

USDA Invests \$114.5 Million to Improve Critical Infrastructure in Rural Wisconsin

Written by USDA, Jessica Mancel
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Funding Will Expand Access to Clean Water and Dependable Electric Power in People's Homes and Businesses in Rural Communities

BLOOMER, Wisc., Dec. 16, 2021 -- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced that [USDA is investing \\$114.5 million to build and improve critical infrastructure in rural Wisconsin](#) (PDF, 279 KB). The investments will help expand access to clean water and reliable electricity in people's homes and businesses in rural communities across the state. Today's announcement comes on the heels of Biden-Harris Administration releasing its Lead Pipe and Paint Action Plan. The plan represents a historic effort of unprecedented ambition that will deploy catalytic resources from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law while leveraging every tool across federal, state, and local government to deliver clean drinking water replacing lead pipes and remediating lead paint.

"When we invest in rural infrastructure, we invest in the livelihoods and health of people in rural America," Vilsack said. "Under the leadership of President Biden and Vice President Harris, USDA is committed to Building a Better America by investing in America's rural infrastructure, expanding access to broadband, clean drinking water and resilient power infrastructure. The investments we are announcing today will drive the creation of good-paying union jobs and grow the economy sustainably and equitably so that everyone gets ahead for decades to come."

This announcement follows the recent passage of President Biden's historic Bipartisan

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Infrastructure Law and reflects the many ways USDA Rural Development's programs are helping people, businesses and communities address critical infrastructure needs to help rural America build back better.

For example:

- The city of Bloomer will use \$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.
- The city of Waterloo will use \$21.1 million to replace aging wastewater treatment facility infrastructure and meet current and future effluent limits, including phosphorus. These improvements will benefit 3,339 people in Jefferson County.
- The village of Wonewoc will use \$10.05 million to renovate and expand the wastewater treatment facility and address overflow issues. This investment will benefit 816 people in Juneau County.
- The city of Chetek will use \$20.7 million to upgrade the wastewater treatment plant and address several code violations for residential and commercial structures within 500 feet of the site. This investment will benefit 2,221 people in Barron County.
- The village of Turtle Lake will use \$21.8 million to upgrade the wastewater treatment plant and sewer system and address excessive phosphorus and chloride limits. These improvement will benefit 1,050 people in Barron County.
- Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative will use a \$13.2 million loan under the [Electric Infrastructure Loan and Loan Guarantee Program](#) to build 2.2 new miles of line and a new headquarters facilities. Scenic Rivers serves 14,289 consumers over 3,528 miles of line in Grant, Richland, Green, Crawford, Iowa, Lafayette and Vernon counties in Wisconsin, as well as Jo Daviess and Stephenson counties in Illinois.

Background

Vilsack highlighted six investments in rural Wisconsin that USDA is making in two programs designed to help people access clean water and dependable electric power. These programs are the [Electric Infrastructure Loan and Loan Guarantee Program](#) and [Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant Program](#).

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The investments announced today will support rural infrastructure projects in Barron, Chippewa, Crawford, Grant, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Juneau, Lafayette, Richland and Vernon counties.

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 [w](https://www.rd.usda.gov/wi)
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