

## How can I obtain more information?

A section of the ADEQ Web site is devoted to small community compliance assistance, and includes the small community policy, currently available guidance materials, and agency contacts. This information can be accessed at: [azdeq.gov/function/compliance/smallcomm.html](http://azdeq.gov/function/compliance/smallcomm.html).

ADEQ appreciates your interest in this initiative. We look forward to partnering with your community to protect the quality of life in rural Arizona.



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# ARIZONA'S SMALL COMMUNITIES ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE ASSISTANCE PROJECT



Arizona Department of Environmental Quality has launched a program to help small communities throughout the state comply with state environmental regulations. The effort is being conducted with the assistance of a grant from the Environmental Council of States to ADEQ.

*ADEQ is seeking to make it easier for small communities to meet the requirements of the law, especially small communities in rural Arizona. The goal is to provide small communities with the assistance they may need in light of their limited resources. The focal point of this project is ADEQ's small community policy.*

## Which communities are eligible to participate?

Cities and towns with populations fewer than 3,300 residents (as determined by the most recent U.S Census Bureau estimate) are eligible to participate. Cities and towns having between 3,300 and 10,000 residents may also apply for coverage provided they demonstrate, through a capacity test, that this program will improve compliance with environmental laws. Special districts (e.g. water and wastewater districts) serving less than 10,000 residents may also apply for coverage via the same capacity test.

## How can this program benefit my organization?

As detailed in the small community policy, an eligible community or district may qualify for up to a 100% penalty reduction from ADEQ for environmental violations. Also, ADEQ's policy is written in a manner to help these organizations qualify for special penalty considerations from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Partially due to staff turnover, many small communities have difficulty staying current on environmental requirements. Efforts under the small community policy will provide officials with ready access to policies, procedures and schedules to be used in identifying, prioritizing, correcting and preventing future environmental compliance problems. Also, these materials may be used by municipal managers to train staff on environmental requirements, or as a marketing tool for attracting investment in their communities.

## What does this process entail?

An interested small community or special district should first assess applicable environmental laws and its commitment to comply with these laws. A "good faith" commitment is defined in the policy, and involves an internal compliance evaluation.

The next step is to send a request letter to ADEQ. This letter should document the community's good faith commitment, provide information on the capacity test (if applicable), and set forth a schedule for completion of a Small Community Environmental Protection Plan, or "SCEPP".

Through documented processes and practices, SCEPPs are designed to enable communities to reduce their environmental impact.

## How will ADEQ assist interested small communities and special districts?

ADEQ will:

- prepare and maintain guidance materials, including a SCEPP template and checklist and guidance on frequent small community issues and violations;
- review request letters and SCEPPs in a timely manner;
- offer special penalty considerations to those communities meeting the terms of the small community policy;
- utilize the agency's rural representatives, called "community liaisons", to help small communities with compliance questions and SCEPP development;
- interface with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on a regular basis, to help participating communities qualify for special considerations under EPA's small community policy; and
- maintain a Web page with ready references for small communities.

