

8th DWINSA: Small System Needs

March 19, 2026

Objective: Ensure small-system needs are more directly assessed in the 8th DWINSA.

Proposed Approach: EPA will directly survey small systems as part of the 8th DWINSA. The same small systems that were previously surveyed under 7th DWINSA will be surveyed again via phone interview. This approach is fully responsive to public comments regarding surveying small systems, while also providing time- and cost-savings through the use of phone interviews instead of in-person site visits. Small systems will be able to review their capital improvement needs previously documented in the 7th DWINSA, provide detailed updates and add new needs, and answer the same supplemental questions as medium and large systems. This approach uses the existing survey form and data portal, which will reduce costs.

In addition, EPA will gather input from key small-water-system stakeholders to facilitate potential adjustments of small-system needs data. We plan to consult with stakeholders as well as some small-system representatives to better understand the unique needs of these small, rural systems. For more information, please see attached key stakeholder engagement plan.

Approach	Additional Resources		Earliest Year to Use for Allotments	Pros	Cons
	Time	Cost			
Phone Survey of Small Systems: Include small systems in the 8th DWINSA Survey by directly contacting the previously surveyed 606 small system via a phone call to gather quantitative data	6 months	~\$652,000	FY 2027 (potentially FY 2028)	Fully responsive to public comments Gathers updated needs information directly from small systems Utilizes already developed resources (survey form and data portal)	Phone-based discussions may not deliver the data quality of the on-site visits to small systems Uses past sample, potentially introducing some bias for the statistical sample (e.g., states with more or less representation based on response to phone calls)