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EPA Announces \$45.5 Million in Funding for Drinking Water Infrastructure Upgrades in U.S. Virgin Islands

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The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on Tuesday announced that the U.S. Virgin Islands would receive \$45,565,000 for essential drinking water infrastructure upgrades through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF). This investment is part of the Biden Administration's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which allocated \$6 billion to the EPA to increase the investments available for rebuilding the nation's water infrastructure.

The funding will be used by the territory's government to upgrade drinking water treatment systems, with a focus on disadvantaged communities throughout the islands, the EPA said. The funds will also go towards the rehabilitation of existing distribution systems, the expansion of service to the community, and assistance to other drinking water providers in the territory.

EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan said, "Every community deserves access to safe, clean and safe drinking water...we have an unprecedented opportunity to revitalize America's drinking water systems, support the Biden-Harris Administration's goal of removing 100% of lead pipes across our country, and protect communities from PFAS pollution."

The DWSRF allotments to states are based on the results of EPA's 7th Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey and Assessment (DWINSA). The survey, which is required by the 1996 Safe Drinking Water Act, assesses the nation's public water systems' infrastructure needs every four years, and the findings are used to allocate DWSRF grants to states.

This funding is part of the Biden-Harris Administration's \$50 billion investment in water and wastewater infrastructure improvements across the country between FY 2022 and FY 2026. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will invest \$3 billion in lead service line identification and improvement, \$800 million to address PFAS and other emerging contaminants, and \$2.2 billion in other critical drinking water system improvements. Approximately \$500 million will also be available through the DWSRF annual appropriations, established by the Safe Drinking Water Act.

The EPA said it is committed to ensuring every community has access to this historic investment and has centralized increasing investment in disadvantaged communities within its implementation. EPA is strengthening its water technical assistance programs to support communities in assessing their water needs and applying for their fair share of this historic investment.