

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

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 Kansas

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 Coolidge, KS, obtain funding to complete a project that prevented pollution of the water system. Coolidge utilized a lagoon treatment system for wastewater to serve the town's 95 residents. The lagoon was located in a floodplain near the Arkansas river. Moist conditions caused waste from the lagoon to seep into groundwater, which was the source of drinking water for the town.

Due to the town's small size, it did not have the financial capacity to evaluate and fix the problem on its own. MAP helped the community secure a planning grant from Rural Development (RD) to evaluate the problem and determine appropriate next steps. The evaluation concluded that the lagoon needed to be completely relocated to protect the drinking water source. Relocation of the lagoon was a massive project that required funding from many sources. MAP assisted the town with completing various applications, and as a result, the town has successfully secured the required funding to relocate the lagoon, thereby preventing pollution of the drinking water.

*"An organization to utilize like MAP is a tremendous asset, and an absolute necessity! Our ability to operate, comply regulatorily, and ensure that our community sustains a healthy environment, is more dependent on organizations like MAP with each passing day."*

— Lori Lennen, Coolidge Mayor

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