

DAAccent.....on State and Local Government



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Rural Development Supports Essential Services



Increasing economic opportunity and improving the quality of life for people living in rural America is a goal of USDA's Rural Development mission area. For nearly seventy years their programs have provided financial assistance to support essential public facilities and services such as water and sewer systems, electric and telecommunication service, housing, health care centers, schools, and emergency service facilities. They also promote economic development through the creation and improvement of viable businesses and cooperatives. USDA Rural Development believes rural Americans deserve the same services enjoyed by people in suburban and urban areas while retaining the advantages of small town living.

Program assistance is provided through direct or guaranteed loans, grants, technical assistance, research and educational materials. To accomplish this mission, USDA Rural Development often works in partnership with Virginia's state and local governments, as well as rural businesses, cooperatives and non-profit agencies.

Rural Development has a variety of programs that may assist your community. Through the **Rural Business and Cooperatives Programs**

financial and technical assistance opportunities are available to small and emerging businesses, cooperatives, and agricultural producers. With the **Rural Housing and Community Facilities Programs**, financial and technical assistance is available to purchase, renovate or build single family or multifamily housing as well as provide rental assistance. Communities and community based nonprofits also benefit through assistance available for essential community facilities for health care, public safety, telecommunications, and public services. The **Rural Utilities Programs** provide financial and technical as-

Rural Development's financial programs support water and sewer systems, housing, health clinics, emergency service facilities, and electric and telephone service.

sistance to help meet community infrastructure needs for modern telecommunications, electricity and water and wastewater disposal services. The Rural Utilities Programs promote economic development by serving as a partner to rural businesses and providing the foundation for competitiveness in a time of change.

Many Virginia localities are familiar with the infrastructure programs but for those who are not, here are the highlights of just a few of the utilities programs offered through Rural Development.

Water and Waste Disposal: Low-interest loans and grants are available for water, sewer, and solid waste facilities in rural areas of up to 10,000 people. Eligible applicants include public bodies and non-profit corporations. Funds can be used to build, repair, and/or improve public water systems and sewerage collection and treatment systems and finance related costs, such as legal and engineering fees and the purchase of land. Interest rates are based on the service area's median household income as reported in the 2000 census, and the interest rates at the time of this publication range from 4½ to 5 percent. The maximum repayment term is 40 years. Grant eligibility is based on the area's median household income and similar systems' costs.

While a community could qualify for as much as 75 percent of eligible project costs in the form of a grant, grants are limited by Virginia's appropriation of grant funds. In addition to the direct loan program, also offered is a loan guarantee program whereby Rural Development can guarantee a loan made by a private lender.

Technical Assistance and Training: Grants can be made to provide technical assistance and training to improve rural water and wastewater systems. Non-profit organizations serving a rural area of less than 10,000 people are eligible to apply.

Solid Waste Management: This program provides grants for technical assistance and training to reduce pollution of water resources and improve management of solid waste facilities. Eligible applicants include public bodies and non-profit corporations in a rural area of less than 10,000 people.



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There is a network of offices throughout the Commonwealth that are committed to the future of rural communities. To learn more about how USDA Rural Development can help your community, contact your area office or visit us on the web at www.rurdev.usda.gov.

State Office: Richmond; (804) 287-1599.

Area Offices & the Counties They Serve

Lebanon: (276) 889-4650; Buchanan, Dickenson, Lee, Russell, Tazewell, Scott, and Wise and the City of Norton.

Wytheville: (276) 228-4547; Bland, Carroll, Grayson, Smyth, Washington, and Wythe and the Cities of Bristol and Galax.

Lynchburg: (434) 239-3735; Alleghany, Amherst, Appomattox, Bath, Bedford, Botetourt, Campbell, Charlotte, Craig, Floyd, Franklin, Giles, Halifax, Henry, Montgomery, Patrick, Pittsylvania, Pulaski, Roanoke, and Rockbridge and the Cities of Buena Vista, Covington, Danville, Lexington, Martinsville, Radford, and Salem.

Harrisonburg: (540) 433-9126; Albemarle, Arlington, Augusta, Caroline, Clarke, Culpeper Fairfax, Fauquier, Fluvanna, Frederick, Goochland, Greene, Hanover, Highland, King George, Loudoun, Louisa, Madison, Nelson, Orange, Page, Prince William, Rappahannock, Rockingham, Shenandoah, Spotsylvania, Stafford, and Warren and the Cities of Falls Church, Fredericksburg, Harrisonburg, Manassas, Staunton, Waynesboro, and Winchester.

Courtland: (757) 653-2532; Accomack, Amelia, Brunswick, Buckingham, Charles City, Chesterfield, Cumberland, Dinwiddie, Essex, Gloucester, Greensville, Henrico, Isle of Wight, James City, King and Queen, King William, Lancaster, Lunenburg, Mathews, Mecklenburg, Middlesex, New

Kent, Northampton, Northumberland, Nottoway, Poquoson, Powhatan, Prince Edward, Prince George, Richmond, Southampton, Surry, Sussex, Westmoreland, and York and the Cities of Colonial Heights, Emporia, Franklin, Hopewell, Petersburg, and Williamsburg.



This article was provided by Carrie Schmidt, Community Programs Director, with the Virginia State Office of USDA Rural Development.

Virginia Dept. of Health Extends DWSRF Deadline

The application deadline for the 2005 Construction Assistance Program has been extended until November 12, 2004. The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund's capacity for funding has been substantially increased and additional funds are now available.

The maximum interest rate for 2005 funding is 3% and down to 0% for certain communities. There are no costs associated with borrowing through the DWSRF outside of the applicants cost for financial advisory services and bond council.

More information and an application can be found at www.vdh.virginia.gov/dw/financial.asp. You may also call Dale Kitchen at (540) 463-7136 for further details.

Draper Aden Associates is a full-service engineering, surveying and environmental consulting firm. Services include: civil/utilities engineering; environmental services, geological/hydrogeological services; geotechnical/construction/laboratory; site planning & engineering; solid waste management; structural engineering; surveying; subsurface utility engineering, information management services, GIS and transportation engineering.



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