15 days of receipt of the project, HUD should proceed with its project review.

C. Formal Section 1424(e) Review

Should a Formal Section 1424(e) Review be required, EPA shall formally notify HUD of this decision. If additional information is required, HUD shall be responsible for submitting the requested information to EPA in a timely manner. A public hearing may be held to gather additional information.

Based on the information provided, EPA shall make a determination to either approve the project, request more information, suggest modifications or disapprove the project.

D. Local Area Certification For Housing Environmental Review

If the community is wholly or partially within a SSA project review area boundary, the local certified agency shall have the same responsibility as HUD in meeting the SSA review requirements as outlined in Section 1424(e) and this MOU.

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GENERAL PROCEDURAL MATTERS

Materials submitted to EPA by HUD or the applicant will be addressed to the attention of:

<p>U.S. EPA Region II 290 Broadway, 25th floor New York, NY 10007</p>	<p>Chief, Environmental Review Section USEPA Region 2 290 Broadway, 25th floor New York, NY 10007</p>
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The following representatives will serve as liaisons for HUD and EPA respectively. The liaisons will maintain communication as needed regarding projects/activities affecting the SSAs and this MOU.

HUD: Regional Office Environmental Officer
(212) 264-0793

<p>EPA: Chief, Environmental Impacts Branch 212-637-3738</p>	<p>Chief, Environmental Review Section 212-637-3738</p>
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This MOU is subject to revision upon agreement by both parties.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

A. M. Villane, Jr., DDS
Regional Administrator/
Regional Housing Commissioner

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff
Regional Administrator

Date: AUG 24 1990

Date: 8/10/90

ATTACHMENT 1

DESIGNATED SOLE SOURCE AQUIFERS IN REGION II

<u>Name</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Citation</u>	<u>Publication Date</u>
Brooklyn/Queens Aquifer System (AS)	NY	49 FR 2950	01/24/84
Buried Valley AS	NJ	45 FR 30537	05/08/80
Cattaraugus Creek AS	NY	52 FR 36100	09/25/87
Clinton Street- Ballpark AS	NY	50 FR 2025	01/14/85
Cortland-Homar- Preble AS	NY	53 FR 22045	06/13/88
Highlands AS	NJ/NY	52 FR 37213	10/05/87
Nassau/Suffolk	NY	43 FR 26611	06/21/78
New Jersey Coastal Plain AS	NJ	53 FR 23791	06/24/88
Northwest New Jersey Fifteen Basin AS	NJ	53 FR 23685	06/23/88
Ridgewood Area	NJ	49 FR 2943	01/24/84
Schenectady/Niskayuna AS	NY	50 FR 2022	01/14/85
Upper Rockaway River Basin AS	NJ	49 FR 2946	01/24/84