

The Rural Community Development (RCD) Program

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



Kentucky State Facts



375 community water systems

155 water systems serve communities with fewer than 3,300 people

\$614 million estimated water infrastructure need for small systems

41.3% 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 [Great Lakes Community Action Partnership \(GLCAP\)](#) and [United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. \(USET\)](#) serve communities in the state of Kentucky.

Example of RCD's Support in Kentucky

Bacon Creek Watershed

High levels of drinking water contaminants, including E. coli caused by livestock feeding operations, pesticides, and fertilizers, were discovered in the Bacon Creek Watershed. This contamination affected the drinking water of several communities in the watershed including Upton, Hammonville, and Magnolia.

With RCD funding, GLCAP helped the communities apply for funding from the Kentucky Division of Water (KDW) to mitigate the contamination. The funding from the KDW enabled septic system pump outs, inspections, and repairs to reduce contamination in the public wastewater systems. Then, GLCAP helped the communities access U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 319 Nonpoint Source funds to provide source water protection training to residents in the area. According to the EPA, source water protection includes a wide variety of actions and activities aimed at safeguarding, maintaining, or improving the quality, quantity, or both of sources of drinking water and their contributing areas. By providing water protection training to residents, GLCAP helped equip them with the tools and skills they needed to promptly address any threats to the water system.

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](#).