

The Rural Community Development (RCD) Program

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



Rhode Island State Facts



- 90** community water systems
- 64** water systems serve communities with fewer than 3,300 people
- \$124 million** estimated water infrastructure need for small systems
- 8.9%** 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 Rhode Island.

Example of RCD's Support in Rhode Island

Hog Island South Water System

Hog Island, Portsmouth, Rhode Island is a seaside village in Narragansett Bay; the Hog Island South Water System serves 100 residents. Operating within a smaller system presents a challenge for board members and operations staff to stay abreast of the ever-evolving best practices within the water sector. Competing demands and limited resources make it particularly challenging to dedicate ample time and funds towards professional development initiatives.

With RCD funding, RSOL provides high quality training at no cost to water systems like Hog Island South. Recently, RSOL facilitated a virtual training session for members of the Hog Island South board and operations staff. This training covered the technical, managerial, and financial topics inherent in the management and operation of a small drinking water system. The training session was attended by five board members and three operators.

After the training, these members and operators returned to their work with additional knowledge and skills that will help ensure that residents have access to reliable and safe drinking water.

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](#).