

Water & Waste Disposal Loan & Grant Program

Success Story: Solar Replaces Sludge in Epping, New Hampshire

\$5.7 Million

WWD loan from
USDA RD

\$7.3 Million

WWD grant from
USDA RD

\$500,000

community development
block grant

1.5 MW

Solar array producing
2,625,000 kWh annually

\$180,000

Annual energy
cost savings

1700

Epping residents
positively impacted

The NEED

In June 2016, the EPA issued an administrative order to Epping in response to violations of their National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit: levels of total phosphorous, ammonia, nitrogen and arsenic exceeded toxicity limits. Two unlined lagoons used for wastewater and sludge were contaminating ground water and surface water, creating significant environmental and public-health hazards for town residents and those downstream of the nearby Lamprey River.

The CHALLENGE

Rockingham County is one of four federally designated disaster counties in New Hampshire due to flooding, and removing outdated sewer lagoons within these counties is a high priority. The EPA ordered the closure and decommissioning of the lagoons, but they still contain large volumes of septage and sludge. This process, and the energy demand of the recently built wastewater treatment facility, represents a significant cost to town residents.

The SOLUTION

Epping is using a USDA RD grant/loan package to transform the sludge lagoons into a large solar array. A \$500K Community Development Block Grant will also contribute to the project, and the loan features an historically low interest rate, thus lightening the financial burden on taxpayers. Solar energy to run the wastewater treatment plant offsets its \$15K monthly power bill, and the improved soil and water quality will have positive health impacts for the town and others downstream on the Lamprey River.

For program regulations and requirements, please go to the [USDA RD fact sheet](#).

