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Greetings!

Welcome to the Spring 2014 Edition of Watershed to Well! Since 1986, RCAP Solutions has been proud to bring this newsletter to our constituents, providing educational resources on important rural community issues. Our articles are now housed on the RCAP Solutions blog, which can be found by [clicking here](#). As always, we appreciate your feedback on this publication and welcome your input on anything regarding RCAP Solutions and our services. [Please click here for staff contact information](#).

From the Communities We Serve...

"RCAP Solutions has provided us with invaluable technical assistance to the Town for a number of years, helping us with the planning and development of a community wastewater collection and treatment system. We look forward to partnering on future projects and are particularly excited about the chance to improve our municipal drinking water system and to enhance the systems asset management program with GIS mapping. Through the technical assistance and training provided by RCAP Solutions, our community will be better able to manage our facility and infrastructure, increase organizational capacity and undertake economic and community planning and development initiatives."

William Flood, Supervisor, Town of Amenia, NY

Sustaining Rural Communities



From Scott Mueller, Director of Community Resources & Chief Rural Affairs Officer

Rural communities across the country are all experiencing challenges with keeping their localities clean, healthy, and economically vibrant. This past year has certainly shown that the federal and state governments are tightening the purse strings further impacting local communities, but in particular the small rural communities.

[Click here to read more...](#)

From A Funding Partner...

"We are pleased that the approval of plans for these communities means residents will be able to secure low-interest loans to make necessary septic system repairs, which will result in a safer, healthier water supply for many throughout the region. We are also impressed with RCAP's advocacy efforts to capitalize a Massachusetts Water Pollution Abatement Trust Fund

to ensure that funds will continue to be available to other small communities in the future. We look forward to exploring other opportunities to work with RCAP Solutions."

Janice B. Yost, Ed.D, President & CEO of

The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts, which provided RCAP Solutions with a grant to provide no-cost technical assistance to develop Community Septic Management Plans in the communities of Groton, Hardwick, Harvard, Orange and Westminster. These plans are used to help towns manage their community's septic needs in a comprehensive way and provide homeowners with a sustainable solution to their failing septic systems.



Practical Implementation of CUPSS R&R Schedule



Arthur Astarita, Maine State Lead

RCAP Solutions' experience has shown that developed, small-sized systems (<3300 connections), have a wide-range of documenting capital improvements. Typically a written sheet is developed showing a list of improvements including costs and is used to plan proposed upgrades. This "mental list" is generated and updated when events arise that call for a new suggestion or thought but does not contain a comprehensive look at the entire system and financial health. It is not holistic which is required to

assure the system is operated in a long term and responsible manner. [Click here to read more...](#)

Educational Tools to Sustain Our Rural Drinking Water and Wastewater Systems



Sukhwindar Singh, Director of Education and Training

For many years, RCAP personnel have documented the unique challenges small systems face in providing reliable drinking water and wastewater services that meet federal and state regulations. These challenges include but are not limited to a lack of financial resources and customer base, aging infrastructure, management limitations, and high staff turnover. At RCAP we offer technical assistance and training to system personnel and boards to raise awareness of technical, managerial, and financial issues and to improve the operations and compliance of these small systems.

[Click here to read more...](#)

Legislative Update

Ari Neumann, Director of Policy Development and Applied Research, [RCAP](#)

As the 2014 mid-term election nears, Congress has gradually checked off many of the big items on its to-do list. Congress will likely devote most of the rest of this legislative session to passing its annual budget and appropriations bills that fund the federal government. We expect that the spending bills will be wrapped up before Congress heads home for its annual August recess and the election season is in full swing. The budget outlook for rural programs is much the same as last year. Barring any unforeseen circumstances, major changes are unlikely to occur.

One of the big items that Congress recently finished is the reauthorization of the 5-year Farm Bill. It passed both chambers of Congress with bipartisan support and was signed into law by President Obama on February 7. The total bill is complex and multi-faceted and is organized into 12 titles that each address one issue area. The one that most directly impacts RCAP's work is the Rural Development (RD) Title.

[Click here to read more...](#)



Legislative UPDATE

A Local Leader's Guide to Generating Legislative Advocacy for Your Project



Sukhwindar Singh, Director of Education and Training

A recent conversation with a small wastewater system in southwestern Pennsylvania and then again with a small drinking water system in central Pennsylvania has reminded me of the need to highlight a couple of successful steps that small systems can take to build and develop legislative advocacy for local projects. In its simplest terms, legislative advocacy means working with individual lawmakers and lawmaking bodies to gain

support for your local initiatives and projects. Such efforts are usually successful over a period of time and thus longer-term infrastructure development or rehab projects can be ideal community projects to highlight for your state and local representatives, even when the funding for the project is far down the road. While legislative support can take several forms including a bill with funding attached, a bill with wording that supports a particular philosophy or helps to legitimize an issue, a bill with regulations that assist a target population or a local ordinance, it is often the budget advocacy and the political and moral support as well as links to other contacts that persuade most of our RCAP community leaders to improve efforts in this area.

[Click here to read more...](#)

RCAP Solutions Working with Local Legislators



Massachusetts State Senator Jamie Eldridge meets with staff members to discuss rural community infrastructure issues and learn more about RCAP Solutions programs.

Pictured from left: Paul Teixeira, Vice President & Chief Program Officer; Brian Scales, Chief Development & Governmental Affairs Officer; Karen A. Koller, President and CEO; Senator James Eldridge, Tunde Baker, Regional Lead for Ma/RI/CT; and James Starbard, Environmental Water and Wastewater Technician.

RCAP Focused on Expanding Services

Brian Scales, Chief Development & Governmental Affairs Officer

The Development Team is continuing to serve the mission of the organization by continuing to provide the assets necessary to continue to do our work. Currently we are working to increase revenues to expand our technical assistance in drinking and wastewater asset management, launch a



geographic information system (GIS) mapping technical assistance program, compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act, initiate trainings for private well owners, and increase our small business lending capacity. [Click here to read more..](#)

Potable Water Operator Training in Puerto Rico



Josefa Torres, District Director

In November, RCAP Solutions provided the first of three Potable Water Operator trainings at Sila María Calderón Foundation in San Juan, Puerto Rico. This training activity is part of the Puerto Rico Department of Health Technical Assistance Support & Circuit Rider Project, to help 48 small community-owned public water systems work towards becoming compliant with the EPA Safe Drinking Water Act. [Click here to read more...](#)

Pine Hill Water District Always Looks Forward to RCAP's Assistance



Candace Balmer, Water Resource Specialist

The Town of Shandaken, located in southern New York, was named after the native phrase "land of rapid waters" and is home to Slide Mountain, the highest peak in the Catskill Mountains. Shandaken is also home to The Pine Hill Water District, formed by the Town to take over an abandoned private water company serving over 200 mostly residential properties. [Click here to read more...](#)

RCAP + Community Investor Program



Thank you to our participating Community Investors!

- Canton Water District - Canton, ME
- Comunidad Mamey - Patillas, PR
- Limestone Water and Sewer District - Limestone, ME
- Wright Pierce, Portsmouth, NH

If you are interested in making a voluntary contribution to RCAP Solutions, so that we can continue assisting small communities to ensure the most basic of needs - to have safe and sustainable drinking water and sanitary wastewater disposal - [please click here](#). We offer several opportunities for communities to participate with tremendous value-added benefits. You may also contact our office at 800.488.1969.

RCAP Solutions mission is to foster personal and public self-reliance and improve the quality of life for individuals, families and the communities in which they live.

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