

## How do I apply for BRF grants for septic system upgrades?

Maryland's program to upgrade septic systems with nitrogen-reducing technology is administered by local jurisdictions. Information about county contacts can be found online at:

[bit.ly/BRFlocals](http://bit.ly/BRFlocals)

Consistent with Maryland law, MDE prioritizes funding for septic system upgrades toward those systems that pose the greatest threat to clean waterways and drinking water, following this criteria:

1. Failing septic systems in the Critical Areas (land within 1,000 feet of tidal waters)
2. Failing septic systems not in the Critical Areas
3. Non-failing septic systems and new installation in the Critical Areas
4. Non-failing septic systems outside the Critical Areas

Grant money can be used toward the cost of the upgrade, which includes five years of operations and maintenance. The amount of assistance, up to 100 percent in some cases, is determined based on income guidelines.

Information:

[bit.ly/MDESepticUpgradeProgram](http://bit.ly/MDESepticUpgradeProgram)



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## Investing in the future of the Bay

**BAY RESTORATION FUND  
SEPTIC SYSTEM  
INFORMATION GUIDE**



## What is the Bay Restoration Fund and what does it pay for?

The Bay Restoration Fund (BRF) assesses fees that pay for upgrades to wastewater treatment plants to dramatically reduce the levels of the nutrients nitrogen and phosphorus entering the Atlantic Coastal Bays, the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. BRF fees also pay to upgrade septic systems with the best available technology for nitrogen reduction. The fees also provide funding to plant cover crops that reduce nutrient pollution entering our groundwater and streams. Nutrient pollution can lead to reduced levels of the oxygen needed by aquatic life and can contaminate drinking water.



The original BRF fees were:

- \$2.50 per month (\$30 annual fee) per household for citizens on sewer
- \$30 annual fee per household for citizens served by a septic system
- Businesses pay \$2.50 per month per equivalent dwelling unit (EDU). EDU equals 250 gallons a day and 7,500 gallons a month. Fee is capped at \$120,000 per year.



## New fees at a glance

The revised BRF fees are:

- \$5 per month per household for citizens on sewer
- \$60 annual fee per household for citizens served by a septic system
- Businesses pay \$5 per month per equivalent dwelling unit (EDU) up to 2,000 EDUs. Fee is capped at \$120,000 per year

The legislation that revised BRF fees requires local governments to establish programs to exempt low-income residents from the fees. In addition, a local government that implements a stormwater utility fee will be provided with BRF funding for stormwater pollution controls. All increased fees will sunset after 2030 back to the original fee structure.

## Where are we now with BRF-funded progress?

Enhanced nutrient removal (ENR) upgrades at 23 of the 67 largest, publicly owned wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs) discharging to the Chesapeake Bay are complete. Twenty are under construction, 20 are in the design or planning stage, and four are in the pre-planning stage. Over the last seven years, more than 3,000 septic systems have been upgraded with technology to remove nitrogen. The increased fee allows for more than 1,300 septic systems to be upgraded annually.

The estimated capital cost for upgrades at the 67 WWTPs is \$1.38 billion. If the original fee had remained as it was, a funding shortfall of \$385 million was projected. With the increased fee, upgrades will be completed by 2017, which is consistent with the goals of Maryland's Watershed Implementation Plan and meeting the State's EPA-mandated pollution target.

The BFR fee increase will support more than 1,000 jobs annually. These jobs cannot be outsourced and will benefit Maryland families with clean water for years to come.