

**RICE COUNTY
SUBSURFACE SEWAGE TREATMENT SYSTEM
LOW INCOME FIX-UP
GRANT POLICY**

Overview

The Rice County SSTS Low Income Fix-up Grant Program is established to promote public health and welfare by preventing, reducing and eliminating water pollution. This grant program assists property owners in financing site evaluation, design, installation, repair, and replacement of subsurface sewage treatment systems on privately owned property which are identified as imminent public health threats under Rice County Ordinances.

The Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) is authorized to assist local government in protecting water and related land quality, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes §103B.101 Subd. 9(1) and 103B.3369 and is providing funding.

The Rice County SSTS Low Income IPHT Fix-up Grant program is hereby established to provide grants to qualified applicants living in Rice County seeking to make septic system improvements. The Rice County Environmental Services Department will administer the program on behalf of Rice County.

Eligible Properties

Program funds for septic systems shall be used to improve residential properties located within Rice County where the property owner qualifies under the USDA very low income guidelines.

Eligible Improvements

Funds may be used to finance the site evaluation, design, and replacement of an individual septic system that is identified as an imminent threat to public health. This includes an individual's cost to join an approved cluster collection system. The eligibility status of the system to be approved shall be determined by Rice County Environmental Services. Funds may not be used to increase capacity of an individual sewage treatment system beyond what is reasonably required to serve existing buildings or for new construction or for upgrading a septic system due to property transfer.

Eligible Recipients

Eligible recipients are individuals that own the real property for which the improvement is to be made and the recipient must qualify for the very low income qualifications of USDA Rural Development.

Project Funding

1. Grants of 50% of the cost (up to \$6,000) will be available to participants who meet the above listed criteria provided funding is available. Funding will be provided on a first come first serve basis. A waiting list will be established.
2. The maximum grant amount is \$6,000 per property.

Application Process

1. Application must first be made with the USDA Rural Development office in Faribault, MN. If the applicant qualifies for the USDA very low income level program requirements then the applicant may proceed with completing a county grant application.
2. County applications will be processed on a first come, first serve basis and are contingent on State funding.
3. Upon submission of a complete application, the applicant will be notified of eligibility and instructed to obtain a site evaluation and plan from a licensed evaluator/installer. Evaluation must include soil borings. The evaluation/plan shall be submitted to Rice County Environmental Services for approval.
4. Upon approval of the plan, the applicant shall solicit bids from licensed installers. At least two bids shall be obtained. The bids shall be submitted to the Rice County Environmental Services office.
5. A grant agreement shall be executed which will provide that any transfers of property within three years from the date of execution of the grant agreement will require repayment of the entire grant amount.
6. Contractor authorized to begin work.

Contracting Procedures and Requirements

1. All contractors must be a Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) licensed ISTS installer/evaluator.
2. The contract for system design and installation will be between the homeowner and the contractor(s). The selection of the contractor is the sole responsibility of the homeowner.
3. The contractor is responsible for obtaining required permits.
4. All work must be completed within 90 days of the date of grant approval. Exceptions will be made for weather related delays.
5. Work may not begin on the project until approval is received. Starting work prior to approval may be grounds for denial.

Property Inspections

Rice County Environmental Services shall be responsible for conducting inspections for each approved project as required by Rice County Ordinances.

Additional inspections may occur during construction to determine if work is being performed according to specifications and in a satisfactory manner, however Rice County is not supervising the construction nor is it guaranteeing the quality of the construction.

Upon completion, the inspector will sign off on the project, initiating processing of payment to the contractor. Checks will be issued by Rice County to the homeowner and contractor and sent to the homeowner.

Amendments

These procedural guides may be amended or supplemented from time to time by Rice County by issuance of revised pages to be effective as of the date of issuance.

For further information or an application form please contact:

Rice County Environmental Services
320 NW 3rd Street
Faribault, MN 55021
507-332-6113
rcplanningzoning@co.rice.mn.us