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NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Catherine L. Coffman (636) 789-3551

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDES FUNDS FOR GENERATOR FOR BELGRADE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Greg Branum, the Missouri State Director of USDA Rural Development, presented the Belgrade Volunteer Fire Department with a \$4,748 Mock Check on Tuesday, October 9, 2007. The funds will be used to purchase a generator which will be used to provide electricity to the firehouse when needed and the firehouse will be used for an emergency shelter when necessary. This equipment will serve the citizens living in the fire district by providing a heating/cooling shelter when needed.

U.S. Senator McCaskill said, “Public safety and emergency preparedness should be a priority. I’m pleased these federal funds will go to help Belgrade be better prepared for emergencies and ready to shelter its citizens in the event of a disaster.”

U.S. Representative Emerson said, “Emergency situations often demand unique equipment—certainly in rural areas those items may be located miles away from the site where they are needed. I am very glad the Belgrade Volunteer Fire Department is going to be the recipient of funds to acquire a new generator. USDA Rural Development has identified a tremendous opportunity to invest in the public safety of our community.”

Byron Akers, Fire Chief said, “We are pleased to have this generator at the Belgrade Volunteer Fire Department. It will be used in the event of a power outage or disaster. It will make it possible to maintain daily operations without interruption, as well as provide a heating and cooling shelter during times of need. The department is also thankful for the assistance through USDA Rural Development that made it possible for us to purchase this generator.”

“Financing essential equipment is consistent with Rural Developments mission and President Bush’s commitment to the future of rural communities,” said Branum. “Appreciation is also extended to our Federal elected officials for supporting USDA Rural Development. They have been strong proponents for the necessary funding for essential services for rural Missourians.



Left to right: Terry Luetkemeyer, Area Director, USDA Rural Development, Farmington, MO; Don Lewis, Captain, Belgrade Volunteer Fire Department; Melvin Meade, Belgrade Volunteer Fireman; Joe Sutton, Belgrade Volunteer Fireman; Donald Hedrick, Belgrade Volunteer Fireman; Greg Branum, USDA Rural Development, Columbia, MO; Cathy Coffman, Rural Development Manager, USDA Rural Development, Hillsboro, MO; Ben Dyer, District Senator Claire McCaskill’s Office, Cape Girardeau, MO; Donna Marti, Specialist, USDA Rural Development, Farmington, MO

Anyone interested in obtaining regarding assistance available through USDA Rural Development may visit the homepage at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo/> or can contact Cathy Coffman, Rural Development Manager, at the Hillsboro Local Office of USDA Rural Development at 10820 Highway 21, Suite 201, Hillsboro, MO 63050 or by calling 636-789-3551.

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