

Ohio

Water & Environmental Programs | Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant Program

Appalachian Ohio Village Breaks Ground on New Water Project



Community leaders and partners gathered to celebrate groundbreaking at the Village of Chauncey's (OH) Phase 2 wastewater infrastructure project. USDA Photo.

The Village of Chauncey (pronounced Chance – E), is a small, rural community tucked away in the heart of Appalachian Ohio's Athens County. Recently, community leaders, residents, and partners celebrated a groundbreaking to mark the start of construction on a wastewater infrastructure project designed to improve quality of life for more than 900 residents.

"This has been a labor of love for five years and has been the topic of every meeting we've had," said Amy Renner, mayor of the Village of Chauncey. "So, to take this moment today really means a lot to us and it reminds us why we are putting in all this work to make a difference."

The village's clay pipe wastewater collection system was built in the 1950s and is at the end of its serviceable lifecycle. Because of the system's age, inflow at the village's sewer facility was overwhelmed by stormwater getting into the system. Subject to chronic breaks, it costs the village time and money because of constant monitoring and repairs.

"Chauncey's been talking about the necessity of this project for over 30 years now, and in 2020 we made the decision that enough was enough, and we were actually going to do something about it," said Mayor Renner. "We were well overdue for a replacement, and this is really going to allow us to do a lot of the big community development work that we've been wanting to do for a long time."

So, local leaders connected with USDA's Rural Development's team in Hillsboro, Ohio, and learned about the [Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant](#) program to help fund the replacement project. Now with funding in hand, Phase 2 of the village's wastewater infrastructure project is ready to start.



Chauncey (OH) Village Hall. USDA Photo.

Village of Chauncey – Water & Waste Disposal Grant

“USDA Rural Development was the first office that we got in touch with, and they connected us to the Rural Community Assistance Partnership who assisted us with the technical assistance to get the project from the dream state to the funding state,” said Mayor Renner.

Funded entirely by grants, Phase 2 construction is expected to begin in early 2025 and will replace all the village’s sewer lines. And, because nearly one-third of Chauncey’s residents live below the poverty line, Mayor Renner says this project will ensure the village can deliver quality service at affordable rates.

“We’re happy to say that this project has not impacted our customers financially at all,” Mayor Renner said. “We’re very sensitive about rate increases and wanted to make sure we did everything within our power to find funding to help us achieve this project.”

“It’s such a beautiful thing how much we’ve overcome, persevered, and pushed ourselves to always do better, not only for ourselves but for each other,” Mayor Renner continued. “I do think rural America is worth fighting for and Chauncey embodies that spirit.”

Obligation amount: \$2,600,000 grant

Obligation date: July 17, 2024

Congressional: U.S. Rep. Troy Balderson (OH-12); U.S. Senators Sherrod Brown and J.D. Vance

Impact: Project will provide reliable, modern infrastructure to collect Village of Chauncey wastewater.