

The Rural Community Development (RCD) Program

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



Maryland State Facts

464 community water systems

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

\$882 million estimated water infrastructure need for small systems

14.4% 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 [Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project, Inc. \(SERCAP\)](#) and [United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. \(USET\)](#) serve communities in the state of Maryland.

Examples of RCD's Support in Maryland

Eagle Harbor, Maryland

Eagle Harbor, Maryland is a small town with only 63 residents and no community water or sewer system. Residents receive water and sewer services through private wells and septic systems, several of which show signs of failure. With RCD funding, SERCAP collaborated with town officials and residents to discuss options for creating a safer wastewater system for residents. The residents decided to pursue the development of a community wastewater system. SERCAP is currently helping the town apply for funding to finance its construction. Development of a wastewater system will ensure that residents have access to sanitary and reliable sewer services. Additionally, such a system could draw new permanent residents and tourists to the area, creating conditions for economic growth.

Rock Hall, Maryland

The community of Rock Hall, Maryland was using 20-year-old water meters that were inaccurately recording water use. Town staff spent an inordinate amount of time manually reading meters and transferring usage to the billing system on a quarterly basis. With RCD funding, SERCAP guided Rock Hall through writing the request for proposal for replacing the water meters, approving an engineering firm with the Maryland Department of Environment (MDE), operating software and billing programs, and securing construction contractors. SERCAP's project management assistance with the grant and loan process along with the installation of the water meters and associated software and billing program allowed Rock Hall to ensure accurate revenues, provide fiscal responsibility to constituents, and make the utility more sustainable in the long term.

"Without the assistance of Vikki [SERCAP], the town would not have been able to efficiently and successfully manage this project."

—Bob Resele, town manager, Rock Hall

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](#).