



August 18, 2026

Rural Decentralized Water Systems Program

Agency	U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Rural Development – Rural Utilities Service (RUS)		
Program	The Rural Utilities Service (RUS), a Rural Development mission area of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), announces acceptance of additional applications under the Rural Decentralized Water Systems (DWS) Program for Fiscal Year 2026.		
Description	Grant funds are awarded to qualified applicants to create a revolving fund and to issue sub-grants to finance the costs of individual household water well systems and individually owned household decentralized wastewater systems. Through the DWS program, private non-profit organizations receive grant funds to establish lending programs that provide household water well and wastewater system loans and sub-grants to individuals. A loan may not exceed \$15,000 and will have a term up to 20 years at a one percent annual interest rate; up to 50 percent of the funds awarded may be used for sub-grants. The program is authorized under Section 306E of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (CONACT), 7 U.S.C. 1926e, and implemented by 7 CFR part 1776. Funding Opportunity Number: RDRUS-26-DWS2. Assistance Listing Number: 10.862.		
Application Due	11:59 PM Eastern Time (ET) on September 30, 2026. The Agency will start accepting applications on July 24, 2026. Late, incomplete, or ineligible applications will not be accepted.		
Total Funding	\$11,000,000 (approx.)	Max Award: No maximum award amount	Min Award: No minimum award amount
Award Amount	10		
Local Match:	Applicant contribution is required per 7 CFR 1776.9(b)(3). Cost share requirements only apply to revolving funds and not to sub-grant awards.		
Eligible Applicants	Private non-profit organizations that meet the eligibility requirements of 7 CFR 1776.5. Non-Tribal applicants proposing to serve households on Tribal lands must submit a Tribal Resolution of Support from the Tribe(s) that have jurisdiction over those lands.		
Eligible Activities/ Projects	Establishing a revolving fund to provide household water well and decentralized wastewater system loans and sub-grants to individuals. Recipients may use funds to construct, refurbish, and service their household water well or decentralized wastewater systems up to the point of entry to the residence (and beyond the point of entry where ground water contamination is documented). Sub-grants may be used to help reduce the cost to construct, refurbish, rehabilitate, or replace individually owned household decentralized water well and wastewater systems.		
Review Criteria	All eligible and complete applications are evaluated and scored competitively based on the scoring criteria in 7 CFR 1776.9 and this Notice. Applications may be awarded up to a total of 10 administrative points (the work plan must include a section titled “Administrative Points” per 7 CFR 1776.9(b)(7)). Each application receives a score based on the averages of the reviewers’ scores and discretionary points awarded by the RUS Administrator. Applications are ranked and grants awarded based on the scoring results and funding availability.		
Link:	https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/water-environmental-program https://www.grants.gov/search-results-detail/363364		
Application Submission	Applications must be submitted electronically through www.grants.gov . Applications will not be accepted via paper, fax, or email. Applicants must have an active registration in SAM.gov and a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) before submitting, and must maintain an active SAM registration. Apply under Assistance Listing Number 10.862 and Funding Opportunity Number RDRUS-26-DWS2. The registration processes may take up to 10 business days to complete.		
BAC Partnership Opportunity	The Build America Center (BAC) is a technical assistance program funded by the USDOT, offering grant development services to localities at NO CHARGE. For more information, please visit our websites: https://bac.umd.edu/ and https://billlaunchpad.com/		

If your agency is interested in exploring this opportunity, contact us at bac@umd.edu for details on collaboration