

The Rural Community Development (RCD) Program

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



New Jersey State Facts



565 community water systems

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

\$1.09 billion estimated water infrastructure need for small systems

6.2% 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 New Jersey.

Examples of RCD's Support in New Jersey

Stillwater Water District

The Stillwater Water District in New Jersey's Paulinskill Lake Community's water system was originally designed for seasonal use and faced new challenges as the homes became year-round residences. The system was staffed by homeowner volunteers with limited water management experience. With RCD funding, RSOL provided training and consultation to increase staff's managerial and financial capacity. This enabled the community to pay off two loans and bring most of the delinquent accounts into good standing. However, the community still struggled with water quality, operational efficacy, and communication between operations staff and management. RSOL helped Stillwater get accepted into the USDA Loan Program and Community of Engineering Corps, which provided free engineering services. Additionally, RSOL helped hire an operator who coordinated with the management staff to help them plan for the future. Stillwater is now poised to make major improvements and ensure the system can meet future needs of this small, isolated community.

Manufactured Home Communities Statewide

Multiple manufactured home communities in New Jersey found their water system plans and procedures were not updated with the most recent regulations. Their lead and copper sampling plans became outdated, resulting in noncompliance with regulations set by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). With RCD funds, RSOL helped these communities evaluate their lead and copper sampling plans and update them to ensure they meet NJDEP standards. Upon completion of the updated plans, these communities will be in compliance with NJDEP requirements, offering assurance of access to drinking water that is free from contamination by lead or copper.

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](#).