



USDA Announces Funding Available for Communities to Assess Future Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Projects

Recovery Act Funding Will Help Rural Communities to Access Technical Expertise

WASHINGTON, July 9, 2009 - Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced that USDA is providing \$14.2 million to help rural communities identify water and wastewater infrastructure needs that can be financed through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. "Many people in smaller communities throughout the country are suffering because their local infrastructure is in desperate need of repair, and this funding will enable these communities to get the technical expertise they need to make these much-needed improvements," said Vilsack. "One of the primary goals of the Recovery Act is to rebuild our communities, and this investment will help us to meet the basic need of providing clean, safe water infrastructure in struggling communities."

The funding will be provided under USDA Rural Development's Rural Water and Wastewater Circuit Rider Program to enable the National Rural Water Association to add 15 water and 71 wastewater technical assistance staff in 2009 and 2010 to help rural communities operate and maintain water and wastewater infrastructure, and provide training and other technical assistance to local staff throughout the country. Known as Circuit Riders, these technical assistance staff will help rural communities prepare proposals for water and wastewater systems, manage construction, offer on-site expertise and ensure that health and environmental protection requirements are met. The assistance provided by Circuit Riders keeps water and wastewater systems in compliance with EPA rules and reduces - often by thousands of dollars - repair and maintenance costs borne by small rural communities that lack sufficient financial resources.

The first \$4.1 million in funding will be for technical assistance services performed between June 1, 2009, and October 31, 2009. The remainder will be used beginning November 1, 2009. In addition to the \$14.2 million, USDA Rural Development anticipates making Recovery Act funds available later in the year through a competitive grant process for further technical assistance services. All states and the Territory of Puerto Rico are eligible to apply.

President Obama signed The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 into law on February 17, 2009. It is designed to jumpstart the nation's economy, create or save millions of jobs and put a down payment on addressing long-neglected challenges so our country can thrive in the 21st century. The Act includes measures to modernize our nation's infrastructure, enhance energy independence, expand educational opportunities, preserve and improve affordable health care, provide tax relief, and protect those in greatest need.



(cont.) USDA Announces Funding Available for Communities to Assess Future Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Projects

More information about USDA's Recovery Act efforts is available at:

www.usda.gov/recovery

More information about the Federal government's efforts on the Recovery Act is available at

www.recovery.gov.

The objectives of the Technical Assistance and Training Grant Program are to:

- 1- Identify and evaluate solutions to water and waste disposal problems in rural areas.
- 2- Assist applicants in preparing applications for water and waste grants made at the State level offices.
- 3- Improve operation and maintenance of existing water and waste disposal facilities in rural areas.

NOTE: Rural areas are defined as any area not in a city or town with a population in excess of 10,000, according to the latest decennial census of the United States.

Eligibility: (for more information, See [Eligibility Section 1775.35](#)).

(a) Entities eligible for grants must be private nonprofit organizations with tax exempt status, designated by the Internal Revenue Service. A nonprofit organization is defined as any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization that:

1. Is operated primarily for scientific, education, service, charitable, or similar purposes in the public interest.
2. Is not organized primarily for profit.
3. Uses its net proceeds to maintain, improve, and/or expand its operations.

(b) Entities must be legally established and located within a state as defined in [§ 1775.2](#).

(c) Organizations must be incorporated by December 31 of the year the application period occurs to be eligible for funds.

(d) Private businesses, Federal agencies, public bodies, and individuals are ineligible for these grants.



(cont.) USDA Announces Funding Available for Communities to Assess Future Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Projects

(e) Applicants must also have the proven ability; background; experience, as evidenced by the organization's satisfactory completion of project(s) similar to those proposed; legal authority; and actual capacity to provide technical assistance and/or training on a regional basis to associations as provided in § 1775.63. Associations are defined as an entity, including a small city or town, that is eligible for Rural Utilities Service (RUS) water and waste financial assistance in accordance with [RUS Regulation 1780, part 7](#). To meet the requirement of actual capacity, an applicant must either:

1. Have the necessary resources to provide technical assistance and/or training to associations in rural areas through its staff, or
2. Be assisted by an affiliate or member organization which has such background and experience and which agrees, in writing, that it will provide the assistance, or
3. Contract with a nonaffiliated organization for not more than 49 percent of the grant to provide the proposed assistance.

**Applications will be accepted from:
October 1 through December 31 of each calendar year.**

Applications may be hand-delivered to the State Office by close of business December 31, or postmarked by midnight December 31 to be considered submitted on time. Applications received after December 31 will NOT be considered in that year's review and will be returned to the applicant.

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal?contentidonly=true&contentid=2009/07/0296.xml>

[http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/tatg.htm#Application_Requirements:](http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/tatg.htm#Application_Requirements)