

The Rural Community Development (RCD) Program

Helping California's rural and tribal communities build and maintain safe water and wastewater systems



California State Facts



2,842 community water systems

2,179 water systems serve communities with fewer than 3,300 people

\$5.55 billion estimated water infrastructure need for small systems

5.8% of the population lives in a rural area

Sources: EPA, Census

About the RCD Program

The [Rural Community Development \(RCD\)](#) grant program builds capacity to create, expand, and maintain safe, affordable water and wastewater systems in rural areas. RCD serves very small communities in sparsely populated areas made up predominately of residents with low income who lack safe water and wastewater treatment services and sometimes even indoor plumbing. RCD tailors its support based on community need. It helps communities assess water and wastewater infrastructure and accessibility needs, helps identify and secure funding for water facility upgrades, builds capacity through local experts to establish and maintain water facilities, and trains water operators to ensure water systems are functional and compliant. There are currently [eight RCD grant recipients](#)— six regional organizations and two organizations that support tribal communities. RCD grant recipients [Rural Community Assistance Corporation \(RCAC\)](#) and [Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. \(ITCA\)](#) serve communities in the state of California.

Examples of RCD's Support in California

Soledad, California

The nitrate concentrations in the Mission Union Elementary School District's water in Soledad, California exceeded the maximum contaminant level (MCL) set by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the State of California, leading to a violation from the Monterey County Health Department. With RCD funding, RCAC provided the district with budget and project management assistance to fix the problem. This included ordering drinking fountains, gathering contractor quotes, scheduling installation, requesting invoice reimbursements, completing point-of-use (POU) regulatory requirements with a local primacy agency, and creating written plans and reports for documentation purposes. This ensured safe drinking water for the 328 students of Mission Union.

Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Tribe

The Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Tribe faced significant challenges with its public water system, operated by the Lone Pine Public Utilities Department (LPPUD). A sanitation facilities survey conducted in 2018 identified several deficiencies, which prevented the LPPUD from receiving funding for much-needed infrastructure improvements. With RCD funding, ITCA helped LPPUD develop a cross-connection control program, a preventative maintenance plan, an emergency response plan, and a risk resilience assessment, which were all completed between May 2021 and July 2022. The LPPUD now has the necessary plans and authorizations in place to apply for funding for infrastructure improvements. The impact of this project extends to the 360 people served by the LPPUD and the overall health and safety of the Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone community.

National Outcomes*

With the help of RCD:



\$742 million
in additional funding
secured for communities



83,000 residents
have gained access to
safe drinking water



49,000 residents
have gained access to
sanitary sewer systems



2,100 communities
served by RCD projects

*Outcomes for RCD grant recipients' work across the country since FY21



For more information about the Rural Community Development (RCD) Program, [visit the RCD website](#) and the [RCD Information and Data Dashboard](#).

For more information about OCS's other anti-poverty programs, [visit the OCS website](#).