

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

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 Wyoming

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 Aladdin Water District (WD) obtain ownership of the water system that supplies drinking water to 20 people in the town, as well as hundreds of visitors during the annual Sturgis Motorcycle Rally. The Aladdin WD sources the drinking water from an exploratory well that was drilled in 1995 by the Wyoming Water Development Commission (WWDC). WWDC still owns this well but plans to sell the well to Aladdin WD.

To obtain the funding required to buy the well, the town had to meet certain qualifications, including not exceeding the required Median Household Income (MHI) level. According to an initial evaluation, the MHI in Aladdin was too high to qualify for funding. Aladdin WD officials suspected that the true MHI in the area was much lower than evaluated due to high unemployment in the area, and MAP provided technical assistance to help Aladdin WD re-evaluate the MHI level.

MAP used RCD funds to conduct an additional income study to recalculate the area MHI that reflected the town's true unemployment numbers. MAP and the Aladdin WD were able to show that the area MHI was actually much lower than originally calculated. As a result, Aladdin WD qualified for funding to buy the well from WWDC.

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