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More stimulus funds awarded for rural communities

NEW PRAGUE, Minn. Rural Communities Assistance Partnership (RCAP) has been awarded \$5 million in stimulus funds to provide technical assistance and training for rural communities and tribal nations. Midwest Assistance Program (MAP) is an RCAP partner

“We look forward to applying this additional funding to help our clients find solutions for their water and wastewater system challenges,” said Chris Fierros, MAP chief operating officer.

“RCAP and its partners are excited to be given this opportunity to assist more communities with funds provided by these American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds,” said Robert Stewart, RCAP executive director. “This grant to RCAP will complement and support our efforts to ensure that small communities receive the technical support they need, not only complete their infrastructure projects, but also to ensure their systems are properly managed for long-term sustainability.”

RCAP plans to use the grant for a year-long Technitrain ARRA program, beginning May 1. The majority of the funds will be disbursed through RCAP’s six regional partners to provide technical assistance and training to 420 water and wastewater systems across the U.S. The regional partners expect to hire additional staff to implement the program in communities. The stimulus funds were awarded through USDA Rural Development, which has funded RCAP’s ongoing Technitrain program since 1988.

MAP and the other RCAP partners will coordinate with state and area RD offices to select water and wastewater systems to receive Technitrain assistance.

“The Obama Administration supports the construction of new water and wastewater infrastructure that safeguards the health of rural residents,” said Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack. “These funds will help ensure that operators of rural utility systems receive the training needed to plan, manage and operate new, safe reliable water systems.”

Midwest Assistance Program, Inc., is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping rural communities in a nine-state area improve their environment, quality of life and achieve self sustainability. MAP helps revitalize small communities by working with them to find solutions for their infrastructure, enterprise development, aging, technology or training issues. It’s a member of the Rural Community Assistance Partnership, a national, rural community development network. MAP is an equal-opportunity lender, provider and employer.