



## Water Well Trust Receives USDA Grant for New Mexico Water Well Projects

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The [Water Well Trust](#), the only national nonprofit helping Americans get access to a clean, safe water supply, has received a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Household Water Well Systems program for a project to increase potable water availability to rural households in nine New Mexico counties.

The USDA grant and matching funds from the [Water Systems Council](#) will be used to fund Water Well Trust projects in nine southern New Mexico counties, including Catron, Socorro, Grant, Sierra, Luna, Hidalgo, Dona Ana, Otero, and Chaves. These areas include "Colonias," which are non-zoned dwelling areas that do not meet current building code standards. Many Colonias do not have access to a safe water supply and need improved water well systems.

It is estimated that there are 150 Colonias in New Mexico, representing approximately 30% of the total New Mexico housing stock. High rates of poverty in the nine target counties ensure that most residents who need water wells cannot pay for the wells themselves.

The grant monies will provide long-term, low-interest loans to applicants seeking new or improved water wells in the targeted New Mexico counties. The Water Well Trust limits funding to a maximum of \$11,000 per household. Loans have an interest rate of 1% with terms of up to 20 years.

To qualify for a WWT loan, applicants must be the owner and occupant of the home as their primary residence. In addition, the applicant's household income must not exceed 100% of the median non-metropolitan household income for the state in which the applicant resides. The 2017 Non-Metropolitan median household income is \$52,300 for New Mexico. The income criteria apply to both the applicant and all other occupants of the home.

Prospective applicants can download the application form and instruction letter from the Water Well Trust website at [waterwelltrust.org](http://waterwelltrust.org) under "Apply" at the top of the home page.

The Water Well Trust will be working with the office of Senator Martin Heinrich (D-NM) and the New Mexico Groundwater Association on outreach efforts in the nine target counties.

The Water Systems Council established the Water Well Trust in 2010 to provide clean, sanitary drinking water to Americans who lack access to a reliable water supply and to construct and document small community water systems using water wells to demonstrate that these systems are more economical.





This is the fourth USDA grant received by the Water Well Trust since 2014. In the past three years, USDA grant monies have been used to increase potable water availability to rural households in Arkansas, Oklahoma, Georgia, South Carolina and New York.

For more information, visit [waterwelltrust.org](http://waterwelltrust.org).

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Contact:

Margaret Martens, Program Director  
Water Well Trust  
[mmartens@watersystemscouncil.org](mailto:mmartens@watersystemscouncil.org)  
202-625-4383



National Programs Office • 1101 30<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W. • Suite 500 • Washington, DC 20007  
Phone: 202-625-4387 • Fax: 202-625-4363 • [www.watersystemscouncil.org](http://www.watersystemscouncil.org)  
wellcare® Hotline: 888-395-1033 • [www.wellcarehotline.org](http://www.wellcarehotline.org)