

# RURAL AMERICA RELIES ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT



NATIONAL  
RURAL WATER  
ASSOCIATION

## USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT WATER PROGRAMS ENSURE AFFORDABILITY

### AFFORDABILITY FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES

Affordability is the key factor for small and rural communities in their decisions to upgrade and enhance water services for their customers.

Skyrocketing construction costs, disrupted supply chains, and ever increasing regulatory requirements are just a few of the roadblocks rural America faces when financing critical water infrastructure.

Rural Development's Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant Program is a lifeline for rural America, funding clean and reliable water systems nationwide.

America has 49,397 community water systems, most of which are small. Small and rural communities lack economies of scale. Passing the costs of unfunded mandates onto customers is not feasible without assistance from USDA Rural Development.

**91%**  
of America's  
water systems are small

Grant costs can cover up to 75% of total development costs for the most vulnerable communities, which is necessary to provide affordable rates. For the majority of small and rural communities, a grant/loan mix is critical to keep projects affordable. USDA RD needs an adequate amount of baseline grant funding to maintain their mission to serve rural America.

*Today's Congressional policies and funding decisions are jeopardizing the ability of every community in rural America to keep water and wastewater services affordable. Budget cuts will leave USDA WEP unable to accomplish its mission. WEP is instrumental in helping rural America maintain affordable and sustainable water access for all rural people.*

### USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT WATER & ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS (WEP)

For many underserved communities, USDA Rural Development is the lender of first opportunity. RD exclusively serves small and rural communities. Without this program, many rural Americans will lose access to affordable safe and clean water.

In 2023, WEP excelled in their mission to serve rural America:

72% of WEP funded projects benefited communities with populations of 2,500 or less.

45% of WEP funded projects benefited communities with populations of 1,000 or less.

### TELL CONGRESS NOW

**KEEP RURAL AMERICA STRONG!**

Scan the QR Code to learn more about how you can help keep Rural America Strong!



# THE IMPACT

## WEP IS AFFORDABLE SOLUTION FOR SARGEANT, MINNESOTA

### RURAL AMERICA DESERVES RURAL DEVELOPMENT

“USDA Rural Development funding is critical to the survival of this community.”

-Jake Williams, Minnesota Rural Water Association Circuit Rider

“The Council knows the city’s residents are concerned about water rates staying affordable. Without USDA Rural Development funding for this project, there are no guarantees. If the city loses water, it won’t be a city anymore.”

-Roger Nelson, City of Sargeant Mayor

### IMPACT IN ACTION

Sargeant, Minnesota is home to 70 residents and relies on an over 100-year-old pressure tank.

While the tank has faithfully served the community, it is now failing. Replacing the tank is technically difficult, and with little revenue coming into the city, finding a solution is a top priority. For those that call Sargeant home, they don’t want to lose their water.

“I know that many city residents and businesses would like an upgrade to the water we have in town,” noted Mayor Roger Nelson. “Luckily, we have had great maintenance personnel over the years that have worked feverishly to maintain what we have but things do wear out.”

Rehabilitating the current tank will be less financially burdensome, but difficult as the pressure tank encompasses nearly the entirety of the building it is housed in, leaving little room to work and make enhancements. The city has been exploring all options available, and the expected costs to rehabilitate the current tank are up to \$300,000.

USDA Rural Development has provided an affordable funding option for Sargeant to rehabilitate their pressure tank, leaving residents hopeful for a bright future for their community. If USDA RD WEP isn’t fully funded by Congress, these hopes may be dashed and the proposed project put in danger of not being funded or completed.

### CALL TO ACTION

#### Fund Water Infrastructure - Stand Up for USDA Rural Development

Rural Development will continue to play a vital role in modernizing, preserving, and protecting rural America’s infrastructure and public health. You can help secure its future today by signing the pledge and writing to your Congressional representatives today.

Providing adequate support and resources necessary to protect and enhance the environment, public health, sustainability of utilities, and economic vitality of rural America with clean, affordable, and safe water service is a primary responsibility for our federal elected officials.

Visit [www.ruralwaterstrong.org](http://www.ruralwaterstrong.org) to learn more.



NRWA



**SARGEANT, MN  
POPULATION | 70  
TANK BUILT | 1900**