

Subject: Overview of the Sewer Assessment Program (SAP) and MCES Grant Program

Good morning, All

We are all geared up to launch this year's MCES Grant program. Please review this submission guidelines which should help clarify some of the nuances between SAP and the MCES program.

Please reach out if you have any questions

A copy of this memo can be found at: Z:\sewers\Front desk research\MCES Grant Program

1. Overview of the Sewer Assessment Program (SAP)

The SAP is a year-round program designed to assist property owners with financing sewer lateral repairs through an assessment to their property taxes. Key highlights of the program include:

- **Eligibility:** Available to all residential property owners in the City of Saint Paul.
- **Submission Requirements:**
 - **Completed SAP Application Form.**
 - **Bid from City-approved contractors.**
 - **Lien Waiver-** Signed (SAP Lien Waiver) by an Officer or Controller level employee.
 - **Final Invoice** with total footage of the repair and a clear breakdown of costs.
- **Funding Process:** Property owners pay the remaining balance through tax assessments after any other eligible programs or payments are applied.

2. Overview of the MCES Grant Program

The MCES Grant Program offers financial assistance for sewer lateral repairs, like the SAP program, but with the following distinctions:

- **Grant Funding Availability:**
 - The MCES program is **not year-round** and is only available when grant money has been allocated.
 - Grant awards are provided on a **first-come, first-served basis**, and the program closes once funds are depleted.
- **Eligibility Requirements:**
 - Additional criteria, such as property location within **Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) zones** or household income qualifications, apply.
 - Work must still be performed by licensed contractors on the approved list.
- **Submission Requirements:**

- **MCES Grant Application Form** (*distinct from the SAP form*).
- **3 Bids from City-approved contractors.**
- **Lien Waiver**- Signed (MCES Lien Waiver) by an Officer or Controller level employee.
- **Final Invoice** listing both the **MCES grant amount** and the **SAP remaining balance** clearly. ***MCES work portion must list footage of repair.***

3. Key Similarities Between SAP and MCES Programs

Both programs require:

- Accurate form submissions, including application forms and contractor bids.
- Final invoices that clearly outline:
 - Total repair footage.
 - A breakdown of the total cost of work performed.

4. Key Differences Between SAP and MCES Programs

- **Program Availability:**
 - **SAP:** Available year-round.
 - **MCES:** Only open when grant funds are available. New applications are not accepted once funds are depleted.
- **Funding Structure:**
 - **SAP:** Property owners are responsible for the full cost of repairs, with an option to spread payments through tax assessments.
 - **MCES:** Covers a percentage of eligible costs (up to 90% for certain properties), with the remaining balance covered by the property owner or through the SAP.

5. Important Notes for New Staff

- **Do Not Confuse Forms:** While the submission process is similar, the **MCES grant application form** and the **SAP application form** are distinct. Ensure the correct forms are being submitted based on the program.
- **Communicate Program Details Clearly:** When working with property owners, clarify whether their project qualifies for the MCES grant program or only the SAP program.
- **Grant Funds Are Limited:** Emphasize to property owners that the MCES program is subject to grant funding availability and operates on a first-come, first-served basis.

6. Need Assistance?

For questions about either program or clarification on submission processes, please contact the Sewer Utility team at PW-SewerCounter@ci.stpaul.mn.us or call **651-266-6234**.

By ensuring we all understand and communicate the distinctions and requirements of these programs, we can continue providing efficient and accurate service to property owners.

Thank you for your attention,
City of Saint Paul Sewer Utility