

# Impact of the Rural Community Development (RCD) Program in Missouri

## Training & Technical Assistance to Support Safe, Affordable Water & Wastewater Systems



## About RCD

The [Rural Community Development \(RCD\)](#) program within the Office of Community Services (OCS) is dedicated to reducing the causes and consequences of poverty, increasing opportunity and economic security of individuals and families, and revitalizing communities.

RCD provides training and technical assistance grants to build 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 often even indoor plumbing. Many of these communities have populations of less than 2,500 people and face barriers in funding, building, or operating water infrastructure.

There are currently [eight RCD grant recipients](#)—six regional organizations and two organizations that support tribal communities—which collectively serve all regions of the country.

## Program Outcomes

Since the beginning of Fiscal Year (FY) 2021, RCD grant recipients:<sup>1</sup>

- Helped over 14,000 residents in rural, low-income communities gain access to safe drinking water;
- Helped over 12,000 residents in rural, low-income communities gain access to sanitary sewer systems;
- Conducted over 10,000 management, technical operations, and compliance trainings to ensure effective operation of water and sewage systems, resulting in over 3,000 technical certifications; and
- Leveraged over \$448 million in additional public and private resources to invest in safe and affordable water and wastewater services.

## Highlights in Missouri

RCD grant recipient Midwest Assistance Program, Inc. (MAP) uses RCD funds to implement training and technical assistance services to build technical, managerial, and financial capacity for rural water and wastewater systems in the Midwest United States. These services include emergency response plan development, water management training, and education about water and wastewater infrastructure needs.

MAP helped the town of Pierce City, MO, population 1,251, after a devastating EF Scale 3 tornado destroyed the town's water tower and well. After the dust settled, the town began repairing the damage inflicted by the tornado. A new well was constructed, but funding ran out before the water tower could be repaired, and the system remained vulnerable to failure. Additional funding and engineering services were needed to fully repair the system.

MAP helped the town create a plan to complete the additional repairs through the creation of materials for public outreach, contracting of engineering services, and securing funding. MAP staff composed a bond brochure to help educate the public of the necessity to pass a bond for water improvements, and a \$4 million bond passed, and project design followed. MAP staff instructed the council on the process to procure an engineer to make the repairs and assisted with securing a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to allow the project to progress forward.

With funding for the project secure and engineers in placed, MAP assisted with ongoing monitoring and community outreach as the water system was repaired. Now, the water system is being rebuilt even better than it was before the tornado, ensuring that residents have access to clean drinking water and a functioning wastewater system.

<sup>1</sup> Based on data pulled February 2023