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# NEWS RELEASE

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## **CITY OF LEETON PURCHASES EMERGENCY WARNING SIREN AND RECEIVES FUNDS TO PAVE THE AIR AMBULANCE HELIPAD**

In a ceremony on July 13, 2010, Janie Dunning, Missouri State Director, USDA Rural Development announced that the City of Leeton has received funds to purchase and install an early warning siren for the 619 residents of the small West-Central Missouri community. In addition to \$11,953 that was provided by the City of Leeton, assistance in the amount of \$6,435 was obtained from the Community Facilities Program of USDA, Rural Development. The total cost of the project is \$18,388.

The City also received funds to assist the community in paving an emergency helipad. The assistance consists of a Community Facilities Grant for \$2,415 from USDA, Rural Development. The City of Leeton provided \$4,485 of the needed \$6,900. The helipad will be used to provide a all-weather landing spot for air ambulances serving the 619 residents of Leeton.

“As a lifelong Missourian I understand just how unpredictable Missouri weather can be” said U.S. Senator Kit Bond. “As severe storms approach, this new emergency siren will do much to ensure the safety of the citizens of Leeton and I congratulate the local leaders who worked to secure these funds.” In regard to the funding for the helipad, Bond said, “Like those who live in our urban cities, rapid access to emergency services when needed is critical for the many Missourians who make their homes in rural communities like Leeton”. “This helipad is a life-saving example of the good work that can be achieved when federal and local officials work together.”



Pictured left to right: Howard Morris and Donna Morris, Leeton citizens who contributed \$500 towards the helipad; Kelly Gregory, Area III Director, USDA Rural Development; Loretta Burford, Alderman; Robin Miller, Alderman (holding plaque); Steve Binder, Mayor Pro-Tem; Anita J. (Janie) Dunning, USDA Rural Development MO State Director; Brook Balentine, Constituent Services Representative, Office of U.S. Senator Claire McCaskill; Mark Simmons, Area III Specialist, USDA Rural Development; and Joe Anstine, Alderman.

“I am pleased to hear that with the help of competitive grant funds provided by the USDA, the City of Leeton will have a warning siren and an emergency helipad in the event of an emergency” said U.S. Senator Claire McCaskill. “Proper equipment for emergency preparedness is crucial to the everyday needs of the community

“Without question, early warning systems save lives when severe weather and other emergencies strike. This new early warning siren will be an essential tool to help the City of Leeton protect local residents and improve overall emergency preparedness,” said U.S. Representative Ike Skelton. In times of emergency or severe injury, having immediate access to intensive health care can be the difference between life and death” said Skelton. “By allowing all-weather landing for helicopter ambulances, this new helipad will decrease the time it takes to get patients to the care they need and thus improve their overall chances of surviving serious injury.”

“This is a great partnership effort when everyone works together for a common goal of meeting the needs of a community in providing an early warning storm siren and emergency services” said Dunning. “In providing grant funds, these projects mirrors USDA Rural Development’s mission of being committed to the future of rural communities. I want to personally thank everyone that has worked together to make this project a reality. I am pleased that the residents of the City of Leeton will have the benefit of early warning services. Special thanks are extended to our federal elected officials for making available the federal funds for these kinds of projects.”

Anyone seeking more information about the water and wastewater programs or any other USDA Rural Development programs may visit the homepage at <http://www.rurdev.gov/mo> or by contacting the Clinton Area Office at 1306 North 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Clinton, MO 64735 or by calling (660) 885-5567- ext 5.

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