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# NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Donna R. Martin, Area Specialist 573-756-6413 Ext. 4

## USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT HOLDS EARTH DAY CELEBRATION IN OAK GROVE VILLAGE

Morris Westfall, Missouri State Director of USDA Rural Development, hosted a ground breaking ceremony with the Oak Grove Village officials on Thursday, April 24, 2008. The purpose of the ground breaking ceremony was to celebrate the beginning of construction on a new sewage collection system to provide service to 241 households which will greatly improve the health and sanitary conditions of the Village. USDA Rural Development partnered with the Community Development Block Grant program to provide the funding for this project.

U.S. Senator Kit Bond said, "It is critical that we help our small rural communities provide families with adequate sewage systems. This money will help Oak Grove Village meet this important basic need while safeguarding the environment for future generations."

"On Earth Day we should remember that it is our responsibility to keep surroundings – our air, our forests, and our water – as clean as possible," said U.S. Senator Claire McCaskill. "Ensuring that water collection and treatment facilities are updated helps to keep our environment clean for future generations and to provide clean water for Missouri's families. I'm glad to see federal dollars helping our communities to do just that."

"This is another great example of how USDA's Rural Development program can have a positive impact in our local communities," said Congressman Kenny Hulshof (MO-09). "This money clearly addresses a public need, and I'm pleased to see people's tax dollars returned to their local communities to help improve residents' quality of life. While sewage collection isn't the most glamorous of issues, it's definitely a necessity, and this funding is an important component in seeing that these critical projects are completed. I am confident that this assistance will be of great benefit to Oak Grove Village."

Ken Hayes, of Oak Grove Village Chairman, said, "The Village very much appreciates all the help we have received from USDA Rural Development. The funding is important, but so is all the other assistance USDA Rural Development provided in guiding the Village through the process and bringing this project to a reality."

Westfall said "This is a great partnership effort when everyone works together for a common goal of meeting the needs of community. 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. I am pleased that so many rural households will benefit from an adequate and dependable waste disposal system."

Westfall added, "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.



Pictured left to right: Betty LeSeure, Compliance Specialist, Missouri Department of Economic Development; Morris Westfall, USDA, Rural Development State Director; Donna Martin, USDA, Rural Development Area Specialist; Ken Hayes, Oak Grove Village Chairman; Ed Laubinger, Contractor; Judy McFarland, Oak Grove Village Trustee; Terry Luetkemeyer, USDA, Rural Development Area Director; Pam Campbell, Oak Grove Village Trustee; Ann Scott, Engineer in Training, Brunjes & Associates, Inc.-Engineering; Jenni Riegal, Southern Region Director, Congressman Kenny Hulshof's Office; Bill Brunjes, Project Engineer, Brunjes & Associates, Inc. - Engineering; Bob Burns, Field Representative, Senator Claire McCaskill's Office

Anyone interested in obtaining information regarding assistance available through USDA Rural Development may visit the homepage at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo/> or can contact the Area Office at the Farmington, MO, or by calling 573-756-6413, Ext. 4.

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