

Don't have filter lights?

Here's how to fund them.

Almost no state has a single grant that pays for filtered water in schools. Districts get there by combining a few real paths—and most of them exist in every state. Here's the key.

FUNDING ICON KEY



Open now or anytime



Opens on a cycle



Local, your district

Most states don't require filtered water in schools. That doesn't mean there's no money.

A handful of states now require filtration or testing outright, and a few fund it directly. Most don't. But every state receives federal lead-reduction dollars, every state runs a Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, and every district has local capital tools and a replacement cycle already in budget. Stack two or three of these and a filtered campus is well within reach, no statewide mandate required.

STEP 01

Test for Free

Most states offer free or subsidized lead sampling for schools. Results turn “we think” into “we know” and justify every funding ask that follows.

STEP 02

Match the money

Work the paths below: federal, state, local, or a mix. Use the state finder to identify who administers the funds where you are.

STEP 03

Build the plan with us

An Elkay specialist helps you inventory fixtures, size the project, and bring it to your board.

Federal Funding Options

These programs are national. The dollars flow to your state agency, which decides how they're distributed, so the program is the same everywhere, but the front door is local.



OPENS ON A CYCLE

EPA WIIN—School Lead Testing & Reduction Grant

The single most relevant federal program. Since 2021 it funds not just lead testing but reduction which can include installing filtered fixtures. EPA allots money to every state and territory, then a state agency administers it. Ask yours how reduction dollars can support filtered stations.

See the EPA program → <https://www.epa.gov/dwcapacity/wiin-grant-reducing-lead-drinking-water>



OPENS NOW

USDA Rural Development—Water & Waste Disposal

Loans and grants for drinking water improvements in eligible rural areas, accepted year-round through your local Rural Development office. If your district sits outside a metro area, check the eligibility map before assuming you don't qualify, the rural threshold is broader than most people expect.

Check Eligibility → <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/water-environmental-programs/water-waste-disposal-loan-grant-program>



OPENS ON A CYCLE

Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF)

Every state runs one. Low-cost loans plus principal forgiveness, effectively grant money, for disadvantaged communities. Best fit when a district owns its water system or can partner through its serving utility. Priority lists are set on a published cycle.

How the DWSRF works → <https://www.epa.gov/dwsrf>

State Funding Programs

Every state is different. Here's how to find yours in five minutes.

State programs change year to year, so instead of a list that goes stale, here are the three questions to ask, and exactly where to ask them.

QUESTION 01

Does my state offer free lead testing?

Many do, funded by the federal WIIN grant and run by the state environmental or health agency. It's usually free to schools.

[Search →](#) [your state] school drinking water lead testing program

QUESTION 02

Does my state require or fund filtration?

A small but growing number of states require filters in schools, and some pair the mandate with grant dollars.

[Search →](#) [your state] filter first schools lead law

QUESTION 03

Who runs my state's DWSRF?

Usually the state environmental agency or a state water board. They can tell you whether your project fits and when the next cycle opens.

[Search →](#) [your state] drinking water state revolving fund

Local & District Funding Programs

These don't depend on any state program, and they're the paths a parent advocate can start ASAP.



YOUR ELECTION CALENDAR

Bond, Referendum & Capital Measures

Nearly every district funds facilities through voter-approved bonds or a local capital tax. Bundle filtered stations into an existing capital line so filtration rides a measure that's already moving, instead of becoming a standalone ask.



ROLLING

Community & Business Sponsorship

A local business, booster club, or civic group funds a station, recognized with a small plate or a “sponsored by” callout. Low lift, high visibility, no budget cycle to wait on.



ROLLING

PTA Fundraiser Earmarked For Filtration

Run a donation drive tied directly to clean water.



ROLLING

Local Health & Community Foundations

Hospital systems, community foundations, and children’s health funders often have small grants for exactly this kind of project. Awards are modest but the applications are short and timelines fast.

No New Budget Required



ANYTIME

Time It With Replacement

When a fountain or bottle filler is already due to be replaced, ask facilities to spec a filtered model (Elkay bottle filling stations with a SKU that begins with “L”), or add a retrofit kit, so filtration rides the maintenance line, not a new one. *Elkay filtered models are available at the same price as the unfiltered models.* The cheapest funding is the budget you’re already spending, and this is the path that requires no grant, no vote, and no waiting.

Elkay Programs



AVAILABLE

Buy 10, Get 1 Free

For every 10 Elkay Pro Filtration™ bottle fillers purchased, receive 1 additional unit for free.

Reach out to your facilities director.



AVAILABLE

Retrofit Kits

Elkay offers a variety of in-line filtration kits including the EWF3001, EWF3000, EWF172, and more that turn any cold-water line to filtered.

Explore Filter Upgrade Solutions → <https://www.elkay.com/us/en/drinking-water/filtration.html>

Tell Us How We Can Help

Wherever you are, and whatever state you're in, we'll meet you there.

- Walk our school and inventory which fixtures are filtered
- Match us to the right funding paths in our state
- Schedule a filtered-water session for our PTA
- Send resources to bring to our school board
- Check if we qualify for a free filtration upgrade
- Something else, just point us the right way

Fill out the form on our landing page to learn more.

Program names, allotments, eligibility, and deadlines vary by state and change from year to year — confirm current details with the administering agency (your state environmental or health department, EPA, or USDA) before you apply. Elkay can help you navigate the options but is not a grant advisor, and eligibility is determined by each program. Funding-availability lights reflect general program cadence, not a guarantee of open applications on any given date.