

News From
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RHODE ISLAND



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CHAFEE ANNOUNCES USDA GRANT TO PASCOAG
\$500,000 to Help Develop New Water Supply for Utility District

WASHINGTON, DC – U. S. Senator Lincoln Chafee today announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has approved a Rural Development Water and Waste Disposal Grant in the amount of \$500,000 for the Pascoag Utility District. The federal funds will be used to develop a new water source for the District to replace the supply that is contaminated by methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE).

“This grant will help officials prevent the kind of contamination from MTBE and other gasoline and fuel additives that has so drastically affected the lives of everyone in Pascoag,” said Chafee.

Water is currently being purchased from outside the Pascoag Utility District. This project will include the installation of water lines, a pump station and infrastructure to connect to the Pascoag Utility District’s existing water distribution system.

The Village of Pascoag is just one town among many communities across the nation that has suffered from MTBE contamination that can be traced to leaking underground storage tanks.

In February 2002, Chafee held a Senate Field Hearing to hear testimony on his Underground Storage Tank Bill and the impact of leaking tanks on local communities such as Pascoag. That followed a visit in September 2001 when Chafee traveled to Burrillville to tour the site of the contaminated wells and received an update on the efforts to restore public drinking water to the 1,200 customers of the Pascoag Water Department.

Earlier this year, the U.S. Senate passed by unanimous consent S. 195, the Underground Storage Tank Compliance Act – introduced by Chafee – that requires the inspection of all tanks every two years. It also establishes training of UST operators and increases money authorized from the Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) Trust Fund.

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