

The Rural Community Development (RCD) Program

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



South Carolina State Facts



- 571** community water systems
- 411** water systems serve communities with fewer than 3,300 people
- \$962 million** estimated water infrastructure need for small systems
- 32.1%** 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 South Carolina.

Example of RCD's Support in South Carolina

Branchville, South Carolina

Branchville, South Carolina is a small town with 1,226 residents located in the state's lower midlands region. Currently, Branchville only has one portable diesel-fueled pump to sustain the entire wastewater system in case of a power outage or natural disaster. This limited power supply puts the town at risk of experiencing environmental health hazards such as sewer backups during power outages.

Town officials recognized the need to install emergency generators and identified the State Revolved Fund (SRF) as the most likely available source of funding for their small town. There was a short application period — the town had only two weeks to submit an SRF application. With RCD funding, SERCAP helped the town complete a successful application, which included completing application forms and submitting all needed documentation.

The town was awarded \$426,000 through the SRF competition to purchase and install additional emergency generators. After the purchase and installation of the emergency generators is complete, residents will remain safe and healthy with full access to sanitary wastewater systems even during power outages or natural disasters.

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](#).