



Committed to the future of rural communities.

# NEWS RELEASE

## USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDES FUNDS TO PORTAGEVILLE RURAL VOLUNTEER FIRE ASSOCIATION FOR A NEW FIRE TRUCK

On Monday, November 17, 2008, Missouri Rural Development State Director Morris Westfall and staff met with elected officials and members of the Portageville Rural Volunteer Fire Association to celebrate the recent acquisition of a new fire truck. The truck was purchased with the help of \$133,000 in federal loan and grant funds from USDA Rural Development and \$45,000 from the City of Portageville.

“It is crucial that the brave volunteer fire fighters, who risk their lives to protect their communities, have access to dependable and up-to-date equipment,” U.S. Senator Claire McCaskill said. “I’m pleased that these federal dollars are going to provide a reliable fire truck to the Portageville firefighters so they can continue to keep residents safe.”

The Portageville Rural Volunteer Fire Association is the sole provider of fire protection for the more than 3,200 residents of the City of Portageville and the sparsely populated rural area near Portageville. The Association sought the assistance of Rural Development to replace an existing fire truck that was an adapted 1970 Form F-700 Bob Truck with a front mount pump. The Bob Truck had become increasingly unreliable and very costly to maintain, and parts to repair the truck were extremely difficult to find due to the age of the vehicle. With the funding provided by Rural Development and the City of Portageville, the Association was able to obtain a replacement truck with needed equipment to serve the residents of Portageville and the surrounding communities.

“This combination of grants and loans will provide more reliable vehicles for our firefighters, and benefit everyone they serve in Portageville. I appreciate the partnership USDA Rural Development shares with our Southern Missouri communities, particularly when they identify opportunities to invest in public safety and our first responders,” said U.S. Representative Jo Ann Emerson.

The funding for the fire truck is provided through USDA Rural Development's Community Facilities (CF) Program. In addition to fire trucks, the CF loan and grant program also provides funding to help rural communities finance essential community facilities, health services, and the purchase of equipment which will provide vital services to rural residents. Some examples include financing an ambulance, patrol vehicles, warning sirens, fire-fighting equipment, jaws-of-life, rescue vehicle, 911 dispatch center, justice center, abuse center, public safety building, medical clinics and hospitals.

“We really appreciate all the help we received from Cathy Walters and Rural Development in obtaining the fire truck. I’d also like to extend thanks to Senator Bond, Senator McCaskill and



Pictured: Ervin Gremard, Council Member; Christy Ferrell, Representing U S Senator McCaskill's office, Jo Alexander, Representing State Representative Terry Swinger's office; Greg Batson, USDA Rural Development, Area Director; Bill Foster, Fire Chief; George DeLisle, Asst. Fire Chief; Vella Bea Moody, City Clerk; Cathy Walters, USDA Rural Development; Ronnie Adams, Chief Police; Delmar Edgar, and Ronnie Walker, Secretary & Treasurer/ Alderman

Representative Emerson for all the work they do to ensure the funds are available for these type of projects,” said Bill Foster, Fire Chief, Portageville Rural Volunteer Fire Association.

“The intent of the CF programs is to assist rural communities with financial packages to enhance the quality of life for rural Missourians,” said Westfall. “Assisting with financing fire protection service is very important in a rural community. This kind of assistance mirrors USDA Rural Development’s mission and President Bush’s initiative of being committed to the future of rural communities. Special thanks are extended to our federal elected officials including U.S. Senators Kit Bond and Claire McCaskill plus U.S. Representative Jo Ann Emerson for making available federal monies for funding this fire truck project for Portageville and for other essential services for rural Missouri.”

Further information regarding any of the USDA Rural Development programs is available by contacting the Charleston Rural Development Office at [cathy.walters@mo.usda.gov](mailto:cathy.walters@mo.usda.gov) or by calling 573-649-9947, ext. 4. Rural Development’s web site is: [www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo).

**"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).