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## [USDA Partners to Improve Rural Water Infrastructure for Nearly 250,000 People in 103 Communities.](#)

*Projects in 35 States Will Improve Quality of Life and Build a Foundation for Rural Prosperity*

WASHINGTON, July 16, 2018 – Assistant to the Secretary for Rural Development Anne Hazlett today announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is investing \$267 million in [103 infrastructure projects](#) to upgrade water and wastewater systems in rural communities.

“Robust, modern infrastructure is foundational for quality of life and economic opportunity – no matter what zip code you live in,” Hazlett said. “Under Secretary Perdue’s leadership, USDA is committed to being a strong partner in addressing rural infrastructure needs to support a more prosperous future in rural communities.”

USDA is making investments in 35 states through the [Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant program](#). The funds can be used to finance drinking water, storm water drainage and waste disposal systems for rural communities with 10,000 or fewer residents.

Below are some examples of USDA’s partnerships in water infrastructure:

- The Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Tribe in South Dakota will receive a \$116,000 loan to help finance storm sewer infrastructure improvements for a new housing development for the tribal members on the Lake Traverse Indian Reservation. The project will create proper drainage for a 37.5-acre site that will consist of 67 lots for new homes.
- The city of Erin, Tenn., will use a \$2.1 million loan and a \$1.4 million grant to improve its wastewater treatment plant, nearly doubling its capacity. This will help the city recruit more industry. The plant serves the residents of Erin and Tennessee Ridge as well as businesses in the Houston County Industrial Park. However, it is obsolete and very expensive to operate. USDA’s investment will benefit 625 commercial and residential customers.
- The town of Alexander, N.Y., in Genesee County, will receive a \$2.7 million loan and a \$2.2 million grant to create Water District #5. Water quality testing indicates that a significant portion of residents’ wells have coliform and E. coli contamination, which poses serious public health threats. This project will alleviate the health problems and extend public water service to 124 residential and three non-residential users in the town who currently do not have safe, potable water.

In FY 2018, Congress provided a historic level of funding for water and wastewater infrastructure. The 2018 Omnibus spending bill includes \$5.2 billion for USDA loans and grants, up from \$1.2 billion in FY 2017. It also directs Agriculture Secretary Perdue to make investments in rural communities with the greatest infrastructure needs.

Rural community leaders can apply for these funds electronically by using the interactive [RD Apply tool](#). They can also apply through one of USDA Rural Development’s [state or field offices](#).

In April 2017, President Donald J. Trump established the Interagency Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity to identify legislative, regulatory and policy changes that could promote agriculture

and prosperity in rural communities. In January 2018, Secretary Perdue presented the Task Force's findings to President Trump. These findings included 31 recommendations to align the federal government with state, local and tribal governments to take advantage of opportunities that exist in rural America. Increasing investments in rural infrastructure is a key recommendation of the task force.

To view the report in its entirety, please view the [Report to the President of the United States from the Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity](#). In addition, to view the categories of the recommendations, please view the [Rural Prosperity infographic](#).

USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities and create jobs in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community services such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural areas. For more information, visit [www.rd.usda.gov](http://www.rd.usda.gov).

#### Release & Contact Info

Press Release

Release No. 0146.18

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