

# The Rural Community Development (RCD) Program

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



## Massachusetts State Facts



**534** community water systems

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

**\$654 million** estimated water infrastructure need for small systems

**8.7%** 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 Massachusetts.

## Example of RCD's Support in Massachusetts

### Montague, Massachusetts

Montague, Massachusetts is a riverside town with a community wastewater treatment facility that serves 5,500 residents. The wastewater collection system was run by the Montague Highway Department, and due to outdated maps and data, there was not a good inventory of the wastewater infrastructure. Additionally, there were no plans in place detailing how to maintain and use the data the town did have.

Using RCD funds, RSOL dispatched staff to the site to gather data on the sewer and storm drain systems by cataloging various crucial system elements including storm and sewer manholes, pump stations, and culverts. RSOL helped the town build a GIS database containing the intricate underground construction and connections within the sewer and stormwater systems.

The data collection process and investigative fieldwork uncovered deficiencies in the current system. In response to these findings, the town erected an independent Sewer Collection System Department. The department now uses GIS tools to conduct daily operations, inspections, and reporting. The new system has greatly improved regulatory compliance and the town's ability to serve residents.

## 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](#).