

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS (TAG) GRANTS

Purpose and Eligibility: The purpose of the Technical Assistance Grants (TAG) program is to make grants to local communities and organizations for technical assistance related to pipeline safety issues. Technical assistance is defined as engineering or other scientific analysis of pipeline safety issues. The funding can also be used to help promote public participation in official proceedings. Eligible grant recipients are communities (cities, towns, villages, counties, parishes, townships, and similar governmental subdivisions, or consortiums of such subdivisions) and groups of individuals (not including for-profit entities). A non-governmental group of individuals is eligible if its members are affected or potentially affected by a pipeline safety issue and are, or are willing to become, incorporated as a non-profit organization.

Authorization and Appropriation: Section 9 of the Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002, titled “Pipeline Safety Information Grants to Communities”, first authorized the TAG program. The 2002 Act authorized \$1,000,000 for grant awards under the TAG program, but funds were not appropriated until FY2009. The maximum award for a single grant recipient is \$50,000.

Demonstration Grants: Section 5 of the PIPES Act of 2006 reauthorized the TAG program and required that at least the first three grants be “demonstration” grants in amounts not exceeding \$25,000 each. The demonstration grants are designed to target the implementation of Pipelines and Informed Planning Alliance (PIPA) best practices. Eligibility was limited to communities that participated in the PIPA effort. PHMSA posted a solicitation for TAG demonstration grant applications on Grants.gov on January 14, 2009. The solicitation closed March 13, 2009. PHMSA received four (4) applications, which were reviewed by a three-member panel. All four applications were awarded in full. The recipients are:

- **Brookings County, South Dakota:** The County will use the PIPA Consultation and/or Planning Zone best practices to developing a zoning ordinance to protect pipeline rights of way.
- **City of Fort Worth, Texas:** The City will convert paper-based pipeline records to a public geographic information system (GIS) to be used for land use planning.
- **Montgomery County, Virginia:** The County will develop a GIS of pipelines and consultation zones for land use planning; analyze pipeline consultation zones and revise the development review process to emphasize pipeline safety; examine zoning ordinances in relation to PIPA best practices; develop consultation/planning zone educational materials in cooperation with the pipeline industry; develop a pipeline emergency response plan and exercise the plan.
- **City of St. Peters, Missouri:** The City will develop an educational public webpage for residents, property owners, contractors, and developers to raise awareness of pipeline safety issues in the community.

Full TAG Awards: PHMSA posted a solicitation for full TAG grant applications on Grants.gov on April 9, 2009. The solicitation closed May 29, 2009. A four-member panel comprised of representatives from the National Association of Counties (NACO), the National Association of Pipeline Safety Representatives (NAPSR), the Washington State Utilities and Transportation Commission, and PHMSA reviewed 25 applications. PHMSA expects to finalize awarding the grants in August 2009 and expects to award nearly all of the \$1,000,000 appropriated for the program.