

WISCONSIN

Together,
America
Prosper.



2021-2024 Investments

Photo: Third St., Wausau, by Dave Kallaway

Summary

USDA Rural Development invests in rural America with loan, grant, and loan guarantee programs because we understand a strong community is rooted in its people. The commitment and resources we bring to rural communities helps drive economic security and prosperity. Our programs expand access to high-speed internet, electric, and transportation infrastructure, and support business growth, healthcare, education, housing, and other community essentials.

Since fiscal year (FY) 2021, USDA Rural Development has invested over **\$2.74 billion** in rural Wisconsin. About 1.9 million of the state's 5.9 million residents live in rural areas. Wisconsin Rural Development currently has 62 employees, with the state office located in Stevens Point, and field offices in Dodgeville, Fond du Lac, Menomonie, Shawano, and Spooner.

We are committed to helping improve the economy and quality of life in rural America. Through our programs, we help rural Americans in many ways.

- We offer loans, grants and loan guarantees to help create jobs and support economic development and essential services such as housing; health care; first responder services and equipment; and water, electric and communications infrastructure.
- We promote economic development by way of loans to qualifying businesses through banks, credit unions and community-managed lending pools. We offer technical assistance and information to help agricultural producers and cooperatives get started and improve the effectiveness of their operations.
- We provide technical assistance to help communities undertake community empowerment programs.
- We help rural residents buy or rent safe, affordable housing and make health and safety repairs to their homes.



Photo: USDA Rural Development Wisconsin employees at Oneida County Courthouse, Rhinelander, by Melany Hastreiter



Highlights of Fiscal Year 2024 Investments

Businesses and Cooperatives: More than **\$121.5 million** was invested to help rural businesses build stronger, more resilient communities, creating or saving nearly 400 jobs along the way.

Housing: Wisconsin Rural Development invested **\$84.2 million** in direct and guaranteed loans and grants through Single Family Housing last year, including helping 490 low- and moderate-income families buy or repair homes. We continue to promote packaging through intermediaries, and we are cultivating partnerships with local Habitat for Humanity affiliates. In addition, Rural Development invested **\$24 million** in Multi-family Housing rental assistance to help more than 660 families find or stay in affordable rental housing.

Community Facilities: Nearly **\$35.2 million** was invested across 23 projects to build, buy, or improve infrastructure and equipment necessary to provide essential community services to rural areas of the state.

High-Speed Internet and Telecom Infrastructure: More than \$1 billion was invested to build or repair modern electric and high-speed internet infrastructure. For example, Edgerton Hospital and Health Services received a **\$66,698** grant to provide telemedicine services in Rock County.

Water and Environmental Programs: More than **\$28 million** was invested across 15 projects in 13 communities to bring clean drinking water and sanitary wastewater treatment to rural residents.

Photo Above: The Mellen School District is just one of many to benefit from a [\\$999,480 Distance Learning and Telemedicine grant](#) that Northwood Technical College received in 2024 to provide distance learning services to 38 project sites in Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Dodge, Douglas, Florence, Iron, Juneau, Marinette, Sawyer, St. Croix and Taylor counties. Photo by Tegan Griffith

Wisconsin Area Office Locations

Area 1: Dodgeville Area Office

1124 Professional Drive
Suite 100 Dodgeville, WI 53533
(608) 935-2791
Wi-rd-dodgeville@usda.gov

Area 2: Shawano Area Office

603 Lakeland Road
Shawano, WI 54166
(715) 524-8522
Wi-rd-shawano@usda.gov

Area 3: Fond du Lac Area Office

W6529 Forest Ave., Suite 200
Fond du Lac, WI 54937
(920) 907-2976
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Area 4: Menomonie Area Office

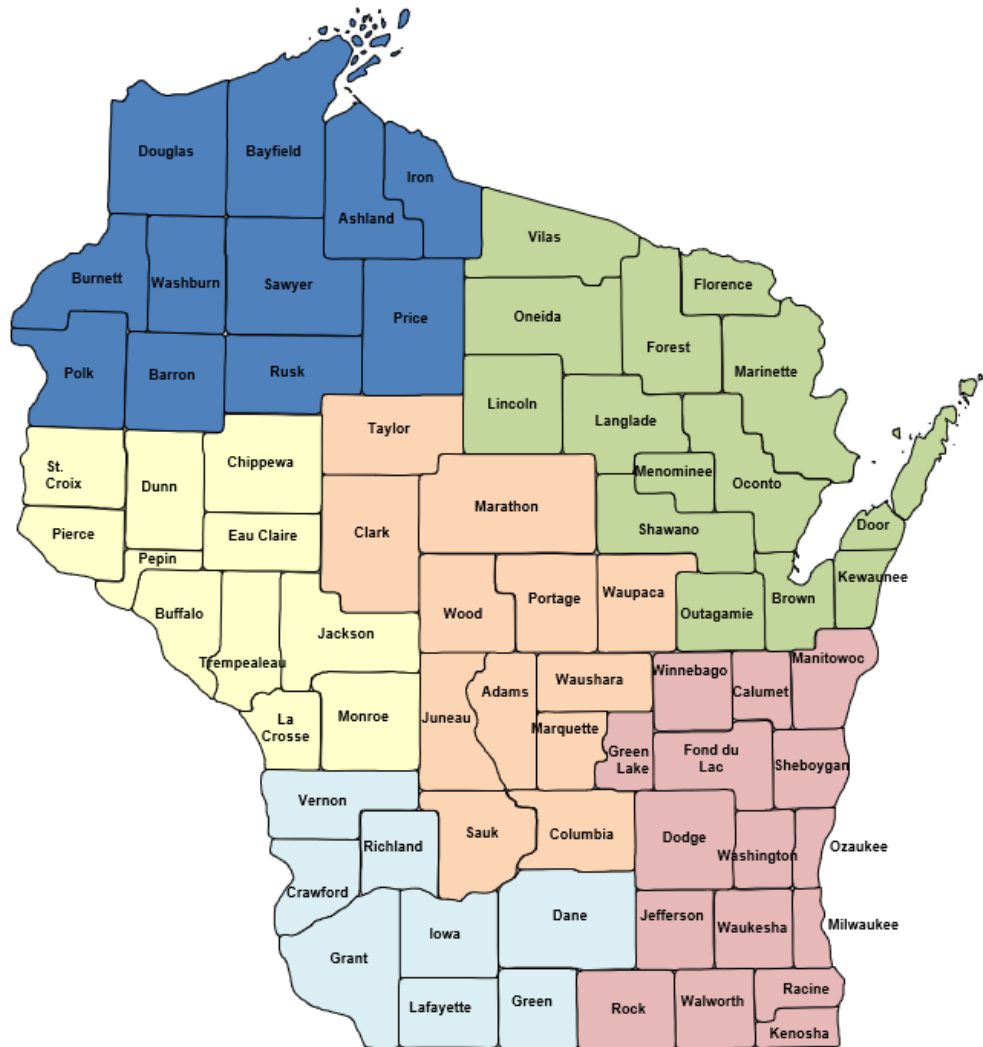
390 Red Cedar Street, Suite C
Menomonie, WI 54751
(715) 232-2614
Wi-rd-menomonie@usda.gov

Area 5: Stevens Point Area Office

5417 Clem's Way
Stevens Point, WI 54482
(715) 345-7601
Wi-rd-stevenspoint@usda.gov

Area 6: Spooner Area Office

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Economic Investments

BUSINESS PROGRAMS

Purpose

Business Programs provide financial backing and technical assistance to stimulate business creation and growth. The programs work through partnerships with public and private community-based organizations and financial institutions to provide financial assistance, business development, and technical assistance to rural businesses.

Energy Programs offer funding to complete energy audits, provide renewable energy development assistance, make energy efficiency improvements and install renewable energy systems.

Funding

Business Programs help to provide capital, equipment, space, job training, and entrepreneurial skills that can help to start and/or grow a business. They also support the creation and preservation of quality jobs in rural areas

Energy Programs help convert older heating sources to cleaner technologies, produce advanced biofuels, install solar panels, build biorefineries, and much more.

Investment Benefits

These investments have helped rural small businesses to:

- Increase ethanol use for gasoline by millions of gallons,
- Produce hundreds of millions of kilowatt hours of energy,
- Save millions of dollars to their bottom line, and
- Create new jobs and save existing jobs.

**\$368 million
invested
since 2021**

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

[Value-Added Producer Grants](#) (“VAPGs”)

At [Lovefood Farm](#) in Stoughton (*photo above*), progress continues after the farm received two USDA grants. One in 2016 for planning and the other in 2020 for working capital. The VAPG program helps agricultural producers enter into value-added activities to generate new products, create and expand marketing opportunities, and increase producer income.

In 2023, [Keene Garlic](#), in Madison, [received a \\$259,000 VAPG](#) to process and market garlic products. The project is expected to create 4 jobs and increase customer base by 5,020 and revenue by **\$515,000**.



Photo above: In 2024, the [West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission](#), in partnership with [Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission](#) and the rest of the Northwestern [Rural Partners Network](#) Communities, will use a \$70,000 USDA [Rural Business Development Grant](#) to showcase outdoor recreation assets and cultivate new opportunities. [These collective efforts will enhance life and enrich daily experiences](#) for people across Buffalo, Chippewa, Clark, Dunn, Eau Claire, Jackson, Pepin, and Trempealeau counties. Photo by Valerie Knurr

In 2024, [Abel Project LLC](#) received \$26.2 million in loan guarantees through the Business & Industry Guaranteed Loan Program and the [Rural Energy for America Program \(REAP\)](#), along with a \$1 million REAP grant. Funding allowed the farm to install an anaerobic digester that will convert dairy waste to Renewable Natural Gas. This project will provide significant economic benefit to the farmer by generating additional income, lowering labor expenses and lowering land costs, along with numerous environmental benefits. The project created 8 new, high-paying jobs.

2024		
Program	Number of Projects	Amount
Advanced Biofuel Payment Program	8	\$20,598
Business and Industry Loan Guarantees (B&I) (BP)	5	\$33,887,495
Fertilizer Product Expansion Program (FPEP)	2	\$4,281,107
Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program	8	\$17,085,474
Intermediary Relending Program (IRP)	1	\$887,973
Rural Business Development Grants (RBDG)	7	\$507,600
Rural Cooperative Development Grants (RCDG)	1	\$199,871
Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDLG)	1	\$200,000
Rural Energy for America Program Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvement Loans and Grants	150	\$62,146,347
Rural Energy for America Technical Assistance Grant Program	1	\$500,000
Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program (RMAP)	5	\$663,248
Socially Disadvantaged Group Grants (SDGG)	1	\$155,009
Value Added Producer Grants (VAPG)	4	\$960,087
Total	194	\$121,494,809

2023		
Program	Number of Projects	Amount
Advanced Biofuel Payment Program	7	\$22,910
Business and Industry Loan Guarantees (B&I) (BP)	3	\$8,436,161
Biofuel Producer Program	6	\$4,533,644
Fertilizer Product Expansion Program (FPEP)	3	\$12,013,883
Food Supply Chain Guaranteed Loan Program	3	\$21,000,000
Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program	1	\$259,853
Rural Business Development Grants (RBDG)	7	\$809,443
Rural Cooperative Development Grants (RCDG)	1	\$199,985
Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program	1	\$1,599,925
Rural Energy for America Program Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvement Loans and Grants	64	\$7,013,367
Rural Energy for America Technical Assistance Grant Program	1	\$450,000
Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program (RMAP)	3	\$94,668
Value Added Producer Grants (VAPG)	6	\$1,299,922
Total	106	\$57,733,761

2022		
Program	Number of Projects	Amount
Advanced Biofuel Payment Program	13	\$26,832
Biofuel Producer Program	6	\$36,526,470
Business and Industry Loan Guarantees (B&I)	1	\$4,600,000
Rural Business Development Grants (RBDG)	10	\$638,000
Rural Cooperative Development Grants (RCDG)	2	\$399,058
Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDLG)	1	\$296,500
Rural Energy for America Program Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvement Loans and Grants	46	\$967,965
Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program (RMAP)	3	\$152,063
Socially Disadvantaged Group Grants (SDGG)	1	\$44,639
Value Added Producer Grants (VAPG)	7	\$939,355
Total	90	\$44,590,882

2021		
Program	Number of Projects	Amount
Advanced Biofuel Payment Program	18	\$56,246
Biorefinery, Renewable Chemical, and Biobased Product Manufacturing Assistance Program	2	\$104,589,829
Business and Industry Loan Guarantees (B&I)	13	\$24,744,704
Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program	4	\$7,826,299
Rural Business Development Grants (RBDG)	10	\$732,682
Rural Cooperative Development Grants (RCDG)	2	\$396,980
Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDLG)	2	\$500,000
Rural Energy for America Program Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvement Loans and Grants	24	\$1,244,478
Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program (RMAP)	3	\$165,264
Value Added Producer Grants (VAPG)	23	\$4,067,577
Total	100	\$144,324,059



Housing Investments

SINGLE AND MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING

Photo: In 2022, [Alma Flores moved her family of 5](#) from a 2-bedroom apartment to a 4-bedroom house in New Richmond. Photo by Tegan Griffith

Single-Family Housing Programs

Provide families and individuals with the opportunity to buy, build, or repair safe and affordable homes located in rural America. Eligibility for these loans, loan guarantees, and grants is based on income and varies according to the average median income for each area.

Multi-Family Housing Programs

Provide affordable multi-family rental housing in rural areas by financing projects geared for low-income, elderly and disabled individuals and families as well as domestic farm laborers. We extend our reach by guaranteeing loans for affordable rental housing designed for low to moderate-income residents in rural areas and towns.

Investment Benefits

Since 2021, these investments have helped:

- Nearly 4,000 individuals and families find affordable homeownership,
- 215 low-income and elderly individuals and families make essential home repairs so they can remain in their current homes, and
- Nearly 1,100 individuals and families find affordable rental units.



**\$770 million
invested
since 2021**

Photo: [Habitat Partnership Leads to Homeownership for Ellsworth Family](#)

A few days after the St. Croix Valley Habitat for Humanity celebrated its 28th year of helping families access safe, affordable housing in Wisconsin, a local mother and healthcare worker, Taylor, and her two children joined volunteers on a snowy afternoon in March to break ground on their new home in Ellsworth. Photo by Tegan Griffith

2024		
Program	Number of Projects	Amount
Single Family Direct (502 Loans and 504 Loans / Grants)	92	\$11,570,005
Single Family Housing Guaranteed Loans	398	\$72,629,068
Multi-Family Housing	724	\$24,120,246
Total	1,214	\$108,319,319

2023		
Program	Number of Projects	Amount
Single Family Direct (502 Loans and 504 Loans / Grants)	140	\$14,695,781
Single Family Housing Guaranteed Loans	499	\$86,357,845
Multi-Family Housing	783	\$26,545,618
Total	1,422	\$127,599,244

2022		
Program	Number of Projects	Amount
Single Family Direct (502 Loans and 504 Loans / Grants)	133	\$13,435,495
Single Family Housing Guaranteed Loans	998	\$168,382,575
Multi-Family Housing	910	\$22,105,641
Total	2,041	\$203,923,711

2021		
Program	Number of Projects	Amount
Single Family Direct (502 Loans and 504 Loans / Grants)	160	\$14,782,699
Single Family Housing Guaranteed Loans	1,786	\$288,538,958
Multi-Family Housing	970	\$26,544,784
Total	2,916	\$329,866,441



Community Investments

COMMUNITY FACILITIES PROGRAM

Purpose

The Community Facilities Program provides affordable funding to develop community facilities in rural areas that provide an essential service to the local community.

Funding

Public bodies, non-profit organizations and federally recognized Tribes can use Community Facilities funding to construct, expand or improve facilities that provide health care, education, public safety, and public services, such as fire and rescue stations, village and town halls, health care clinics, hospitals, adult and childcare centers, assisted living facilities, rehabilitation centers, public buildings, schools, libraries and more.

Investment Benefits

These investments have helped to:

- Build or improve community infrastructure to benefit rural residents, including Tribal members; and
- Finance the costs for land acquisition, professional fees and to purchase equipment.

PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHT

2024 investments include two \$278,216 Tribal College Initiative Grants for the College of Menominee Nation and Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe University.

Photo above: The city of Portage used a \$100,000 Community Facilities grant to purchase a new fire truck. The fire truck was dedicated in December 2024. The fire department serves 10,254 residents in the city of Portage, four area townships (Caledonia, Fort Winnebago, Lewiston and Pacific) and a regional HazMat response team equipped for Type III responses. Due to its age, the City plans to replace Engine 8 that has been assigned to reserve status as the last unit out for response. Engine 8's age has made maintenance, repair and required pumping certification unattainable due to its obsolescence.

**\$141 million
invested
since 2021**



Historic library lovingly restored and significantly expanded in Baraboo

In partnership with a \$6 million loan through USDA's [Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant program](#), [Carnegie-Schadde Memorial Public](#) preserved the long-standing historic facility and also expanded to enhance learning, connection and growth opportunities for the more than 23,000 residents. Photo by Tegan Griffith

New 75,000-square-foot critical access hospital in Darlington

With help from a nearly \$46 million loan and \$9 million in grants through USDA's [Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant](#) program, and a partnership with private lender Compeer Financial on a \$5 million loan guaranteed through USDA's [Community Facilities Guaranteed Loan](#) program, a new 75,000-square-foot critical access hospital is being built in Lafayette County to address growing needs. Memorial Hospital will feature 24 beds, an emergency department, laboratory, radiology, surgical eyecare, rehabilitation and dietary facilities and administration offices.



2024		
Program	Number of Projects	Amount
Community Facilities Direct Loans	1	\$785,000
Community Facilities Grants	20	\$33,872,777
Tribal College Grants	2	\$556,432
Total	23	\$35,214,209

2023		
Program	Number of Projects	Amount
Community Facilities Grants	17	\$21,186,400
Emergency Rural Health Care (ERHC) Grants	2	\$2,000,000
Tribal College Grants	2	\$704,000
Total	21	\$23,890,400

2022		
Program	Number of Projects	Amount
Community Facilities Direct Loans	5	\$63,557,000
Community Facilities Grants	8	\$682,150
Community Facilities Guaranteed Loans	1	\$5,000,000
Emergency Rural Health Care (ERHC) Grants	14	\$5,288,823
Tribal College Grants	2	\$689,790
Total	30	\$75,217,763

2021		
Program	Number of Projects	Amount
CF Direct Loans	2	\$2,767,000
CF Grants	26	\$3,310,505
Tribal College Grants	2	\$350,896
Total	30	\$6,428,401

Electric and Telecom Investments

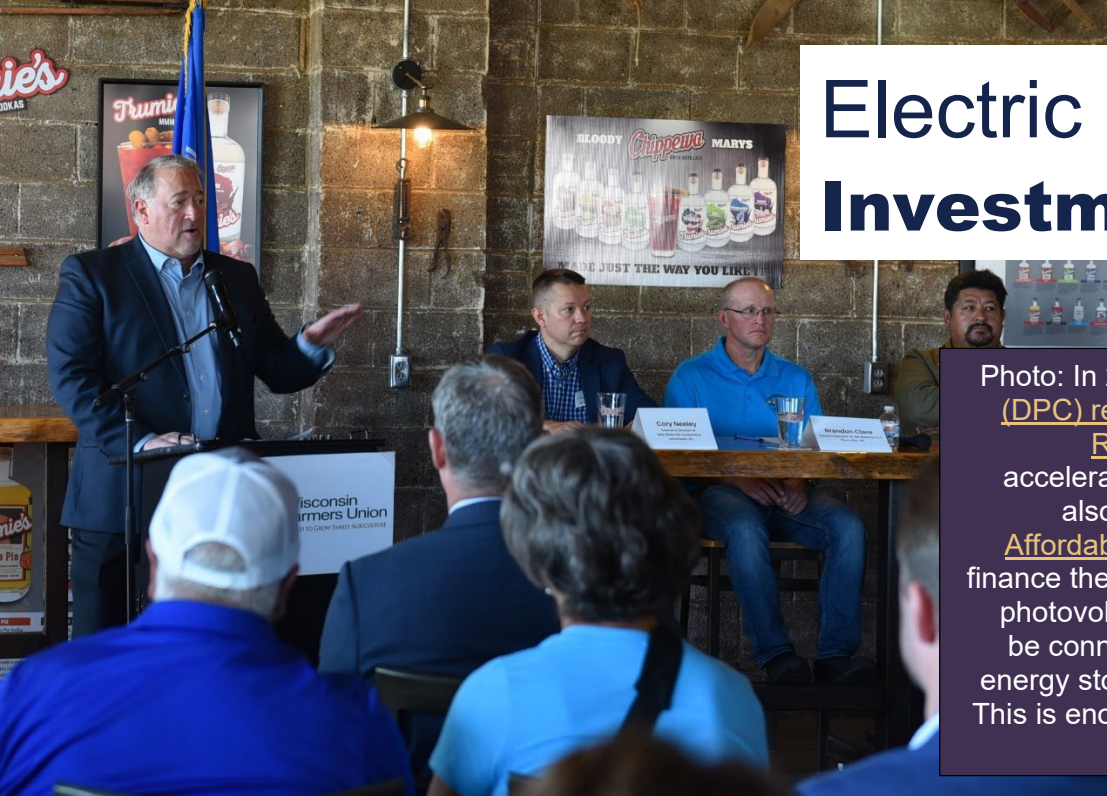


Photo: In 2024, [Dairyland Power Cooperative \(DPC\)](#) received \$579 million in [Empowering Rural America](#) (New ERA) funding to accelerate the clean energy transition. DPC also received \$15.6 million in [Powering Affordable Clean Energy \(PACE\)](#) funding to finance the installation of 2 megawatts of solar photovoltaic generation at 2 sites, which will be connected to a 4-megawatt-hour battery energy storage system in western Wisconsin. This is enough electricity to power up to 1,000 homes.

Purpose

The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) includes programs that provide capital to maintain, expand, upgrade, and modernize America's vast rural electric and high-speed internet infrastructure.

Funding

Under the authority of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, RUS programs make direct loans and loan guarantees, as well as grants and other energy project financing to high-speed internet and electric utilities (wholesale and retail providers of electricity).

Investment Benefits

These investments have helped to:

- Connect new consumers,
- Build or improve thousands of miles of new electric transmission line,
- Invest in smart grid technologies,
- Improve general utility services for consumers,
- Construct hundreds of miles of fiber-to-home high-speed internet to hundreds of new households, and
- Connect elementary, middle and high school students to distance learning technology.

**\$1.1 billion
invested
since 2021**

PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

In 2023, the Reedsburg Utility Commission received a \$28 million [ReConnect](#) loan to deploy a high-speed, fiber-to-the-premises network that will benefit 9,661 people, 319 businesses, 689 farms and eight educational facilities in Richland, Dane, Iowa, Juneau, and Sauk counties.



USDA Photo by Lance Cheung

Water and Environmental Investments

WATER & ENVIRONMENTAL **PROGRAMS**

In 2021, [the city of Bloomer received \\$27.6 million under the Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant Program](#) to replace all lead service lines, lead-jointed water main pipes and sanitary sewer mains. These improvements will help the city to reduce lead limits in their water distribution system for 3,539 people in Chippewa County. Funding also will help to prevent inflow and infiltration issues from cracked piping.

Purpose

The Water & Environmental Programs (WEP) help rural communities obtain technical assistance and financing necessary to develop drinking water and waste disposal systems.

Funding

Public bodies, non-profit organizations and federally recognized Tribes can use WEP programs to construct and rehabilitate water and waste facilities in rural communities. It is the only Federal program exclusively focused on rural water and waste infrastructure needs of rural communities with populations of 10,000 or less. WEP also provides funding to organizations that provide technical assistance and training to rural communities in relation to their water and waste activities.

Investment Benefits

These investments have helped to:

- Build or improve water/waste infrastructure for rural communities,
- Access affordable feasibility studies, design and technical assistance for proposed water and waste projects, and
- Reduce health risks involved water and wastewater.

**\$393 million
invested
since 2021**

WATER & ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS

2024		
Program	Number of Projects	Amount
Decentralized Water Systems Grants	1	\$323,263
Predevelopment Planning Grants	2	\$45,000
Special Evaluation Assistance for Rural Communities and Households Grants (SEARCH)	4	\$115,000
Water & Waste Disposal Direct Loans	2	\$3,852,000
Water & Waste Disposal Loan/Grant Combos	5	\$23,672,000
Total	15	\$28,007,263

2023		
Program	Number of Projects	Amount
Water & Waste Disposal Direct Loans	5	\$28,296,000
Water & Waste Disposal Loan/Grant Combos	12	\$23,493,000
Total	17	\$51,789,000

2022		
Program	Number of Projects	Amount
Water & Waste Disposal Grants	2	\$2,100,000
Water & Waste Disposal Direct Loans	14	\$88,261,000
Water & Waste Disposal Loan/Grant Combos	13	\$51,281,000
Total	29	\$141,642,000

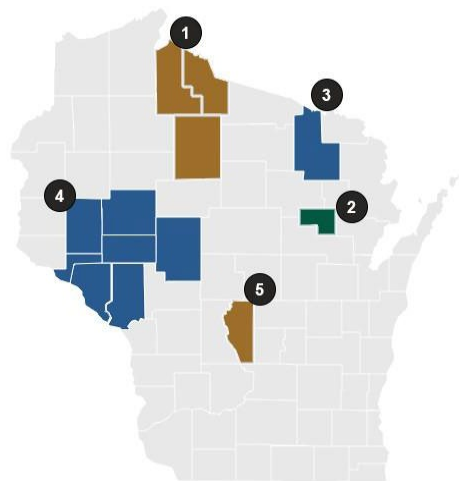
2021		
Program	Number of Projects	Amount
Water & Waste Disposal Grants	3	\$993,000
Water & Waste Disposal Direct Loans	3	\$27,125,000
Water & Waste Disposal Loan/Grant Combos	22	\$143,187,000
Total	28	\$171,305,000

Rural Partners Network (“RPN”)

RPN works with 25+ federal agencies, along with state organizations and philanthropic partners to support rural Wisconsin communities.

There are 13 counties within 5 community networks:

- (1) Northern Network: Ashland, Iron, Price
- (2) Greater Menominee Network: Menominee County and Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin
- (3) Forest County Network: Forest
- (4) Northwestern Network: Buffalo, Chippewa, Clark, Dunn, Eau Claire, Pepin, Trempealeau
- (5) Adams Visionary Network: Adams



2024 RPN Highlights

340
Rural stakeholders and federal or state agencies connected at annually RPN-hosted Federal Partner Forums

6,000+
RPN Newsletter subscribers

50
RPN-hosted virtual events on housing, outdoor recreation and other popular topics

26
Projects advanced through the work of RPN and financial support or technical assistance from federal, state, and philanthropic organizations

\$29M
federal, state, local, and philanthropic resources.

In Wisconsin, 3 USDA RD Community Liaisons help RPN communities clarify local priorities, create successful strategies, navigate resources, connect to providers and funders, develop strong project applications, and build long-term capacity:

- Expanding community connections in local networks through stakeholder introductions and facilitated meetings,
- Increasing awareness of federal, state, and philanthropic agencies that support rural project planning, funding, and development,
- Bringing federal partners and technical assistance providers to rural communities to build capacity,
- Improving access to resources for infrastructure, job creation, and economic development in rural areas, and
- Providing opportunities to advance goals and strategies that build strength in rural communities.

Stay Connected with RPN Wisconsin: follow [@RD_Wisconsin](#) on X and visit www.rural.gov.



Photo: In 2024, David Blashe’s small cabinet manufacturing company in Marion received a \$13,200 REAP grant to install a small solar array. This project is anticipated to save \$981 per year and replaces 7,377 kilowatt hours (89 percent of the business’ energy use) per year, which is enough energy to power one home.

Photo by Tegan Griffith

USDA Rural Development Wisconsin

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Learn more about our programs at: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/all-programs>

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