

# We're Here to Help North Carolina's Water and Wastewater Utilities



**The Resource Agency Partnership for Water Utilities** is a group of diverse organizations working toward solutions to the challenges faced by North Carolina's water and wastewater service providers. The goal of the Partnership is to collaborate with each other and our stakeholders and customers to implement a model for sustainable, viable water and/or wastewater utilities in the state.

## Assistance topics

- Finance
- Rates/Fees
- Asset management
- Operations
- Leak detection
- Legal issues
- Capital planning
- Funding
- Regulations
- Management
- Regionalization
- Benchmarking
- Staff/Board roles and more.

## Assistance types

- Training for staff and board members
- Advising on management issues
- Direct technical assistance on management, finance, and operations
- Acilitation of stakeholder meetings
- Advocacy
- Models and resources to guide decision-making
- Information, data and research
- Grant writing
- Operate/manage utilities;
- and more.

## Assistance providers



Water and wastewater utility staff and local government officials are encouraged to contact any of these organizations for free assistance.

## Assistance Providers

**NC Association of County Commissioners (NCACC)** <https://ncacc.org/>

Founded in 1908 as advocacy organization for counties to the NC General Assembly. Proponent of regionalization to share water and wastewater assets, especially in times of crisis.

**NC Association of Regional Councils of Government (COGs)** <https://ncregions.org/>

Created by the legislature (1960s) and are governed by local governments. Services include grant writing/admin, GIS services, financial admin, and other services. COGs are subject to LGC oversight just as local governments.

**NC League of Municipalities (NCLM)** <https://www.nclm.org/financial-consulting>

Advocacy solutions for member municipalities with ability to influence statewide policy. New program of municipal operations consultants working with members to discuss local challenges and solutions, including utility systems.

**NC Rural Economic Development Center (Rural Center)** <https://ncruralcenter.org/>

Serves 80 rural counties and 415 municipalities. Non-profit organization that emphasizes local leadership development and takes advocacy positions for needed policy changes.

**NC Rural Water Association (NCRWA)** <https://ncrwa.org/>

Provides onsite technical assistance and training to water and wastewater utilities statewide. Areas of assistance include operation, maintenance, compliance, finance, and management systems. Provided in partnership with USDA, EPA, and DEQ.

**Environmental Finance Center at UNC School of Government (UNC EFC)** <https://efc.sog.unc.edu/>

Advising, training, applied research services, and development of resources for utility managers and boards. Focus on finance, management, regionalization, and best practices of water, wastewater and stormwater services.

**Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project, Inc. (SERCAP)** <https://sercap.org/>

Provide technical assistance focusing on managerial aspects of utilities with populations of less than 3.5k; can assist those up to 10k. 100% federally funded. Five staff create long-term relationships with communities.

### State and federal agencies

**NC Department of State Treasurer, State & Local Government Finance Division** <https://nctreasurer.com/>

Monitor fiscal health of local government units (LGUs) across the state. Work with LGUs through its Debt Management Section and Fiscal Management Section. Maintain Unit Assistance List of LGUs with financial issues.

**NC Department of Environmental Quality** <https://deq.nc.gov/about/ncdeq-divisions/>

**Division of Water Infrastructure** <https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-infrastructure>

Division supports State Water Infrastructure Authority (SWIA), focusing on utility best management practices, efficient use of funds, and state's role in funding water/wastewater projects. Division works with all organizations.

**Division of Water Resources, Public Water Supply Section** <https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-resources/drinking-water>

Regulatory agency for implementation of the national *Safe Drinking Water Act* and the *North Carolina Rules Governing Public Water Systems* through technical and regulatory assistance, and enforcement.

**Division of Water Resources, Water Quality Regional Operations Section**

<https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-resources/water-quality-regional-operations>

Seven Regional Operations offices focus on surface water and groundwater protection and regulation. Conduct permitted facility inspections and incident investigations. Often advise staff of small utilities on wastewater issues.

**US Department of Agriculture – Rural Development** <https://www.rd.usda.gov/nc>

Strictly a funding agency with six area offices. Finance water and wastewater, stormwater, solid waste disposal. Work with systems with populations between 2.5k and 10k people. Historically funded expansions but more recently funding has shifted to rehabilitation.

## For more information, contact:

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