

USDA: Highlighting over \$44 million in rural wastewater & biofuel Infrastructure investments in Wisconsin, on Earth Day

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STEVENS POINT, Wis., April 22, 2021 – Today, in honor of Earth Day 2021, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Wisconsin Rural Development Acting State Director Michelle Wallace announced that USDA [is investing \\$487 million in critical infrastructure that will help communities in 45 states](#) build back better and stronger while prioritizing climate-smart solutions and environmental stewardship. USDA is making the investments under the [Water and Environmental Program](#), the [Rural Energy for America Program](#), the [Electric Loan Program](#) and the [Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program](#).

“Through our programs, USDA continues to fund rural infrastructure projects that support communities by providing greater economic opportunities while protecting natural resources for future generations,” Wallace said. “The investments we are announcing today demonstrate how the Biden-Harris Administration has put rural communities at the heart of clean energy capabilities.”

Wisconsin highlights of today’s announcement include investments in:

Rural Water and Wastewater Infrastructure

USDA is investing \$374 million through the Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant Program to modernize rural drinking water and wastewater infrastructure in 31 states. Through its Water and Environmental Programs, USDA funds vital water, wastewater, storm sewer and solid waste infrastructure that directly benefits the

health, economic vitality and environment of rural America.

The City of Waupun will celebrate the groundbreaking of their \$36 million wastewater treatment plant upgrade on May 6th, funded through a USDA \$28 million loan and \$8 million grant. The local utility commission is upgrading their plant to meet strict nutrient reduction requirements for their wastewater discharge permit. This investment will serve approximately 9,000 residents.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources recently reduced the phosphorus discharge limits at Waupun by more than 95% resulting in limits lower than 0.05 milligrams per liter. To comply with these new ultra-low phosphorus limits, Waupun will use a algae-based Advanced Biological Nutrient Recovery (ABNR) system from CLEARAS Water Recovery emerged as the preferred and low-cost option. The ABNR system uses algae to uptake phosphorus from the wastewater and then processes the phosphorus-rich algae into a marketable co-product. This dried algae product will be sold as an industrial feedstock to offset some ABNR system expenses, with an initial customer planning to produce insoles from the dried algae.

USDA supports the ABNR system because it reduces nutrient levels to protect the environment and uses technology that is natural and cost effective. The ABNR system is an example of waste-to-resource technologies that may also help other rural communities across the U.S. meet waste treatment goals.

Biofuel Infrastructure

USDA is investing \$18.4 million in 20 states through the Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP) to build infrastructure to help expand the availability of higher-blend renewable fuels by approximately 218 million gallons per year. This will give consumers more environmentally friendly fuel choices when they fill-up at the pump.

Bulk Petroleum Corp is receiving a \$3.2 million grant to replace 165 dispensers and 30 storage tanks at 36 fueling stations in Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana and Iowa. Stations and locations benefitting from this grant are Salem, Stevens Point, Lodi, Pewaukee, Cudahy, South Milwaukee, Two Rivers, Random Lake, Sturgeon Bay, Green Bay, Brussels, Sheboygan, Waukesha, Milwaukee and Oak Creek. This project increases the amount of ethanol sold by over 12 million gallons per year.

Kwik Trip Inc is receiving a \$4.8 million grant to replace 65 dispensers and 10

storage tanks at six fueling stations, as well as install 298 dispensers at 25 fueling stations in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa. Stations and locations benefitting from this grant are Prairie Du Chien, River Falls, Kenosha, Fennimore, Dodgeville, Waukesha, West Bend, Crivitz, Medford, Beaver Dam, Hayward, Eau Claire, Wisconsin Dells, Antigo and Janesville. This project will increase the amount of ethanol sold by over 45 million gallons per year.

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 facilities 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, call us at 715-345-7600 or email wi-rd-stateoffice@usda.gov.

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