

The Rural Community Development (RCD) Program

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



Oklahoma State Facts



893 community water systems

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

\$2.37 billion estimated water infrastructure need for small systems

35.4% 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 [Communities Unlimited, Inc. \(CU\)](#) and [Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. \(ITCA\)](#) serve communities in the state of Oklahoma.

Examples of RCD's Support in Oklahoma

Maysville, Oklahoma

The Maysville Water Authority in Maysville, Oklahoma supplies drinking water for a population of 1,351, and needed critical upgrades to make clean drinking water more accessible in the town. To fund the project, the Maysville Water Authority applied for a loan through the United States Department of Agriculture-Rural Development (USDA-RD) program and needed to comply with the USDA-RD Letter of Conditions (LOC). The LOC required the authority to develop a conflict-of-interest policy, a risk and resilience assessment, and an emergency response plan. With RCD funding, CU helped the authority draft these documents in order to meet the requirements and receive the loan. CU is also coordinating with the authority to develop a multi-year budget to ensure that enough money is available to complete the project and repay the USDA-RD loan.

Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma

The Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma's three public water systems were found to have significant deficiencies during regulatory sanitary surveys conducted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in November 2021. With RCD funding, ITCA provided technical assistance to help one of the systems — the New Gaming Enterprise water system — develop updated standard operating procedures, an emergency response plan, and a risk and resilience assessment. This brought the system in compliance with the requirements of the America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018.

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



RCD
Rural Community Development

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](#).