AMERICAN IRON AND STEEL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Contractor acknowledges to and for the benefit of the City of _____ ("Purchaser") and the State of Ohio (the "State") that it understands the goods and services under this Agreement are being funded with monies made available by the Clean Water State Revolving Fund and/or Drinking Water State Revolving Fund that have statutory requirements commonly known as "American Iron and Steel;" that requires all of the iron and steel products used in the project to be produced in the United States ("American Iron and Steel Requirement") including iron and steel products provided by the Contactor pursuant to this Agreement. The Contractor hereby represents and warrants to and for the benefit of the Purchaser and the State that (a) the Contractor has reviewed and understands the American Iron and Steel Requirement, (b) all of the iron and steel products used in the project will be and/or have been produced in the United States in a manner that complies with the American Iron and Steel Requirement, unless a waiver of the requirement is approved, and (c) the Contractor will provide any further verified information, certification or assurance of compliance with this paragraph, or information necessary to support a waiver of the American Iron and Steel Requirement, as may be requested by the Purchaser or the State. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Agreement, any failure to comply with this paragraph by the Contractor shall permit the Purchaser or State to recover as damages against the Contractor any loss, expense, or cost (including without limitation attorney's fees) incurred by the Purchaser or State resulting from any such failure (including without limitation any impairment or loss of funding, whether in whole or in part, from the State or any damages owed to the State by the Purchaser). While the Contractor has no direct contractual privity with the State, as a lender to the Purchaser for the funding of its project, the Purchaser and the Contractor agree that the State is a third-party beneficiary and neither this paragraph (nor any other provision of this Agreement necessary to give this paragraph force or effect) shall be amended or waived without the prior written consent of the State.

_____ _____

Signature Date

_____

Name and Title of Authorized Signatory, Please Print or Type

_____

Bidder's Firm

☐ Check here if the WPCLF or WSRLA applicant will be requesting an individual waiver for non-American made iron and steel products. Please note that the waiver box does not need to be marked for nationwide waivers.

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

MAR 2 0 2014

OFFICE OF WATER

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Implementation of American Iron and Steel provisions of P.L. 113-76, Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014

FROM: Andrew D. Sawyers, Director
Office of Wastewater Management (4201M)

Peter C. Grevatt, Director
Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water (4601M)

TO: Water Management Division Directors
Regions I - X

P.L. 113-76, Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (Act), includes an "American Iron and Steel (AIS)" requirement in section 436 that requires Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund (CWSRF) and Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund (DWSRF) assistance recipients to use iron and steel products that are produced in the United States for projects for the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of a public water system or treatment works if the project is funded through an assistance agreement executed beginning January 17, 2014 (enactment of the Act), through the end of Federal Fiscal Year 2014.

Section 436 also sets forth certain circumstances under which EPA may waive the AIS requirement. Furthermore, the Act specifically exempts projects where engineering plans and specifications were approved by a State agency prior to January 17, 2014.

The approach described below explains how EPA will implement the AIS requirement. The first section is in the form of questions and answers that address the types of projects that must comply with the AIS requirement, the types of products covered by the AIS requirement, and compliance. The second section is a step-by-step process for requesting waivers and the circumstances under which waivers may be granted.

Implementation

The Act states:

Sec. 436. (a)(1) None of the funds made available by a State water pollution control revolving fund as authorized by title VI of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1381 et seq.) or made available by a drinking water treatment revolving loan fund as authorized by section 1452 of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300j–12) shall be used for a project for the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of a public water system or treatment works unless all of the iron and steel products used in the project are produced in the United States.

(2) In this section, the term ''iron and steel products'' means the following products made primarily of iron or steel: lined or unlined pipes and fittings, manhole covers and other municipal castings, hydrants, tanks, flanges, pipe clamps and restraints, valves, structural steel, reinforced precast concrete, and construction materials.

(b) Subsection (a) shall not apply in any case or category of cases in which the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (in this section referred to as the ''Administrator'') finds that—

(1) applying subsection (a) would be inconsistent with the public interest;

(2) iron and steel products are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities and of a satisfactory quality; or

(3) inclusion of iron and steel products produced in the United States will increase the cost of the overall project by more than 25 percent.

(c) If the Administrator receives a request for a waiver under this section, the Administrator shall make available to the public on an informal basis a copy of the request and information available to the Administrator concerning the request, and shall allow for informal public input on the request for at least 15 days prior to making a finding based on the request. The Administrator shall make the request and accompanying information available by electronic means, including on the official public Internet Web site of the Environmental Protection Agency.

(d) This section shall be applied in a manner consistent with United States obligations under international agreements.

(e) The Administrator may retain up to 0.25 percent of the funds appropriated in this Act for the Clean and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds for carrying out

the provisions described in subsection (a)(1) for management and oversight of the requirements of this section.

(f) This section does not apply with respect to a project if a State agency approves the engineering plans and specifications for the project, in that agency's capacity to approve such plans and specifications prior to a project requesting bids, prior to the date of the enactment of this Act.

The following questions and answers provide guidance for implementing and complying with the AIS requirements:

Project Coverage

1) What classes of projects are covered by the AIS requirement?

All treatment works projects funded by a CWSRF assistance agreement, and all public water system projects funded by a DWSRF assistance agreement, from the date of enactment through the end of Federal Fiscal Year 2014, are covered. The AIS requirements apply to the entirety of the project, no matter when construction begins or ends. Additionally, the AIS requirements apply to all parts of the project, no matter the source of funding.

2) Does the AIS requirement apply to nonpoint source projects or national estuary projects?

No. Congress did not include an AIS requirement for nonpoint source and national estuary projects unless the project can also be classified as a 'treatment works' as defined by section 212 of the Clean Water Act.

3) Are any projects for the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of a public water system or treatment works excluded from the AIS requirement?

Any project, whether a treatment works project or a public water system project, for which engineering plans and specifications were approved by the responsible state agency prior to January 17, 2014, is excluded from the AIS requirements.

4) What if the project does not have approved engineering plans and specifications but has signed an assistance agreement with a CWSRF or DWSRF program prior to January 17, 2014?

The AIS requirements do not apply to any project for which an assistance agreement was signed prior to January 17, 2014.

5) What if the project does not have approved engineering plans and specifications, but bids were advertised prior to January 17, 2014 and an assistance agreement was signed after January 17, 2014?

If the project does not require approved engineering plans and specifications, the bid advertisement date will count in lieu of the approval date for purposes of the exemption in section 436(f).

6) What if the assistance agreement that was signed prior to January 17, 2014, only funded a part of the overall project, where the remainder of the project will be funded later with another SRF loan?

If the original assistance agreement funded any construction of the project, the date of the original assistance agreement counts for purposes of the exemption. If the original assistance agreement was only for planning and design, the date of that assistance agreement will count for purposes of the exemption only if there is a written commitment or expectation on the part of the assistance recipient to fund the remainder of the project with SRF funds.

7) What if the assistance agreement that was signed prior to January 17, 2014, funded the first phase of a multi-phase project, where the remaining phases will be funded by SRF assistance in the future?

In such a case, the phases of the project will be considered a single project if all construction necessary to complete the building or work, regardless of the number of contracts or assistance agreements involved, are closely related in purpose, time and place. However, there are many situations in which major construction activities are clearly undertaken in phases that are distinct in purpose, time, or place. In the case of distinct phases, projects with engineering plans and specifications approval or assistance agreements signed prior to January 17, 2014 would be excluded from AIS requirements while those approved/signed on January 17, 2014, or later would be covered by the AIS requirements.

8) What if a project has split funding from a non-SRF source?

Many States intend to fund projects with "split" funding, from the SRF program and from State or other programs. Based on the Act language in section 436, which requires that American iron and steel products be used in any project for the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of a public water system or treatment works receiving SRF funding between and including January 17, 2014 and September 30, 2014, any project that is funded in whole or in part with such funds must comply with the AIS requirement. A "project" consists of all construction necessary to complete the building or work regardless of the number of contracts or assistance agreements involved so long as all contracts and assistance agreements awarded are closely related in purpose, time and place. This precludes the intentional splitting of SRF projects into separate and smaller contracts or assistance agreements to avoid AIS coverage on some portion of a larger project, particularly where the activities are integrally and proximately related to the whole. However, there are many situations in which major construction activities are clearly undertaken in separate phases that are distinct in purpose, time, or place, in which

case, separate contracts or assistance agreement for SRF and State or other funding would carry separate requirements.

9) What about refinancing?

If a project began construction, financed from a non-SRF source, prior to January 17, 2014, but is refinanced through an SRF assistance agreement executed on or after January 17, 2014 and prior to October 1, 2014, AIS requirements will apply to all construction that occurs on or after January 17, 2014, through completion of construction, unless, as is likely, engineering plans and specifications were approved by a responsible state agency prior to January 17, 2014. There is no retroactive application of the AIS requirements where a refinancing occurs for a project that has completed construction prior to January 17, 2014.

10) Do the AIS requirements apply to any other EPA programs, besides the SRF program, such as the Tribal Set-aside grants or grants to the Territories and DC?

No, the AIS requirement only applies to funds made available by a State water pollution control revolving fund as authorized by title VI of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1381 et seq.) or made available by a drinking water treatment revolving loan fund as authorized by section 1452 of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300j–12)

Covered Iron and Steel Products

11) What is an iron or steel product?

For purposes of the CWSRF and DWSRF projects that must comply with the AIS requirement, an iron or steel product is one of the following made primarily of iron or steel that is permanently incorporated into the public water system or treatment works:

Lined or unlined pipes or fittings;
Manhole Covers;
Municipal Castings (defined in more detail below);
Hydrants;
Tanks;
Flanges;
Pipe clamps and restraints;
Valves;
Structural steel (defined in more detail below);
Reinforced precast concrete; and
Construction materials (defined in more detail below).

12) What does the term 'primarily iron or steel' mean?

'Primarily iron or steel' places constraints on the list of products above. For one of the listed products to be considered subject to the AIS requirements, it must be made of greater than 50% iron or steel, measured by cost. The cost should be based on the material costs.

13) Can you provide an example of how to perform a cost determination?

For example, the iron portion of a fire hydrant would likely be the bonnet, body and shoe, and the cost then would include the pouring and casting to create those components. The other material costs would include non-iron and steel internal workings of the fire hydrant (i.e., stem, coupling, valve, seals, etc). However, the assembly of the internal workings into the hydrant body would not be included in this cost calculation. If one of the listed products is not made primarily of iron or steel, United States (US) provenance is not required. An exception to this definition is reinforced precast concrete, which is addressed in a later question.

14) If a product is composed of more than 50% iron or steel, but is not listed in the above list of items, must the item be produced in the US? Alternatively, must the iron or steel in such a product be produced in the US?

The answer to both question is no. Only items on the above list must be produced in the US. Additionally, the iron or steel in a non-listed item can be sourced from outside the US.

15) What is the definition of steel?

Steel means an alloy that includes at least 50 percent iron, between .02 and 2 percent carbon, and may include other elements. Metallic elements such as chromium, nickel, molybdenum, manganese, and silicon may be added during the melting of steel for the purpose of enhancing properties such as corrosion resistance, hardness, or strength. The definition of steel covers carbon steel, alloy steel, stainless steel, tool steel and other specialty steels.

16) What does 'produced in the United States' mean?

Production in the United States of the iron or steel products used in the project requires that all manufacturing processes, including application of coatings, must take place in the United States, with the exception of metallurgical processes involving refinement of steel additives. All manufacturing processes includes processes such as melting, refining, forming, rolling, drawing, finishing, fabricating and coating. Further, if a domestic iron and steel product is taken out of the US for any part of the manufacturing process, it becomes foreign source material. However, raw materials such as iron ore, limestone and iron and steel scrap are not covered by the AIS requirement, and the material(s), if any, being applied as a coating are similarly not covered. Non-iron or steel components of an iron and steel product may come from non-US sources. For example, for products such as valves and hydrants, the individual non-iron and steel components

do not have to be of domestic origin.

17) Are the raw materials used in the production of iron or steel required to come from US sources?

No. Raw materials, such as iron ore, limestone, scrap iron, and scrap steel, can come from non-US sources.

18) If an above listed item is primarily made of iron or steel, but is only at the construction site temporarily, must such an item be produced in the US?

No. Only the above listed products made primarily of iron or steel, permanently incorporated into the project must be produced in the US. For example trench boxes, scaffolding or equipment, which are removed from the project site upon completion of the project, are not required to be made of U.S. Iron or Steel.

19) What is the definition of 'municipal castings'?

Municipal castings are cast iron or steel infrastructure products that are melted and cast. They typically provide access, protection, or housing for components incorporated into utility owned drinking water, storm water, wastewater, and surface infrastructure. They are typically made of grey or ductile iron, or steel. Examples of municipal castings are:

Access Hatches;
Ballast Screen;
Benches (Iron or Steel);
Bollards;
Cast Bases;
Cast Iron Hinged Hatches, Square and Rectangular;
Cast Iron Riser Rings;
Catch Basin Inlet;
Cleanout/Monument Boxes;
Construction Covers and Frames;
Curb and Corner Guards;
Curb Openings;
Detectable Warning Plates;
Downspout Shoes (Boot, Inlet);
Drainage Grates, Frames and Curb Inlets;
Inlets;
Junction Boxes;
Lampposts;
Manhole Covers, Rings and Frames, Risers;

Meter Boxes;
Service Boxes;
Steel Hinged Hatches, Square and Rectangular;
Steel Riser Rings;
Trash receptacles;
Tree Grates;
Tree Guards;
Trench Grates; and
Valve Boxes, Covers and Risers.

20) What is 'structural steel'?

Structural steel is rolled flanged shapes, having at least one dimension of their cross-section three inches or greater, which are used in the construction of bridges, buildings, ships, railroad rolling stock, and for numerous other constructional purposes. Such shapes are designated as wide-flange shapes, standard I-beams, channels, angles, tees and zees. Other shapes include H-piles, sheet piling, tie plates, cross ties, and those for other special purposes.

21) What is a 'construction material' for purposes of the AIS requirement?

Construction materials are those articles, materials, or supplies made primarily of iron and steel, that are permanently incorporated into the project, not including mechanical and/or electrical components, equipment and systems. Some of these products may overlap with what is also considered "structural steel". This includes, but is not limited to, the following products: wire rod, bar, angles, concrete reinforcing bar, wire, wire cloth, wire rope and cables, tubing, framing, joists, trusses, fasteners (i.e., nuts and bolts), welding rods, decking, grating, railings, stairs, access ramps, fire escapes, ladders, wall panels, dome structures, roofing, ductwork, surface drains, cable hanging systems, manhole steps, fencing and fence tubing, guardrails, doors, and stationary screens.

22) What is not considered a 'construction material' for purposes of the AIS requirement?

Mechanical and electrical components, equipment and systems are not considered construction materials. Mechanical equipment is typically that which has motorized parts and/or is powered by a motor. Electrical equipment is typically any machine powered by electricity and includes components that are part of the electrical distribution system.

The following examples (including their appurtenances necessary for their intended use and operation) are NOT considered construction materials: pumps, motors, gear reducers, drives (including variable frequency drives (VFDs)), electric/pneumatic/manual accessories used to operate valves (such as electric valve actuators), mixers, gates, motorized screens (such as traveling screens), blowers/aeration equipment, compressors, meters, sensors, controls and switches, supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA), membrane bioreactor systems, membrane filtration systems, filters, clarifiers and clarifier mechanisms, rakes, grinders, disinfection systems, presses (including belt presses), conveyors, cranes, HVAC (excluding ductwork), water heaters,

heat exchangers, generators, cabinetry and housings (such as electrical boxes/enclosures), lighting fixtures, electrical conduit, emergency life systems, metal office furniture, shelving, laboratory equipment, analytical instrumentation, and dewatering equipment.

23) If the iron or steel is produced in the US, may other steps in the manufacturing process take place outside of the US, such as assembly?

No. Production in the US of the iron or steel used in a listed product requires that all manufacturing processes must take place in the United States, except metallurgical processes involving refinement of steel additives.

24) What processes must occur in the US to be compliant with the AIS requirement for reinforced precast concrete?

While reinforced precast concrete may not be at least 50% iron or steel, in this particular case, the reinforcing bar and wire must be produced in the US and meet the same standards as for any other iron or steel product. Additionally, the casting of the concrete product must take place in the US. The cement and other raw materials used in concrete production are not required to be of domestic origin.

If the reinforced concrete is cast at the construction site, the reinforcing bar and wire are considered to be a construction material and must be produced in the US.

Compliance

25) How should an assistance recipient document compliance with the AIS requirement?

In order to ensure compliance with the AIS requirement, specific AIS contract language must be included in each contract, starting with the assistance agreement, all the way down to the purchase agreements. Sample language for assistance agreements and contracts can be found in Appendix 3 and 4.

EPA recommends the use of a step certification process, similar to one used by the Federal Highway Administration. The step certification process is a method to ensure that producers adhere to the AIS requirement and assistance recipients can verify that products comply with the AIS requirement. The process also establishes accountability and better enables States to take enforcement actions against violators.

Step certification creates a paper trail which documents the location of the manufacturing process involved with the production of steel and iron materials. A step certification is a process under which each handler (supplier, fabricator, manufacturer,

processor, etc) of the iron and steel products certifies that their step in the process was domestically performed. Each time a step in the manufacturing process takes place, the manufacturer delivers its work along with a certification of its origin. A certification can be quite simple. Typically, it includes the name of the manufacturer, the location of the manufacturing facility where the product or process took place (not its headquarters), a description of the product or item being delivered, and a signature by a manufacturer's responsible party. Attached, as Appendix 5, are sample certifications. These certifications should be collected and maintained by assistance recipients.

Alternatively, the final manufacturer that delivers the iron or steel product to the worksite, vendor, or contractor, may provide a certification asserting that all manufacturing processes occurred in the US. While this type of certification may be acceptable, it may not provide the same degree of assurance. Additional documentation may be needed if the certification is lacking important information. Step certification is the best practice.

26) How should a State ensure assistance recipients are complying with the AIS requirement?

In order to ensure compliance with the AIS requirement, States SRF programs must include specific AIS contract language in the assistance agreement. Sample language for assistance agreements can be found in Appendix 3.

States should also, as a best practice, conduct site visits of projects during construction and review documentation demonstrating proof of compliance which the assistance recipient has gathered.

27) What happens if a State or EPA finds a non-compliant iron and/or steel product permanently incorporated in the project?

If a potentially non-compliant product is identified, the State should notify the assistance recipient of the apparent unauthorized use of the non-domestic component, including a proposed corrective action, and should be given the opportunity to reply. If unauthorized use is confirmed, the State can take one or more of the following actions: request a waiver where appropriate; require the removal of the non-domestic item; or withhold payment for all or part of the project. Only EPA can issue waivers to authorize the use of a non-domestic item. EPA may use remedies available to it under the Clean Water Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, and 40 CFR part 31 grant regulations, in the event of a violation of a grant term and condition.

It is recommended that the State work collaboratively with EPA to determine the appropriate corrective action, especially in cases where the State is the one who identifies the item in noncompliance or there is a disagreement with the assistance recipient.

If fraud, waste, abuse, or any violation of the law is suspected, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) should be contacted immediately. The OIG can be reached at 1-888-546-8740 or OIG_Hotline@epa.gov. More information can be found at this website: http://www.epa.gov/oig/hotline.htm.

28) How do international trade agreements affect the implementation of the AIS requirements?

The AIS provision applies in a manner consistent with United States obligations under international agreements. Typically, these obligations only apply to direct procurement by the entities that are signatories to such agreements. In general, SRF assistance recipients are not signatories to such agreements, so these agreements have no impact on this AIS provision. In the few instances where such an agreement applies to a municipality, that municipality is under the obligation to determine its applicability and requirements and document the actions taken to comply for the State.

Waiver Process

The statute permits EPA to issue waivers for a case or category of cases where EPA finds (1) that applying these requirements would be inconsistent with the public interest; (2) iron and steel products are not produced in the US in sufficient and reasonably available quantities and of a satisfactory quality; or (3) inclusion of iron and steel products produced in the US will increase the cost of the overall project by more than 25 percent.

In order to implement the AIS requirements, EPA has developed an approach to allow for effective and efficient implementation of the waiver process to allow projects to proceed in a timely manner. The framework described below will allow States, on behalf of the assistance recipients, to apply for waivers of the AIS requirement directly to EPA Headquarters. Only waiver requests received from states will be considered. Pursuant to the Act, EPA has the responsibility to make findings as to the issuance of waivers to the AIS requirements.

Definitions

The following terms are critical to the interpretation and implementation of the AIS requirements and apply to the process described in this memorandum:

Reasonably Available Quantity: The quantity of iron or steel products is available or will be available at the time needed and place needed, and in the proper form or specification as specified in the project plans and design.

Satisfactory Quality: The quality of iron or steel products, as specified in the project plans and designs.

Assistance Recipient: A borrower or grantee that receives funding from a State CWSRF or DWSRF program.

Step-By-Step Waiver Process

Application by Assistance Recipient

Each local entity that receives SRF water infrastructure financial assistance is required by section 436 of the Act to use American made iron and steel products in the construction of its project. However, the recipient may request a waiver. Until a waiver is granted by EPA, the AIS requirement stands, except as noted above with respect to municipalities covered by international agreements.

The waiver process begins with the SRF assistance recipient. In order to fulfill the AIS requirement, the assistance recipient must in good faith design the project (where applicable) and solicit bids for construction with American made iron and steel products. It is essential that the assistance recipient include the AIS terms in any request for proposals or solicitations for bids, and in all contracts (see Appendix 3 for sample construction contract language). The assistance recipient may receive a waiver at any point before, during, or after the bid process, if one or more of three conditions is met:

1. Applying the American Iron and Steel requirements of the Act would be inconsistent with the public interest;
2. Iron and steel products are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities and of a satisfactory quality; or
3. Inclusion of iron and steel products produced in the United States will increase the cost of the overall project by more than 25 percent.

Proper and sufficient documentation must be provided by the assistance recipient. A checklist detailing the types of information required for a waiver to be processed is attached as Appendix 1.

Additionally, it is strongly encouraged that assistance recipients hold pre-bid conferences with potential bidders. A pre-bid conference can help to identify iron and steel products needed to complete the project as described in the plans and specifications that may not be available from domestic sources. It may also identify the need to seek a waiver prior to bid, and can help inform the recipient on compliance options.

In order to apply for a project waiver, the assistance recipient should email the request in the form of a Word document (.doc) to the State SRF program. It is strongly recommended that the State designate a single person for all AIS communications. The State SRF designee will review the application for the waiver and determine whether the necessary information has been included. Once the waiver application is complete, the State designee will forward the application to the EPA for review.

Evaluation by EPA

After receiving an application for waiver of the AIS requirements, EPA Headquarters will publish the request on its website for 15 days and receive informal comment. EPA Headquarters will then use the checklist in Appendix 2 to determine whether the application properly and adequately documents and justifies the statutory basis cited for the waiver – that it is quantitatively and qualitatively sufficient – and to

determine whether or not to grant the waiver.

In the event that EPA finds that adequate documentation and justification has been submitted, the Administrator may grant a waiver to the assistance recipient. EPA will notify the State designee that a waiver request has been approved or denied as soon as such a decision has been made. Granting such a waiver is a three-step process:

1. Posting – After receiving an application for a waiver, EPA is required to publish the application and all material submitted with the application on EPA's website for 15 days. During that period, the public will have the opportunity to review the request and provide informal comment to EPA. The website can be found at: http://water.epa.gov/grants_funding/aisrequirement.cfm

2. Evaluation – After receiving an application for waiver of the AIS requirements, EPA Headquarters will use the checklist in Appendix 2 to determine whether the application properly and adequately documents and justifies the statutory basis cited for the waiver – that it is quantitatively and qualitatively sufficient – and to determine whether or not to grant the waiver.

3. Signature of waiver approval by the Administrator or another agency official with delegated authority – As soon as the waiver is signed and dated, EPA will notify the State SRF program, and post the signed waiver on our website. The assistance recipient should keep a copy of the signed waiver in its project files.

Public Interest Waivers

EPA has the authority to issue public interest waivers. Evaluation of a public interest waiver request may be more complicated than that of other waiver requests so they may take more time than other waiver requests for a decision to be made. An example of a public interest waiver that might be issued could be for a community that has standardized on a particular type or manufacturer of a valve because of its performance to meet their specifications. Switching to an alternative valve may require staff to be trained on the new equipment and additional spare parts would need to be purchased and stocked, existing valves may need to be unnecessarily replaced, and portions of the system may need to be redesigned. Therefore, requiring the community to install an alternative valve would be inconsistent with public interest.

EPA also has the authority to issue a public interest waiver that covers categories of products that might apply to all projects.

EPA reserves the right to issue national waivers that may apply to particular classes of assistance recipients, particular classes of projects, or particular categories of iron or steel products. EPA may develop national or (US geographic) regional categorical waivers through the identification of similar circumstances in the detailed
justifications presented to EPA in a waiver request or requests. EPA may issue a national waiver based on policy decisions regarding the public's interest or a determination that a particular item is not produced domestically in reasonably available quantities or of a sufficient quality. In such cases, EPA may determine it is necessary to issue a national waiver.

If you have any questions concerning the contents of this memorandum, you may contact us, or have your staff contact Jordan Dorfman, Attorney-Advisor, State Revolving Fund Branch, Municipal Support Division, at dorfman.jordan@epa.gov or
(202) 564-0614 or Kiri Anderer, Environmental Engineer, Infrastructure Branch, Drinking Water Protection Division, at anderer.kirsten@epa.gov or (202) 564-3134.

Attachments

Appendix 1: Information Checklist for Waiver Request

The purpose of this checklist is to help ensure that all appropriate and necessary information is submitted to EPA. EPA recommends that States review this checklist carefully and provide all appropriate information to EPA. This checklist is for informational purposes only and does not need to be included as part of a waiver application.

Items	✓	Notes
General • Waiver request includes the following information: — Description of the foreign and domestic construction materials — Unit of measure — Quantity — Price — Time of delivery or availability — Location of the construction project — Name and address of the proposed supplier — A detailed justification for the use of foreign construction materials • Waiver request was submitted according to the instructions in the memorandum • Assistance recipient made a good faith effort to solicit bids for domestic iron and steel products, as demonstrated by language in requests for proposals, contracts, and communications with the prime contractor		
Cost Waiver Requests • Waiver request includes the following information: — Comparison of overall cost of project with domestic iron and steel products to overall cost of project with foreign iron and steel products — Relevant excerpts from the bid documents used by the contractors to complete the comparison — Supporting documentation indicating that the contractor made a reasonable survey of the market, such as a description of the process for identifying suppliers and a list of contacted suppliers		
Availability Waiver Requests • Waiver request includes the following supporting documentation necessary to demonstrate the availability, quantity, and/or quality of the materials for which the waiver is requested: — Supplier information or pricing information from a reasonable number of domestic suppliers indicating availability/delivery date for construction materials — Documentation of the assistance recipient's efforts to find available domestic sources, such as a description of the process for identifying suppliers and a list of contacted suppliers. — Project schedule — Relevant excerpts from project plans, specifications, and permits indicating the required quantity and quality of construction materials • Waiver request includes a statement from the prime contractor and/or supplier confirming the non-availability of the domestic construction materials for which the waiver is sought • Has the State received other waiver requests for the materials described in this waiver request, for comparable projects?		

Appendix 2: HQ Review Checklist for Waiver Request

Instructions: To be completed by EPA. Review all waiver requests using the questions in the checklist, and mark the appropriate box as Yes, No or N/A. Marks that fall inside the shaded boxes may be grounds for denying the waiver. If none of your review markings fall into a shaded box, the waiver is eligible for approval if it indicates that one or more of the following conditions applies to the domestic product for which the waiver is sought:

1. The iron and/or steel products are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities and of a satisfactory quality.
2. The inclusion of iron and/or steel products produced in the United States will increase the cost of the overall project by more than 25 percent.

Review Items	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
Cost Waiver Requests • Does the waiver request include the following information? — Comparison of overall cost of project with domestic iron and steel products to overall cost of project with foreign iron and steel products — Relevant excerpts from the bid documents used by the contractors to complete the comparison — A sufficient number of bid documents or pricing information from domestic sources to constitute a reasonable survey of the market • Does the Total Domestic Project exceed the Total Foreign Project Cost by more than 25%?				
Availability Waiver Requests • Does the waiver request include supporting documentation sufficient to show the availability, quantity, and/or quality of the iron and/or steel product for which the waiver is requested? — Supplier information or other documentation indicating availability/delivery date for materials — Project schedule — Relevant excerpts from project plans, specifications, and permits indicating the required quantity and quality of materials • Does supporting documentation provide sufficient evidence that the contractors made a reasonable effort to locate domestic suppliers of materials, such as a description of the process for identifying suppliers and a list of contacted suppliers? • Based on the materials delivery/availability date indicated in the supporting documentation, will the materials be unavailable when they are needed according to the project schedule? (By item, list schedule date and domestic delivery quote date or other relevant information) • Is EPA aware of any other evidence indicating the non-availability of the materials for which the waiver is requested? Examples include: — Multiple waiver requests for the materials described in this waiver request, for comparable projects in the same State — Multiple waiver requests for the materials described in this waiver request, for comparable projects in other States — Correspondence with construction trade associations indicating the non-availability of the materials • Are the available domestic materials indicated in the bid documents of inadequate quality compared those required by the project plans, specifications, and/or permits?				

Appendix 5: Sample Certifications

The following information is provided as a sample letter of **step** certification for AIS compliance. Documentation must be provided on company letterhead.

Date

Company Name

Company Address

City, State Zip

Subject: American Iron and Steel Step Certification for Project (XXXXXXXXXX)

I, (company representative), certify that the (melting, bending, coating, galvanizing, cutting, etc.) process for (manufacturing or fabricating) the following products and/or materials shipped or provided for the subject project is in full compliance with the American Iron and Steel requirement as mandated in EPA's State Revolving Fund Programs.

Item, Products and/or Materials:

1. Xxxx
2. Xxxx
3. Xxxx

Such process took place at the following location:

_____

If any of the above compliance statements change while providing material to this project we will immediately notify the prime contractor and the engineer.

Signed by company representative

The following information is provided as a sample letter of certification for AIS compliance. Documentation must be provided on company letterhead.

Date

Company Name

Company Address

City, State Zip

Subject: American Iron and Steel Certification for Project (XXXXXXXXXX)

I, (company representative), certify that the following products and/or materials shipped/provided to the subject project are in full compliance with the American Iron and Steel requirement as mandated in EPA's State Revolving Fund Programs.

Item, Products and/or Materials:

1. Xxxx
2. Xxxx
3. Xxxx

Such process took place at the following location:

_____

If any of the above compliance statements change while providing material to this project we will immediately notify the prime contractor and the engineer.

Signed by company representative

American Iron & Steel (AIS) Requirement of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014
(Public Law 113-76)

Q&A Part 2

PRODUCT QUESTIONS

1. **Q: Do all fasteners qualify for de minimis exemption?**

   A: No. There is no broad exemption for fasteners from the American Iron and Steel (AIS) requirements. Significant fasteners used in SRF projects are not subject to the de minimis waiver for projects and must comply with the AIS requirements. Significant fasteners include fasteners produced to industry standards (e.g., ASTM standards) and/or project specifications, special ordered or those of high value. When bulk purchase of unknown-origin fasteners that are of incidental use and small value are used on a project, they may fall under the national de minimis waiver for projects. The list of potential items could be varied, such as big-box/hardware-store-variety screws, nails, and staples. The key characteristics of the items that may qualify for the de minimis waiver would be items that are incidental to the project purpose (such as drywall screws) and not significant in value or purpose (such as common nails or brads).

   EPA also clarifies that minor components of two listed products – valves and hydrants -- may not need to meet the AIS requirements if the minor components compromise a very small quantity of minor, low-cost fasteners that are of unknown origin.

2. **Q: Does PCCP pipe have to be domestically produced?**

   A: Yes. Pre-stressed concrete cylinder pipe (PCCP) or other similar concrete cylinder pipes would be comparable to pre-cast concrete which is specifically listed in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014 as a product subject to the AIS requirement.

3. **Q: If the iron or steel is made from recycled metals will the vendor/supplier have to provide a certification document certifying that the recycled metals are domestically produced?**

   A: No. Recycled source materials used in the production of iron and steel products do not have to come from the U.S. Iron or steel scrap, for instance, are considered raw materials that may come from anywhere. While certification is not required for the raw material, EPA does recommend that additional final processing of iron and steel be certified to have occurred in the U.S.

4. **Q: Do tanks used for filtration systems, if delivered to the construction site separately and then filled with filtration media onsite, have to be domestically produced?**

A: No. Tanks that are specifically designed to be filters, or as parts of a filtration system, do not have to be domestically produced because these parts are no longer simply tanks, even if the filter media has not been installed and will be installed at the project site, as is customary to do for shipping purposes. These parts have only one purpose which is to be housing for filters and cannot be used in another fashion.

5. **Q: Can a recipient use non-domestic flanged pipe?**

   A: No. While the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014 does not specifically mention flanged pipe, since it does mention both pipe and flanges, both products would need to be domestically produced. Therefore, flanged pipe would also need to be domestically produced.

6. **Q: Can a recipient use non-domestic couplings, expansion joints, and other similar pipe connectors?**

   A: No. These products would be considered specialty fittings, due to their additional functionality, but still categorized under the larger "fitting" categorization. Fittings are defined as a material that joins pipes together or connects to a pipe (AWWA, The Drinking Water Dictionary, 2000). Therefore, these products must comply with the AIS requirements and be produced domestically.

7. **Q: Can a recipient use non-domestic service saddles and tapping sleeves?**

   A: No. These products are necessary for pipe repair, to tap a water main, or to install a service or house connection. Therefore, they are included under the larger "pipe restraint" category which is a specifically identified product subject to the domestic preference in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014.

8. **Q: The AIS guidance does not appear to cover reused items (i.e., existing pipe fittings, used storage tanks, reusing existing valves). How should reused items be addressed?**

   A: The AIS guidance does not address reuse of items. Reuse of items that would otherwise be covered by AIS is acceptable provided that the item(s) was originally purchased prior to January 17, 2014, the reused item(s) is not substantially altered from original form/function, and any restoration work that may be required does not include the replacement or addition of foreign iron or steel replacement parts. EPA recommends keeping a log of these reused items by including them on the assistance recipient's de minimis list, and stating therein that these items are reused products. The donation of new items (such as a manufacturer waiving cost for certain delivered items because of concerns regarding the origin of a new product) is not, however, considered reuse.

9. **Q: What does "time needed" mean in the AIS guidance, in reference to the definition of "Reasonably Available Quantity"?**

A: For considering whether a product would meet reasonably available quantity, "time needed" is based on the construction schedule. If the item is delayed and there is substantial impact on the overall construction schedule, this would not be according to the "time needed."

10. **Q: If a product is not specifically included on the list of AIS covered products, must it comply with AIS?**

    A: Possibly. The AIS requirements include a list of specifically covered products, one of which is construction materials, a broad category of potential products. For construction materials, EPA's AIS guidance includes a set of example items that it considers construction materials composed primarily of iron and steel and covered by the Act. This example list in the guidance is not an all-inclusive list of potential construction materials. However, the guidance also includes a list of items that EPA specifically does not consider construction materials, generally those of electrical or complex-mechanical nature. If a product is similar to the ones in the non-construction material list (and it is also not specifically listed by the Act), it is not a construction material. For all other items specifically included in the Act, coverage is generally self-evident.

11. **Q: If a listed iron and steel product is used as a part for an assembled product that is non-domestic, do the AIS requirements apply?**

    A: AIS requirements only apply to the final product as delivered to the work site and incorporated into the project. Other assemblies, such as a pumping assembly or a reverse osmosis package plant, are distinct products not listed and do not need to be made in the U.S. or composed of all U.S. parts. Therefore, for the case of a non-covered product used in a larger non-domestic assembly, the components, even if specifically listed in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, do not have to be domestically produced.

12. **Q: Is cast iron excluded from the AIS requirements?**

    A: No. Cast iron products that fall under the definition of iron and steel products must comply with the AIS requirements.

13. **Q: The guidance states that "construction materials" do not include mechanical equipment, but then identifies ductwork as a construction material. Please clarify.**

    A: Ductwork is not mechanical equipment, therefore it is considered a "construction material" and must comply with the AIS requirements.

14. **Q: Do "meters" mentioned in EPA's guidance as non-construction materials include both flow meters and water meters?**

    A: Yes. "Meters" includes any type of meter, including: flow meters, wholesale meters, and water meters/service connections.

15. **Q: Must coiled steel be domestic?**

    A: Yes. Coiled steel is an intermediate product used in the production of steel pipe and must come from a U.S. source or subject to a waiver in order to comply with the AIS requirements.

16. **Q: Are pig iron, direct reduced iron (DRI), and ingot considered raw materials?**

    A: No. These are considered intermediate products used in the production of iron or steel and must come from a U.S. source or subject to a waiver in order to comply with the AIS requirements.

17. **Q: Can assistance recipients rely on a marking that reads, "Made in the USA," as evidence that all processes took place in the U.S.?**

    A: No. This designation is not consistent with our requirements that all manufacturing processes of iron and steel products must take place in the U.S.

18. **Q: When determining what constitutes a product made "primarily" of iron or steel, who makes this determination?**

    A: The manufacturer will show if its product qualifies as primarily made of iron or steel. The recipient should expect the manufacturer to provide documentation/ certification that its product is AIS compliant.

19. **Q: Do aerators need to be produced domestically in order to comply with AIS?**

    A: No. Aerators, similar to pumps, are mechanical equipment that do not need to meet the AIS requirements. "Blowers/aeration equipment, compressors" are listed in EPA's guidance as non-construction materials.

20. **Q: Are Sluice and Slide Gates considered valves?**

    A: No. Valves are products that are generally encased / enclosed with a body, bonnet, and stem. Examples include enclosed butterfly, ball, globe, piston, check, wedge, and gate valves. Furthermore, "gates" (meaning sluice, slide or weir gates) are listed in EPA's guidance as non-construction materials.

AIS PROCESS QUESTIONS

21. **Q: Will notices of waiver applications be published in the federal register?**

    A: No. Applications for waivers will be published on EPA's website (http://water.epa.gov/grants_funding/aisrequirement.cfm**).** EPA will provide 15 days for open public comment, as noted on the website.

22. **Q: Will states be collecting the step certification paper trail, as presented in the AIS guidance?**

    A. No. Assistance recipients must maintain documentation of compliance with AIS. EPA recommends use of the step certification process. This process is a best practice and traces all manufacturing of iron and steel products to the U.S. If the process is used, the state does not have to collect the documentation. The documents must be kept by the assistance recipient and reviewed by the state during project reviews.

23. **Q: Why is it considered a best practice for states to conduct site visits, when it is the assistance recipient's responsibility to meet the AIS requirements?**

    A: It is both the assistance recipient's and the state's responsibility to ensure compliance with the AIS requirements. The state is the recipient of a federal grant and must comply with all grant conditions, including a condition requiring that the AIS requirements be adhered to. Therefore, it is recommended that states conduct site visits of projects during construction and review documentation demonstrating the assistance recipient's proof of compliance.

24. **Q: Please further define the state's role in the waiver process.**

    A: The state's role in the waiver process is to review any waiver requests submitted to the state in order to ensure that all necessary information has been provided by the assistance recipient prior to forwarding the request to EPA. If a state finds the request lacking, the state should work with the assistance recipient to help obtain complete information.

25. **Q: How much time does EPA have to evaluate the waiver during the evaluation step?**

    A: At a minimum, EPA is required to provide 15 days for open public comment. There is no specific deadline or time limit for EPA to review waiver requests. Each waiver request will come with its own specific details and circumstances and may require a different amount of time for review and analysis. For example, public interest waivers in general may take longer to review than availability waivers which are typically more straightforward. However, EPA understands that construction may be delayed while waiting for a waiver and will make every effort to review and issue decisions on waiver requests in a timely manner.

PROJECT QUESTIONS

26. **Q: What if a project is funded by another funding entity (i.e., United States Department of Agriculture – Rural Development) where AIS is not required and begins construction after January 17, 2014 but then applies to the SRF to refinance the project? Are they ineligible?**

A: The project is not ineligible. AIS requirements will apply to any construction that occurs after the assistance agreement is signed, through the end of construction. If construction is complete, there is no retroactive application of the AIS requirements.

27. **Q: If the assistance recipient can demonstrate through market research that the AIS requirement will exceed the 25 percent cost threshold, is the entire project exempt from the AIS requirement?**

    A: If the waiver application shows that the inclusion of American iron and steel products causes the entire cost of the project to increase by more the 25 percent, a waiver may be granted for the entirety of the project.

28. **Q: Can the recipient use non-SRF funds to pay for the non-compliant item.**

    A: No. It is not an acceptable to use non-SRF funds to pay for a non-compliant item. The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014 requires that all iron and steel products, no matter the source of funding, must be made in the U.S. if SRF funds are used in the project.

29. **Q: What constitutes "satisfactory quality" as defined in the AIS guidance, in reference to the availability waiver process.**

    A: "Satisfactory quality" means the product meets the project design specifications. A waiver may be granted if a recipient determines that the project plans and design would be compromised because there are no American made products available that meet the project design specifications.

30. **Q: The guidance states that the AIS requirement applies to any project "funded in whole or in part" by an SRF. Where is this in the Act?**

    A: The Act states that, "None of the funds made available by a … [State SRF program] … shall be used for a project for the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of a public water system or treatment works unless all of the iron and steel products used in the project are produced in the United States." This sentence clearly states that no SRF program may use its funds for a project unless all of the iron and steel products used in the project are made in the U.S. This is true even if only $1 of SRF funding is used in the project.

31. **Q: There is always an expectation on the part of an assistance recipient that the construction phase of a planning and/or design only loan will be funded through the SRF. If the original planning and/or design only loan was executed prior to a January 17, 2014, does this mean the entire project will be exempt from the AIS requirement?**

    A: If the original loan includes construction, and was executed prior to January 17, 2014, then the AIS provision does not apply to the project. If the original loan was only for planning and/or design, then a written commitment or documented "expectation" is needed to show exemption from the

requirements. Appearance on a priority list in an Intended Use Plan along with written reasonable assurance from the state that the recipient will receive SRF funding for project construction could provide sufficient evidence of "expectation of funding".

32. **Q: What if there has been a change order or redesign requiring new plans and specifications to be approved and they were approved after January 17, 2014: does the project now have to comply with AIS?**

    A: In most cases, no. Change orders are typically small enough changes that the original plan and specification date will still hold true. For example, if a pipe alignment has to be changed for a block or two due to unforeseen conditions, but new plans and specifications had to be submitted for this section of the project, then that could be considered a minor change. However, if there has been a major redesign, perhaps the whole project had to be redesigned starting from scratch, then the new plans and specification approval date would apply.

33. **Q: What if the bids on a project with plans and specifications approved before January 17, 2014 but the loan is signed after January 17, 2014 come in low, and there is significant funding remaining in the loan agreement, so the community designs a second project with the remaining funds: does that project have to comply with the AIS requirements?**

    A: If the second project is closely related in purpose, place and time to the first project, then the second project would be exempt from the AIS requirements. It is the assistance recipient's responsibility (with state oversight) to show that a project is closely related, or not, in purpose, place and time.

34. **Q: What if the assistance agreement was signed after January 17, 2014, state approval of plans for the first phase of the project was in place prior to January 17, 2014, but state approval of the plans for the second phase of the project was received after January 17, 2014?**

    A: In such a case, the AIS provision would not apply to the first phase of the project. If the second phase of the project is considered the same project as the first phase, due to its close relation in purpose, place and time, the entire project may be exempt. It is the assistance recipient's responsibility (with state oversight) to show that phases of a project is closely related, or not, in purpose, place and time.

35. **Q: Do products purchased through procurement-only contracts have to be comply with AIS?**

    A: Yes. For projects funded by SRF, the products procured under any form of contract must comply with AIS. A procurement-only contract generally involves the bulk purchase of common items (such as pipe, concrete, and/or pumps) of independent timing from a set of planned projects. If products which are purchased through a procurement-only contract are being installed under another contract, the procurement-only contract would probably not be considered a separate project in purpose, place and time; and therefore, would have to comply with the AIS requirements.

March 2015

American Iron & Steel Requirement for the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds

Q&A Part 3

*For CWSRF and DWSRF: On **January 17, 2014**, Public Law 113-76, the "Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014," was enacted and included an American Iron and Steel requirement for the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund programs through the end of fiscal year 2014. Since then, the AIS requirement has continued for both programs, but through different statutes, with a few changes as described in the questions and answers provided below.*

*For CWSRF: On **June 10, 2014**, the Water Resources Reform and Development Act amended the Clean Water Act to include permanent requirements for the use of AIS products in CWSRF assistance agreements. Section 608 of the CWA now contains requirements for AIS that repeat those of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014. All CWSRF assistance agreements must comply with Section 608 of the CWA for implementation of the permanent AIS requirement.*

*For DWSRF: On **December 16, 2014**, the President signed Public Law 113- 235, the "Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015," which provides fiscal year 2015 full-year appropriations through September 30, 2015. This law continues the requirement for the use of AIS products in DWSRF assistance agreements through September 30, 2015.*

CWSRF PROGRAM

1. **Q: The Water Resources Reform and Development Act amended the Clean Water Act to include permanent requirements for the use of AIS for CWSRF funded assistance agreements. Does the CWA include an exemption for plans and specifications approved prior to the enactment of the legislation similar to the exemption included in the Consolidated Appropriations Act (CAA) 2014?**

   A: Yes. The WRRDA amendment to the CWA, which included AIS requirements, included a similar exemption as the CAA 2014. For any CWSRF assistance agreement signed on or after October 1, 2014, if the plans and specifications were approved prior to June 10, 2014 (the enactment of WRRDA), then the project is exempt from AIS requirements. For assistance agreements signed prior to October 1, 2014, the previous dates in the CAA 2014 apply (see March 20, 2014, AIS guidance document).

   If a project does not require approved engineering plans and specifications, the bid advertisement date will count in lieu of the plans and specifications approval date for purposes of this exemption in Section 608 (f).

   The following table summarizes AIS exemptions based on the plans and specifications approval date for CWSRF funded projects.

CWSRF AIS Project Exemption Based on Plans and Specifications Approval Date		
Assistance Agreement Signed:	Exempt from AIS if Plans and Specifications Were Approved Before:	Basis for Exemption:
1/17/2014 through 9/30/2014	4/15/2014	• Consolidated Appropriations Act 2014 • National waiver signed 4/15/2014*
On or after 10/1/2014	6/10/2014	• Clean Water Act Section 608

** To be covered by the national waiver, the plans and specifications had to be submitted to the state prior to 1/17/2014*

2. **Q: Does the AIS requirement apply to refinanced CWSRF projects?**

   A: Yes, in some cases. If a project began construction, financed from a non-CWSRF source prior to June 10, 2014, but is refinanced through a CWSRF assistance agreement executed on or after October 1, 2014, AIS requirements will apply to all construction that occurs on or after June 10, 2014, through completion of construction, unless engineering plans and specifications were approved by the responsible state agency prior to June 10, 2014. For CWSRF projects funded on or after October 1, 2014, there is no retroactive application of the AIS requirements where a refinancing occurs for a project that has completed construction prior to June 10, 2014.

DWSRF PROGRAM

3. **Q: The Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act 2015 continues the AIS requirements for DWSRF funded assistance agreements. Does the Act include an exemption for plans and specifications approved prior to the enactment of the legislation, similar to the exemption included in the Consolidated Appropriations Act (CAA) 2014?**

   A: Yes. The Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act 2015 includes a similar exemption as the CAA 2014. For any assistance agreement signed on or after December 16, 2014 (the enactment of the Act), if the plans and specifications were approved prior to December 16, 2014, then the project is exempt from the AIS requirements. For assistance agreements signed prior to December 16, 2014, the previous dates in the CAA 2014 apply (see March 20, 2014 AIS guidance document).

   If a project does not require approved engineering plans and specifications, the bid advertisement date will count in lieu of the plans and specifications approval date for purposes of the exemption in Section 424(f).

4. **Q: Do DWSRF assistance agreements signed during the time period between September 30, 2014, and December 16, 2014, still have to comply with the AIS requirements?**

A: Yes. The Continuing Appropriations Resolution 2015 was signed on September 19, 2014, which extended funding for the DWSRF with the same conditions that were made applicable by the language in the Fiscal Year 2014 appropriations, including the requirement for the use of American Iron and Steel products in projects receiving financial assistance from the DWSRF. Therefore, all assistance agreements starting October 1, 2014, through the enactment of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act 2015 (signed December 16, 2014), must include the AIS requirements. However, if the plans and specifications for any of these projects were approved prior to April 15, 2014 (the date the national waiver was signed), then the project is exempt from the AIS requirements.

The following table summarizes AIS exemptions based on the plans and specifications approval date for DWSRF funded projects.

DWSRF AIS Project Exemption Based on Plans and Specifications Approval Date		
Assistance Agreement Signed:	Exempt from AIS if Plans and Specifications Were Approved Before:	Basis for Exemption:
1/17/2014 through 9/30/2014	4/15/2014	• Consolidated Appropriations Act 2014 • National waiver signed 4/15/2014*
10/1/2014 through 12/15/2014	4/15/2014	• Continuing Appropriations Resolution 2015 (continued CAA 2014 requirements)** • National waiver signed 4/15/2014*
12/16/2014 through 9/30/2015	12/16/2014	• Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act 2015

** To be covered by the national waiver, the plans and specifications had to be submitted to the state prior to 1/17/2014*

*** Following the first continuing resolution, there were two additional CRs to fill the gap between 12/11/2014 and 12/16/2014*

5. **Q: Does the AIS requirement apply to refinanced DWSRF projects?**

A: Yes, in some cases. If a project began construction, financed from a non-DWSRF source prior to December 16, 2014, but is refinanced through a DWSRF assistance agreement executed on or after December 16, 2014, AIS requirements will apply to all construction that occurs on or after December 16, 2014, through completion of construction, unless engineering plans and

specifications were approved by the responsible state agency prior to December 16, 2014. For DWSRF projects funded on or after December 16, 2014, there is no retroactive application of the AIS requirements where a refinancing occurs for a project that has completed construction prior to December 16, 2014.

BOTH CWSRF AND DWSRF PROGRAMS

6. **Q: If a coating is applied to the external surface of a domestic iron or steel component, and the application takes place outside of the United States, would the product be compliant under the AIS requirements?**

   A: Yes. The product would still be considered a compliant product under AIS requirements. Any coating processes that are applied to the external surface of iron and steel components that would otherwise be AIS compliant would not disqualify the product from meeting the AIS requirements regardless of where the coating processes occur, provided that final assembly of the product occurs in the United States.

   The exemption above only applies to coatings on the *external surface* of iron and steel components. It does not apply to coatings or linings on internal surfaces of iron and steel products, such as the lining of lined pipes. All manufacturing processes for lined pipes, including the application of pipe lining, must occur in the United States for the product to be compliant with AIS requirements.

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF WATER

DECISION MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: De Minimis Waiver of Section 436 of P.L. 113-76, Consolidated Appropriations Act (CAA), 2014

FROM: Nancy K. Stoner
Acting Assistant Administrator

The EPA is hereby granting a nationwide waiver pursuant to the "American Iron and Steel (AIS)" requirements of P.L. 113-76, Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (Act), section 436 under the authority of Section 436(b)(**1**) (public interest waiver) for de minimis incidental components of eligible water infrastructure projects. This action permits the use of products when they occur in de minimis incidental components of such projects funded by the Act that may otherwise be prohibited under section 436(a). Funds used for such de minimis incidental components cumulatively may comprise no more than a total of 5 percent of the total cost of the materials used in and incorporated into a project; the cost of an individual item may not exceed **1** percent of the total cost of the materials used in and incorporated into a project.

P.L. 113-76, Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (Act), includes an "American Iron and Steel" (AIS) requirement in section 436 that requires Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund (CWSRF) and Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund (DWSRF) assistance recipients to use specific domestic iron and steel products that are produced in the United States if the project is funded through an assistance agreement executed beginning January 17, 2014 (enactment of the Act), through the end of Fiscal Year 2014, unless the agency determines it necessary to waive this requirement based on findings set forth in Section 436(b). The Act states, "[the requirements] shall not apply in any case or category of cases in which the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency...finds that- (1) applying subsection (a) would be inconsistent with the public interest" 436(b)**(1)**.

In implementing section 436 of the Act, the EPA must ensure that the section's requirements are applied consistent with congressional intent in adopting this section and in the broader context of the purposes, objectives, and other provisions applicable to projects funded under the SRF. Water infrastructure projects typically contain a relatively small number of high-cost components incorporated into the project. In bid solicitations for a project, these high-cost components are generally described in detail via project specific technical specifications. For these major components, utility owners and their contractors are generally familiar with the conditions of availability, the potential alternatives for each detailed specification, the approximate cost, and the country of manufacture of the available components.

Every water infrastructure project also involves the use of thousands of miscellaneous, generally low-cost components that are essential for, but incidental to, the construction and are incorporated into the physical structure of the project. For many of these incidental components, the country of manufacture and the availability of alternatives is not always readily or reasonably identifiable prior to procurement in the normal course of business; for other incidental components, the country of manufacture may be known but the miscellaneous character in conjunction with the low cost, individually and (in total) as typically procured in bulk, mark them as properly incidental. Examples of incidental components could include small washers, screws, fasteners (i.e., nuts and bolts), miscellaneous wire, comer bead, ancillary tube, etc. Examples of items that are clearly not incidental include significant process fittings (i.e., tees, elbows, flanges, and brackets), distribution system fittings and valves, force main valves, pipes for sewer collection and/or water distribution, treatment and storage tanks, large structural support structures, etc.

The EPA undertook multiple inquiries to identify the approximate scope of de minimis incidental components within water infrastructure projects during the implementation of the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) and its requirements (Buy American provisions, specifically). The inquiries and research conducted in 2009 applies suitably for the case today. In 2009, the EPA consulted informally with many major associations representing equipment manufacturers and suppliers, construction contractors, consulting engineers, and water and wastewater utilities, and performed targeted interviews with several well-established water infrastructure contractors and firms who work in a variety of project sizes, and regional and demographic settings to ask the following questions:

- What percentage of total project costs were consumables or incidental costs?

- What percentage of materials costs were consumables or incidental costs?

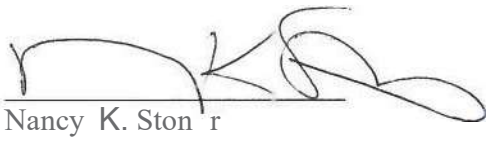
- Did these percentages vary by type of project (drinking water vs. wastewater treatment plant vs. pipe)?

The responses were consistent across the variety of settings and project types, and indicated that the percentage of total costs for drinking water or wastewater infrastructure projects represented by these incidental components is generally not in excess of 5 percent of the total cost of the materials used in and incorporated into a project. In drafting this waiver, the EPA has considered the de minimis proportion of project costs generally represented by each individual type of these incidental components within the many types of such components comprising those percentages, the fact that these types of incidental components are obtained by contractors in many different ways from many different sources, and the disproportionate cost and delay that would be imposed on projects if the EPA did not issue this waiver.

Assistance recipients who wish to use this waiver should in consultation with their contractors determine the items to be covered by this waiver and must retain relevant documentation (i.e., invoices) as to those items in their project files.

If you have any questions concerning the contents of this memorandum, please contact Timothy Connor, Chemical Engineer, Municipal Support Division, at connor.timothy@epa.gov or (202) 566-1059 or Kirsten Anderer, Environmental Engineer, Drinking Water Protection Division, at anderer.kirsten@epa.gov or (202) 564-3134.

Issued on: APR 15 2014

Approved by: 

Nancy K. Stoner
Acting Assistant Administrator

Ohio Water Pollution Control Loan Fund
Use of American Iron and Steel - De Minimis Final Utilization and Certification Form

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014 (P.L. 113-76) Section 436 requires the use of American & Steel in SRF-funded projects. Under the authority of Section 436(b)(1), the EPA has issued a public interest waiver for De Minimis incidental components. The assistance recipient wishing to use this waiver should consult with their contractor(s) to maintain an itemized list of components covered under De Minimis. At the conclusion of the project, this form must be completed and retained in the assistance recipient's project files and a copy provided to DEFA. Please print clearly or type.

Project Name:_____ Loan Agrmt #: _____

NOTE: The De Minimis waiver is only applicable to the cost of materials for the entire project. Do not include other project costs (labor, installation costs, etc.) in the "Total Cost of Materials". The cost of a material must include delivery to the site and any applicable tax. Must have sufficient documentation to support all costs included in this calculation.

Funds used for de minimis incidental components cumulatively may comprise no more than a total of 5 percent of the total cost of the materials used in and incorporated into a project; the cost of an individual item may not exceed 1 percent of the total cost of the materials used in and incorporated into a project.

Total Cost of Materials: | 5% Limit: | 1% limit:

Manufacturer & Component Description	Part/Model #	Quantity (if applicable)	Cost per Unit (if applicable)	Component's Total Cost	How is Cost Documented?*

Use additional sheets as necessary

Total De Minimis Cost of Components:

If approaching the 5% or 1% limits, contact DEFA immediately

* Documentation must demonstrate confirmation of the components' actual costs (invoice, etc.).

Completed by:

Name: _____ Title: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____