



NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Kevin Hinkebein (573) 756-6413 Ext. 4

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PRESENTS MOCK CHECK TO EAST MISSOURI ACTION AGENCY

U.S. Representative Jo Ann Emerson joined Greg Branum, the Missouri State Director of USDA Rural Development, to present East Missouri Action Agency with a \$121,810 Mock Check on Friday, November 3, 2006. The Housing Preservation Grant funds are administered by EMAA to provide funding to eligible very low and low income homeowners for necessary repairs to make their homes decent, safe and sanitary.

U.S. Representative Emerson said, "Homeownership is a great source of pride in our rural communities. I commend USDA Rural Development and the East Missouri Action Agency for their efforts to help low- and moderate-income

residents make important improvements to their homes. This program will help make these structures more livable, more energy-efficient, and safer for their occupants. I thank our U.S. Senators, Kit Bond and Jim Talent, for emphasizing the need for efforts such as this one, and I appreciate the hard work of the EMAA and USDA Rural Development for creating this opportunity."

Branum said, "Funding important projects like this by Rural Development mirrors President Bush's initiatives for rural America and Rural Development's commitment to the future of rural communities. He added, "Appreciation is also extended to U.S. Senators "Kit" Bond and Jim Talent and U.S. Representative Jo Ann Emerson for supporting USDA Rural Development. They have been strong proponents of providing essential services to rural Missourians."

"The Housing Preservation Grant program has been a blessing to the households EMAA serves. We have assisted over 500 homes on this program since we first received funding. As you know, we most often combine HPG funds with DNR Weatherization funding and/or other home repair funds. Without HPG we could not make some of the major repairs that we do for weatherization services. We have replaced leaky roofs, faulty heating and electrical systems with HPG funds. These are some of the services we could not provide for some households without HPG. Many of the types of repairs we make with HPG cannot be funded through the weatherization assistance program. We are very pleased to be able to assist additional families and provide more comprehensive services through HPG," stated Bill Bunch, Executive Director of EMAA.



(Left to Right) Bill Bunch, Executive Director, EMAA; Terry Luetkemeyer, USDA RD Area Director; Rick Hull, Housing Manager, EMAA; State Representative Jo Ann Emerson; Kevin Hinkebein, USDA RD Manager, Farmington; and Greg Branum, USDA RD State Director.

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 Kevin Hinkebein, Rural Development Manager, at the Farmington Local Office of USDA Rural Development at 812 Progress Drive, Farmington, MO 63640 or by calling 573-756-6413, Ext. 4.

“Committed to the future of rural communities.”

“USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.”

To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD).