

The Rural Community Development (RCD) Program

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



Georgia State Facts



1,736 community water systems

1,490 water systems serve communities with fewer than 3,300 people

\$2.68 billion estimated water infrastructure need for small systems

25.9% 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 [Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project, Inc. \(SERCAP\)](#) and [United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. \(USET\)](#) serve communities in the state of Georgia.

Examples of RCD's Support in Georgia

Talbotton Wastewater Treatment Plant

The Wastewater Treatment Plant in Talbotton, Georgia serves 970 residents. Initially built in the 1970s with cutting-edge technology, the technology has become outdated. The town has faced economic challenges, and there has not been funding available to address the declining infrastructure. These conditions have exacerbated public health risks, as raw sewage spills are frequent. With RCD funding, SERCAP dispatched staff to assist the town in applying for loans from the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority's 2023 Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF). With SERCAP's help, the town was awarded a \$4 million loan to conduct critical infrastructure improvements. These improvements will reduce public health risks associated with exposure to raw sewage.

Leary, Georgia

In October 2018, Hurricane Michael overwhelmed the town of Leary, Georgia's wastewater collection system with heavy inflow and infiltration. This had lasting impacts, and the community struggled with ongoing problems and capacity issues at the treatment plant. With RCD funding, SERCAP helped Leary obtain a \$670,000 Clean Water State Revolving Fund loan from the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority to finance the rehabilitation and replacement of the aging gravity sewer system. SERCAP continues to help Leary mitigate inflow and infiltration by updating the community's emergency response plan and conducting a risk and resiliency assessment. As a result, the community can maintain safe and resilient water and wastewater systems, even during severe weather and emergencies.

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](#).