



**CLEVELAND COUNTY
RECOVERY PROGRAM**

Cleveland County Invests in Rural Water Infrastructure

Cleveland County Commissioners commit \$3.5 million in ARPA funds to improve current operations and invest in future growth

PHOTOS



NORMAN, Okla. (February 27, 2023) - Today, Cleveland County Commissioners voted to obligate \$3.5 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to provide improvements to Cleveland County Rural Water District (RWD) No. 1, as well as ancillary system and equipment purchases as necessary to improve operations and ultimately service to existing rural customers.

“Funding for our Rural Water District will ultimately serve thousands of residents across Cleveland County and aligns with Cleveland County’s goal of using ARPA money to benefit people, infrastructure and the economy,” said County Commissioner Rod Cleveland. “Safe, clean drinking water will boost the local economy. This is just the kind of infrastructure project encouraged by ARPA guidelines.”

Cleveland County’s Rural Water District No. 1, located east of Lexington, is required to supply water at a reasonable pressure to all existing customers along its 35 miles of line currently in operation.

“We are grateful that Cleveland County residents and our County Commissioners have chosen to utilize ARPA funds to ensure regulatory drinking water compliance and enhance the performance of our rural water system for the current customer base, helping to serve the growing demand placed on the system by the City of Lexington, which is an existing wholesale customer,” said RWD Board Chair Richard Murnan.

During the pandemic, water usage rose considerably as families experienced increased illness and began working/learning from home for extended periods of time. Last year, residents still used 18.968M gallons of water with the City of Lexington consuming more than 80 percent of that total.

“This project supports clean drinking water accessibility for families in southern Cleveland County,” said County Commissioner Darryl Stacy. “Few things are as important to basic health and life as affordable, clean drinking water. Using ARPA dollars for critical water infrastructure that will improve public health and economic outcomes is a win-win situation.”

Officials indicated that the District desperately needs to limit their water loss due to flushing requirements caused by dead-end lines.

“This project will allow them to reduce water waste by eliminating the flushing protocol,” said County Commissioner Rusty Grissom. “This will also save on the electric cost of the operation. Additionally, this option has minimal environmental impacts since most of the improvements will be completed along county rights-of-way that have already been disturbed.”

The City of Lexington has also increased their draw from the rural water system over the last several months, which necessitates the addition of another water well and an additional storage facility.

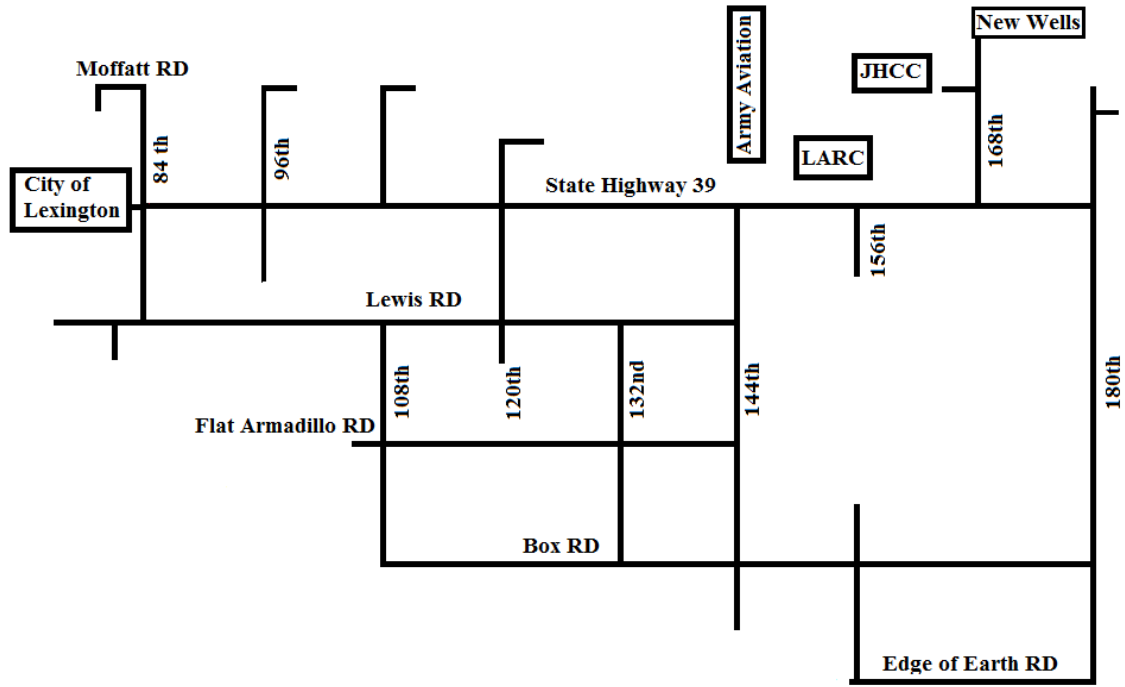
“Construction for the existing rural water system was completed in 2019,” Murnan said. “In order to complete the construction within budget, it became necessary for many lines within the district to be constructed as dead end lines. These Phase 1 improvements will loop these lines in the most efficient manner possible, along with the addition of a water well and water storage facility to support increased usage.”

Rural Water officials have developed a 2-phase plan to further address these challenges. Today’s ARPA grant from Cleveland County Commissioners will provide the following improvements in Phase 1:

- A new groundwater production well.
- A new 100,000 to 500,000-gallon water storage tank.
- Construction of approximately 11-miles of new water distribution mains throughout the existing distribution system to loop existing dead-end lines.
- Upgrades to the RWD’s existing SCADA system to incorporate the new groundwater production well and the new water storage tank.
- Purchase and installation of a portable generator at RWD Well No. 1, enabling the rural water district to operate a minimum of 2-wells during power outages.

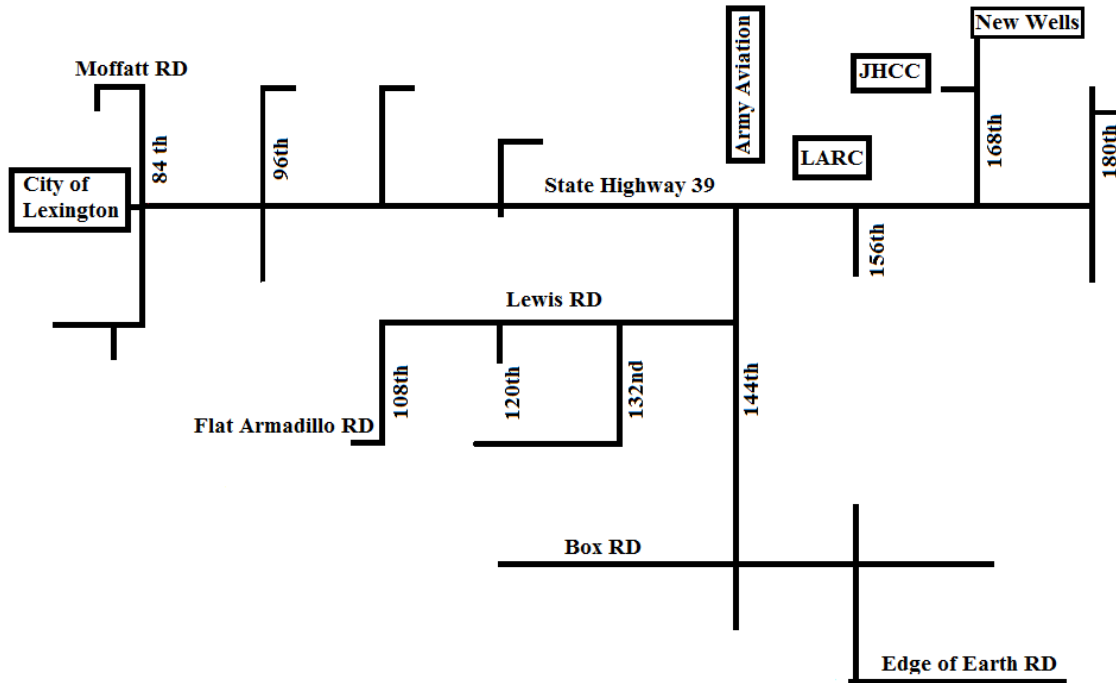
“We are hopeful that additional funding from other sources will help us address future growth in Phase 2 as we prepare for moderate growth,” Murnan said. “Population-based engineering projections indicate that the District and the surrounding areas are expected to see moderate growth over the next 40 years. It is important that we invest in solutions to improve the function of the current system and eventually consolidate/regionalize their system to the north.”

RWD officials are currently pursuing additional funding from state and federal sources for Phase 2 of the overall project. Phase 2 would extend access to potable water to the unincorporated areas south of Noble where four existing communities would become new customers for the RWD.



Cleveland County RWD#1 water distribution system after adding 11 miles of new water distribution mains using Cleveland County ARPA funds. This modification eliminates several dead end water mains plus provides multiple water paths to customers in the southern one-half of the water distribution

system.



Current Cleveland County RWD No. 1 water distribution system with a large number of dead end water mains.

About Cleveland County

Cleveland County covers more than 500 square miles and a steadily growing population of close to 300,000 people (2020 census), making it the third most populous county in Oklahoma.

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