



For immediate release

November 1, 2011

RCAP PRODUCES THREE NEW GUIDES TO HELP SMALL, RURAL COMMUNITIES BETTER MANAGE THEIR UTILITIES

WASHINGTON—The Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP) has produced three new guidebooks to assist small, rural communities in the management and operations of their drinking water and wastewater systems.

Following are the titles and descriptions of each guide:

Sustainable Infrastructure for Small System Public Services: A Planning and Resource Guide

Practical, rather than theoretical, in content, this guidebook provides information, worksheets, examples, case studies, and resources on water conservation, energy efficiency, and renewable-energy resources for small utilities. This planning and resources guide includes a step-by-step process for a utility’s decision-makers, staff, and community members wanting to operate increasingly efficient utilities. It offers a flexible approach to evaluating sustainable alternatives for a utility’s operations. This guide is an update of an existing guide that was published in 2009 by one of RCAP’s regional partners, the Rural Community Assistance Corporation, the Western RCAP.

Formulate Great Rates: The Guide to Conducting a Rate Study for a Water System

This guide to developing a fair and equitable rate structure walks users step-by-step through several worksheets that examine various aspects of customer usage levels and revenue. Detailed instructions, including calculations, are provided for each worksheet, which can be completed by hand with worksheets provided in the guide or in electronic versions (Excel spreadsheets) that are provided with the PDF version of the guide on the RCAP website (see below for URL). The guide also provides guidance on how rate structures impact the financial management of a system.

Getting Your Project to Flow Smoothly: A Guide to Developing Water and Wastewater Infrastructure

This comprehensive guide on all of the steps the governing body of a utility should go through in planning, designing and constructing infrastructure is a very detailed how-to on all phases of the process. The guide discusses roles and responsibilities of the parties in a project – owner,



engineer, inspector, and contractor. It explores actions necessary to secure funding, how to stay organized, and how to maintain control of a project, and includes many pitfalls to avoid.

The guides were written on behalf of the RCAP national network by its regional partners. In writing the guides, RCAP field staff have captured their knowledge on these topics and share their expertise with leaders of small communities. The guides provide managers and decision-makers with background information on the topics and serve as a reference but are best used when accompanied by in-person, tailored assistance from a technical assistance provider, such as an RCAP field staff member.

“Each of these guides addresses a pressing issue in systems today, and all talk about using resources efficiency, whether it’s energy, revenue, or time managing a large construction project,” said Robert Stewart, RCAP Executive Director. “Best of all, these guides provide practical, hands-on help on these topics and assist communities to operate their utility in a more efficient and effective manner.”

The guides are among the ten guides, as well as related multimedia resources, that RCAP is producing this year to aid small, rural communities. Each guide is written and reviewed by field staff who are experts in the subject of the guide they are producing. All guides are general enough to apply to most communities across the country, regardless of their location, size and their state’s rules and regulations. The RCAP national office in Washington, D.C., is responsible for the final production of these resources, which will complement and support RCAP’s field work in providing in-person, customized assistance through its 150 Technical Assistance Providers.

The guides are available at www.rcap.org/commpubs. A list of the other guides that will be produced and a description of each is at the same URL.

The guidebooks are being funded as part of a special grant of ARRA funds secured by RCAP and furnished by the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Rural Development in 2010.

The main distribution of the guides is through the field staff of RCAP’s regional partners. Communities can also obtain the guides as PDFs on the RCAP website at www.rcap.org/commpubs. Communities can view the guides, download and save a copy on their own computers, or print the guides themselves from that URL.

###

For more information, contact Stephen Padre, Director of Communications: 202/470-2808; spadre@rcap.org.

Editors: Graphics of the front covers of the guides accompany this news release. They are high-resolution and suitable for use in print publications with the above text or when used on the web.