

USDA: Partners to improve rural water infrastructure

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STEVENS POINT, Wis, July 19, 2018 – Wisconsin Rural Development State Director Frank Frassetto announced today that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is investing \$267 million in [103 infrastructure projects](#) (PDF, 298 KB) to upgrade water and wastewater systems in rural communities.

“These infrastructure improvements demonstrate USDA’s commitment to ensure Wisconsin residents have access to clean drinking water,” Frassetto said. “Rural Development can help with upgrades, expansions and replacements of essential community facilities and we’re ready to be your partner to increase rural prosperity.”

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.

Three Wisconsin communities received over \$4 million in infrastructure investments. For example, the Village of Plum City will receive a \$1.1 million loan and \$900,000 grant for Waste Water Treatment Plant upgrades as their current facility is outdated and in need of repair. This investment is a result of previous funding received through USDA’s [Special Evaluation Assistance for Rural Communities and Households](#) program.

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](#) (PDF, 5.4 MB). In addition, to view the categories of the recommendations, please view the [Rural Prosperity infographic](#) (PDF, 190 KB).

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/wi.