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# Biden-Harris Administration Releases Draft Guidance, Invites Public Comment on New Orphaned Well Program

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*\$4.7 billion investment from President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will help plug orphaned oil and gas wells*

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Date: Thursday, March 17, 2022

Contact: [Interior\\_Press@ios.doi.gov](mailto:Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov)

**WASHINGTON** — The Department of the Interior today released

[State Initial Grant Guidance Bil \[pdf\]](#) (333.89 KB)

to states on how to apply for the [first \\$775 million in grant funding](#) available this year under President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to create jobs cleaning up polluted and unsafe orphaned oil and gas well sites across the country. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provides a total of \$4.7 billion to address orphaned wells across the country.

Millions of Americans across the country live within a mile of an orphaned oil and gas well. Orphaned wells are polluting backyards, recreation areas, and public spaces across the country. The historic investments to clean up these environmental and safety hazards will create good-paying, union jobs, catalyze economic growth and revitalization, and shut down harmful methane emissions.

“The Department of the Interior is moving quickly to implement President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. We are committed to getting these funds to states and communities as quickly as possible to confront legacy pollution and long-standing environmental injustices that have been allowed to fester for far too long,” said **Secretary Deb Haaland**. “With so many communities looking forward to this program, we are eager to hear from diverse voices to review and provide feedback on this draft guidance.”

The draft guidance released today provides draft instructions to states on how to apply for initial orphaned well grants of up to \$25 million under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, as well as guidance on how states can ensure that activities funded under the program are putting people to work, protecting the environment, investing in disadvantaged communities consistent with the President's Justice 40 Initiative, and safeguarding taxpayer money in a transparent and responsible manner.

States will also be eligible for formula and performance grants under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Guidance for those applications will be informed by comments received on the initial grants draft guidance and will be released a later date.

Comments on the guidance can be emailed to [orphanedwells@ios.doi.gov](mailto:orphanedwells@ios.doi.gov) by 11:59 PM PT on March 30, 2022, and will help inform any changes moving forward. The Department will host two public comment webinars on the guidance, one with an opening presentation focused on industry and labor equities in the guidance on [Wednesday, March 23 at 2:00 PM ET](#) and another with an opening presentation focused on environmental justice equities on [Thursday, March 24 at 4:00 PM ET](#). These webinars will be open to the public, pending registration. People wishing to speak at either webinar should register beforehand by 1:00pm ET on March 22. The amount of time for each speaker will depend on the total number of registrants.

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