

The Rural Community Development (RCD) Program

Helping the United States Virgin Islands' rural and tribal communities build and maintain safe water and wastewater systems



United States Virgin Islands (USVI) Facts

77 community water systems



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

\$71 million estimated water infrastructure need for small systems



5% 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 train s 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 recipient [RCAP Solutions, Inc. \(RSOL\)](#) serves communities in the USVI.

Examples of RCD's Support in USVI

Coral Bay, St. John, USVI

Authorities in Coral Bay, a small community in the USVI, experienced challenges conducting community outreach and understanding the regulations associated with maintaining onsite wastewater treatment compliance. To resolve these challenges, RSOL worked with the Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) to conduct regulatory analyses. RSOL reviewed federal statutes and territorial regulations as part of this analysis. As a result, RSOL developed an extensive report explaining the regulatory obligations and limitations the community was subject to regarding its onsite wastewater treatment.

While working with the DPNR, RSOL also collaborated with the Coral Bay Community Council to develop effective outreach materials for residents about onsite wastewater treatment compliance. RSOL held regular meetings to help the council fully understand the information that must be communicated to residents. RSOL then used the information to create accessible outreach materials that are clear, concise, and effective. The Council then disseminated these materials to residents. By working with the DPNR and the council, RSOL helped to ensure that residents receive necessary information regarding compliance while also building the operational effectiveness of regulatory agencies.

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](#).