

# The Rural Community Development (RCD) Program

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



## Maine State Facts



**386** community water systems

**350** water systems serve communities with fewer than 3,300 people

**\$704 million** estimated water infrastructure need for small systems

**61.4%** 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 [RCAP Solutions, Inc. \(RSOL\)](#) and [United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. \(USET\)](#) serve communities in the state of Maine.

## Examples of RCD's Support in Maine

### Caribou Water District

The Caribou Utilities District (CUD) in Caribou, Maine has been providing drinking water to residents since it was established in 1889. CUD acquired another water system in 1989 but has had to rely on faded paper documentation and antiquated, unusable maps to run their expanded distribution system. This, along with financial loss, limited staff, and freezing conditions, led to difficulties in system operations. With RCD funds, RSOL helped CUD develop a comprehensive picture of the water system through GIS technology. Over a five-day period, nearly 1,700 points of curb stops, gate valves, hydrants, and blowoff valves were located and documented through location photos and addresses. RSOL used the data to create an interactive map of CUD's system. CUD now uses the GIS product to analyze inventories, streamline repairs, and update critical information about the 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](#).