

January 2009

Southeast RCAP Board of
Directors Meeting

Progress in North Carolina

NCRCAP: A Contractor for Southeast
Rural Community Assistance Project, Inc.



Recent Project Highlights in North Carolina

NCRCAP's Promotoras ready to take the training wheels off

The objective of NCRCAP's Healthy Homes For All Program is to create effective, sustainable change in housing and public health for Chatham County residents. In recent years, Healthy Homes For All has grown into a dynamic program where community members themselves perform outreach by utilizing their own informal social networks. Through research and partnerships with organizations across the state, NCRCAP developed a grant proposal to fund a lay health advisor program. The idea behind the program was to train trusted and respected members of the Hispanic community to be informal health educators. The lay health advisor, or in Spanish "Promotora de Salud," uses peer-to-peer networks to educate members of the community about important health issues. NCRCAP chose to train community members on Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention. In Chatham County, one-half of all housing units were constructed before the national ban on lead paint. With old housing stock and a large number of rental units, Chatham County families are particularly at risk for childhood lead poisoning. Even very low levels of lead exposure have been linked to learning and behavior problems, difficulty with communication, and diminished intelligence. The goal of the lay health advisor program is to raise awareness of lead poisoning in the Hispanic community. Through funding by the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, Triangle Community Foundation and the EPA's Childhood Lead Risk Assessment grant, NCRCAP hired four Promotoras. All educators work for nonprofit or grassroots organizations in Siler City, have extensive experience with community-based health projects, are native Spanish-speakers, and are well-established in Chatham County.

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Statistics in North Carolina

Technitrain
12 projects
5 workshops in planning

OCS
6 projects
1 workshop in planning

EPA SMARTAbout Water
1 project in planning
2 workshops in planning



NCRCAP staff with promotora training group, Siler City, November 2008.

NCRCAP's Promotoras continued

This fall, NCRCAP, with the assistance of Wake Forest University's Lay Health Advisor program, held our first two training sessions with the Promotoras. Beginning in December, these educators will make home visits to teach families about Childhood Lead Poisoning. Over the next six months, the Promotoras will develop job skills and health literacy. Armed with accurate health information and the trust of the community, NCRCAP's Healthy Homes for All Promotoras will become powerful health advocates for Chatham County residents.



Wake Forest University Promotora going through the outreach material for the NCRCAP training session in Siler City, November 2008. The Wake Forest program is a valuable partners to NCRCAP in getting this Lead Risk Assessment program into the Chatham County Latino community

NCRCAP Continues critical work in Ridgedale

The Ridgedale Home Owners Association (HOA) has continued to make great progress in establishing a viable water supply system for their community, a mobile home park located in the North Carolina mountains. In previous program years, the Ridgedale HOA gained control of the community well used to supply water to the residents, improved their capacity to correctly manage their water system by hiring a certified operator, and participated in a Small Water System Board Member Training to strengthen their technical, managerial, and financial skills.

The water system now disinfects and monitors the water according to state Public Water Supply Section (PWSS) rules.

Most recently, NCRCAP TAP Rich Holder has assisted the HOA with installing new iron sequestering equipment and blow off valves in the distribution system. Unfortunately, the water system still needs to replace the old hydro-pneumatic tank and discontinue using the bladder tanks which currently pressurize the system. Due to their current debt load however, the HOA is reluctant to take on further debt to finance the needed upgrades. To avoid additional costs, the Ridgedale residents wished to pursue connection to the nearby City of Asheville water system. After several discussions with and a site visit by the PWSS Disadvantaged Communities Program and the City of Asheville Water Resources Department, it was concluded that the cost of connection would be approximately \$2 million. Since this is not financially feasible for the HOA or the Disadvantaged Communities Program, NCRCAP began to research other alternatives, namely the installation of a new hydro-pneumatic tank. After contacting the Asheville Engineers Without Borders (EWB) organization, Rich Holder initiated another site visit to the Ridgedale community, and worked with engineers who provided a Preliminary Engineering Report in addition to citing and permitting services. The proposed project cost is now estimated at around \$30,000. Throughout the 2008-2009 program year, NCRCAP will continue to work with the Ridgedale HOA in securing a loan from USDA RD to finance the installation of a new hydro-pneumatic tank.