Gaining Public Support for Projects

PRESENTED BY
RURAL COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE CORPORATION (RCAC)

With funding from USDA Rural Development Technitrain Program and USEPA Drinking Water and Wastewater Program.

With support from the following:

Project Planning and Development – <u>10 Steps to Success!</u>

1. Identify Problem/Need for Project
2. Target Resources for Assistance
3. Planning
4. Environmental Review
5. Alternatives Assessment
6. Select Preferred Alternative
7. Budgeting
8. Water and Wastewater Rates
9. Project Financing
10. Project Management

1. Identify Problem and Need

Reasons for Water/Wastewater Project:

- System is outdated (i.e. 20 year life expectancy with deficiencies)
- Growth for community projected
- Compliance with public health regulations
- Public Health problems in community
- System components not adequate (source, collection, distribution, storage, treatment, discharge requirements, environmental quality, high risk areas)

2. Resources for Assistance

Contact Professional Organizations

- Technical Assistance Organizations (we are here!)
- Engineering Consulting Firms
- State and Federal Agencies
- City and County Governments
- Local expertise – look within …

3. Planning

Funding for Planning
- One Stop meetings sponsored by Oregon Economic and Community Development Department (OECDD)
- Technical Assistance grants (USDA Rural Development, OECDD, others)
- Engineering Consultants
- City and County resources
- Organizations can help
- Local "in kind" support

4. Environmental Review

What about requirements?
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) federal project $
- Environmental Review (ER)
- Environmental Assessment (EA)
- Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
- Inter-Governmental Consultation (wetlands, endangered species, historic preservation, etc…)

5. Alternatives Assessment

Your Plan should clearly **identify and assess alternatives** for projects

- Environmental considerations
- Compliance with regulations
- Scope of alternatives for project(s)
- Consistency in cost comparisons
- Construction and Operation
- Funding options and rates

6. Select Preferred Alternative

What is the **best option** for your community to meet the need?

- Prioritize project(s) to address most significant problems/need
- Environmental impacts – coordinate with other entities
- Project scope needs to be appropriate for your community
- Cost estimates and budget(s)
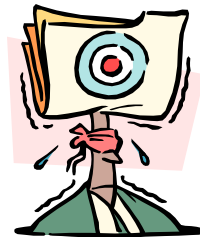- Rate Study may be required

7. Budgeting

"O.K. now we know what we need to do - how can we pay for this?"

- Annual Budget process
- Expenses and Revenue
- Current Costs for Operations
- Costs for Improvements
- Debt Service for loans
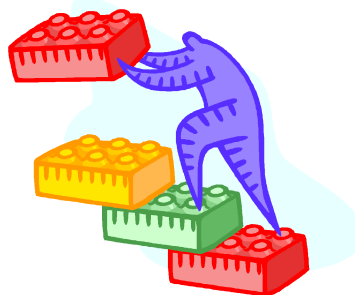- Reserves

8. Water and Wastewater Rates

One step at a time …

- Rates need to cover system expenses (operation, maintenance, repairs, materials, utilities, staff salary, and more)
- Rates need to cover expenses for making necessary improvements (see your plan)
- Rates need to cover reserves for emergencies, repair, and loan debt
- Rates need to be understood by the public
- Rates need to be understood by your Council or Board – YOU are accountable
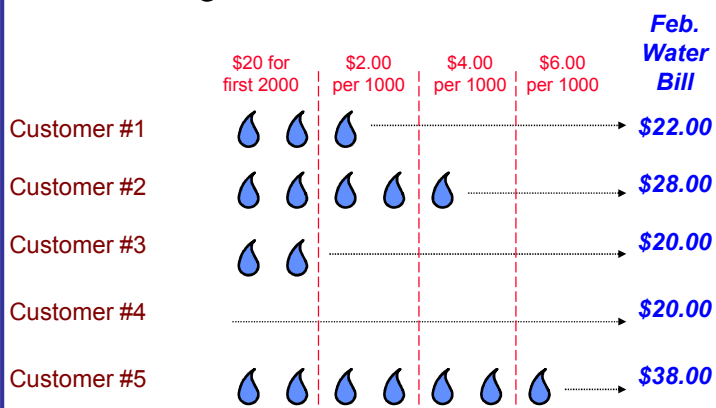
"Rate Policy"

e.g. FLAT RATE versus BLOCK RATES

Increasing Block Rate - Price per Gallon Increases as Consumption Increases.

💧 = 1,000 gallons of water used

	$20 for first 2000	$2.00 per 1000	$4.00 per 1000	$6.00 per 1000	Feb. Water Bill
Customer #1	💧💧 💧				$22.00
Customer #2	💧💧 💧💧💧				$28.00
Customer #3	💧💧				$20.00
Customer #4					$20.00
Customer #5	💧💧 💧💧 💧💧 💧				$38.00

"The Conservation Approach"

Rate Setting & Loan/Grant Programs

- **Rate information is required as part of funding applications - Minimum utility rates required for grant programs**

- **Rates are the typical revenue source for utility operations and debt repayment.**

9. Project Financing

Grants and Loans are available …

- USDA Rural Development (RD)
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Oregon Economic and Community Development Department (OECDD)
- Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
- Indian Health Services (IHS)
- Others (RCAC, etc…)

10. Project Management

Key things to consider …

- Administration ($?)
- Managing Contractor
- Progress Reporting
- Process for Payment
- Requesting Disbursements
- Retainage/Close Out

Gaining Public Support

**Inform
&
Include**

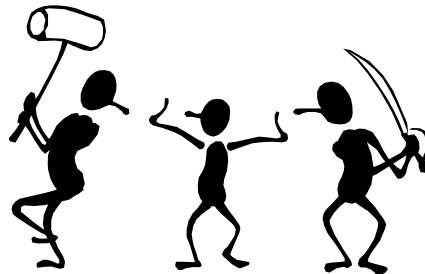# Inform and Educate the Public

Share Reasons for Project
- System is outdated (i.e. Past life expectancy)
- Service costs accelerating
- Service not adequate or at risk
- Community expected to grow by…
- Must comply with public health regulations

Inclusive Planning

Keep Public Involved – Don't Fear the Rate Payer!
- Provide periodic updates
- CCR 'marketing campaign'
- Informational Council meetings

For more information visit www.rcac.org

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Welcome to Cleanville