



United States Department of Agriculture

USDA Rural Development

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News Release

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Biden-Harris Administration Invests \$8 Million in Rural Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Improvements in North Carolina

Water Infrastructure Projects to Address Barriers Communities of Color Face Accessing Public Health in Rural America

BEAUFORT, N.C., July 7, 2021 – Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is investing \$8 million to modernize rural drinking water and wastewater infrastructure in Beaufort, North Carolina.

The investments being announced today follow President Biden's announcement last week of a Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework that will make the largest investment in clean drinking water in American history. The Framework will replace all of the nation's lead pipes and service lines, helping address barriers faced by communities of color, Tribal communities, and people who live in rural America.

"The \$8 million USDA Rural Development is investing into our state will help eliminate outdated pipes and service lines to safeguard public health and safety in rural communities," said USDA Rural Development Acting State Director Mel Ellis. "The Biden-Harris administration is working to replace all of the nation's lead pipes and service lines, helping address barriers faced by communities of color, Tribal communities and rural America."

USDA is financing the project through the [Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant Program](#). The investments will help eliminate outdated pipes and service lines to safeguard public health and safety in rural communities. They will improve rural infrastructure for 4,452 residents in the town of Beaufort.

Beaufort is using a \$8 million loan to renovate and replace various components of the town's water distribution system. The water system improvements include replacing old deteriorated water lines, non-functioning valves and hydrants, and necessary appurtenances.

The project will improve the quality of water, system hydraulics, and operating efficiency.

USDA is [investing \\$307 million to modernize rural drinking water and wastewater infrastructure in 34 states and Puerto Rico.](#)

“Every community needs safe, reliable and modern water and wastewater systems,” Secretary Vilsack said. “The consequences of decades of disinvestment in physical infrastructure have fallen most heavily on communities of color. This is why USDA is investing in water infrastructure in rural and Tribal communities that need it most – to help them build back better, stronger and more equitably than ever before.”

Background:

The Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant Program provides funding for clean and reliable drinking water systems, sanitary sewage disposal, sanitary solid waste disposal, and storm water drainage. The program serves households and businesses in eligible rural areas with populations of 10,000 or less.

To learn more about these and other resources for rural areas, contact a [USDA Rural Development state office](#).

Under the Biden-Harris Administration, Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities, create jobs and improve the quality of life for millions of Americans in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural, tribal and high-poverty areas. For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov. If you'd like to subscribe to USDA Rural Development updates, visit our [GovDelivery subscriber page](#).

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.

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