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NEWS RELEASE

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDES CITY OF WILLOW SPRINGS \$11,320 FOR COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT

Morris Westfall, Missouri State Director for USDA Rural Development presented a Mock Check in the amount of \$11,320 to the City of Willow Springs on Monday, September 29. The Rural Development Community Facilities Grant will help finance communication equipment used by the local volunteer fire department.

“Our firefighters put their lives on the line to protect our families, friends, and homes and this equipment will help them do their jobs more safely,” said U.S. Senator Kit Bond. I commend the City of Willow Springs leadership and the USDA Rural Development for their dedication and hard work to make this project a reality.”

“Providing our fire fighters with updated equipment so they are able to communicate with one another in an emergency situation is critical to keeping Missourians safe,” said U.S. Senator Claire McCaskill. “I’m very happy that this funding will give Willow Springs’ fire fighters the tools they need to do their jobs well and protect their fellow community members.”

“The communications systems of our first responders are extremely important to keeping them safe as they serve the public in Willow Springs. Our rural volunteer fire departments operate on extremely tight budgets and they really need the support of programs like the ones operated by USDA Rural Development. I appreciate the opportunity they have identified to help out the Willow Springs Volunteer Fire Department, and I am proud to support this essential service in our community,” said U.S. Representative Jo Ann Emerson.

Mayor J. C. White expressed his appreciation, “The City would like to thank Rural Development for the grant funds allowing us to purchase portable and mobile radios and pagers. The citizens depend on our Willow Springs Volunteer Fire Department in times of crises. The addition of this equipment for our volunteer firemen will certainly aid their efforts when providing service and safety to the 2,147 citizens of our rural community now and in the future.”



From left: USDA Area Director Mark Hultgren; Eighth District Congresswoman Jo Ann Emerson’s area representative, Heather Peugh; U.S. Senator Claire McCaskill’s area representative, David Rauch; USDA Rural Missouri State Director Morris Westfall; USDA Area Specialist Mark Dethrow; Willow Springs City Councilwoman Linda Elijah, USDA Area Specialist Danny Campbell, Assistant Fire Chief Matt Foster and City Administrator Bill Easley. *Photo courtesy of the West Plains Daily Quill.*

Westfall said, “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 kind of project providing essential services for rural Missouri.”

Anyone seeking more information about this or any other USDA Rural Development program may visit the homepage at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo/> or by contacting Daniel Campbell, Area Specialist, at 3210 Hoover Drive, West Plains, MO 65775-3527 or by calling (417) 256-7117 extension 4 or by email to daniel.campbell@mo.usda.gov.

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