

SSTS FIX UP FUND
2021 APPLICATION GUIDANCE



Becker County was awarded a grant from the Clean Water Fund (MN Stat. Ch. 114D) which can be used to replace eligible subsurface sewage treatment systems (SSTS).



How much money is available?

- Approximately \$31,000 is available in 2021.
- Grants will be awarded based on income limits.
- Leftover funding will be allocated to qualifying individuals as determined by county staff and availability of funds. Leftover funding may also be moved into the next year.

Who is eligible?

- Landowners that have septic systems that have been deemed non-compliant in Becker County and have been issued a "Notice of Noncompliance" from the County. (i.e. Imminent Threat to Public Health or Failing to Protect Groundwater);
- Homesteaded single-family homes or duplexes.
- Systems connected to a house with a deed as ownership.
- Taxes and mortgage payments must be current. The property may not be currently or imminently subject to repossession, forfeiture, or foreclosure.
- Household gross annual income (including Social Security, wages and all regular sources) must be equal to or less than the following limits (*source: USDA Guaranteed Housing Program**). To determine eligibility, look at the dollar amounts in the chart below that correspond to the number of people in your household. To qualify for a grant, the combined adjusted gross income shown on your most recent income tax return (line 37 on form 1040; line 4 on form 1040EZ) must be less than or equal to than the amount listed below for 'low income' households.

Household Size	1 person	2 persons	3 persons	4 persons	5 persons	6 persons	7 persons	8 persons
Low Income	\$59,600	\$59,600	\$59,600	\$59,600	\$78,650	\$78,650	\$78,650	\$78,650

Chart 1

How does the process work?

- Interested homeowners submit a SSTS Financial Assistance Application to the Becker Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). The application is available at www.co.becker.mn.us/dept/soil_water/ or by contacting the SWCD at (218) 846-7360.
- There is no application fee.
- Follow the application checklist and submit all required materials to the SWCD.
- After the SWCD receives and reviews all required materials for eligibility determination, SWCD staff will award grants on a first-come-first-serve basis, until funds run out.

**USDA housing guidelines are current as of 5/12/2021.*

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How does the process work? (cont.)

- Cost share grant amount will be 50% of the lowest bid. Grant award shall not exceed \$7,500. House holds that meet the very low income guidelines eligible for 100% of final invoice costs, up to \$15,000.
- Becker SWCD releases the funds jointly to the applicant and the contractor once work is complete and a Certificate of Compliance has been issued.
- The homeowner must sign the check and turn it over the contractor.
- The homeowner must also submit a lien waiver to Becker County, verifying that payment has been made to the contractor.

Other helpful information

Becker County and SWCD staff will help applicants during the application process, but applicants are responsible for making the choices and doing all of the listed items including, but not limited to, the following:

- Applicants must provide SWCD staff with necessary information promptly.
- Applicants are responsible for soliciting estimates from contractors. A minimum of **two bids** is required for the installation of the designed system. The term “contractor” refers to Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) licensed septic system designers, septic system installers, and other entities providing services to the replacement of the septic system. Contractors can be found at: www.pca.state.mn.us/ssts-search.html
- Applicants should also notify contractors of their participation in the grant program, as it affects the payment process.
- SWCD will select the low bid but applicants are responsible for selecting and entering into a contract with the contractor to do the work. Applicant may use other contractor but will need to make up the difference between the low bid.
- Applicants and/or contractor **must** complete all the necessary permitting. Applicants must pay for permit and inspection fees required by Becker County Planning and Zoning and are not exempt from those fees.
- Applicants are responsible for working with the contractors to settle any and all disagreements that may arise before, during, or after the job. If the applicant fails to abide by the program requirements or if the grantor withdraws or ceases funding for the program, the applicant shall be responsible to the contractor for all contractually agreed upon terms, including payment, without any further remedy for damages or recovery against Becker County.

If you are interested in participating in this program mail or bring your application and supporting forms to:

**Becker Soil and Water Conservation District
809 8th St SE
Detroit Lakes, MN 56501**

Contact the SWCD with application questions: (218) 846-7360

Contact Becker County Planning and Zoning with SSTS questions: (218) 846-7314

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Application Checklist:

The following items need to be submitted with your application:

- ┌ Completed Application for SSTS Financial Assistance signed by property owner(s)
- ┌ Copy of photo IDs for all applicants
- ┌ Documentation of mortgage payments (two most recent mortgage statements)
- ┌ Present the most recent Income Tax Return for verification of income by SWCD staff.
- ┌ Notice of Non-Compliance from Becker County

Your application will not be processed until all necessary and requested documentation is received at our office.