



# NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Rural Development

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## **Agriculture Secretary Vilsack Announces Disaster Assistance for Residents of 14 States**

*~~Three Projects in Two WV Counties Benefit~~*

WASHINGTON, April 2, 2010 – Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced funding to help small towns and communities in 14 states that have been affected by natural disasters.

“When disasters strike, USDA works with local and state officials to assist them so that communities and businesses can get back on track,” Vilsack said. “This funding will help residents of rural communities in counties that have been declared disaster areas by President Obama in their recovery efforts.”

More than \$31.6 million is being made available through Rural Development’s Community Facilities program, which finances essential buildings and equipment for public use in rural areas. These funds, which are competitively awarded through an application process, are available to public bodies, non-profit organizations and federally recognized Indian tribes. More information about USDA Rural Development can be found at [www.rurdev.usda.gov](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov).

For example, in West Virginia, three entities received a total of \$130,200 in grant funds and \$203,000 in loan funds. Belington Emergency Squad, Inc., Barbour County, was selected to receive a loan of \$178,000 and a grant of \$50,000 to purchase a new ambulance and refinancing. Frametown Volunteer Fire Department, Inc., Braxton County, will receive a \$25,000 loan and a \$50,000 grant to purchase 25 sets of turnout gear for the firefighters. And, the Town of Gassaway, Braxton County, was selected to receive a \$30,200 grant to assist in the purchase of a 4WD police vehicle and additional equipment for the police department.

“Providing funds for first responders is essential for communities in order to provide adequate protection and services to the citizens,” stated West Virginia USDA Rural Development State Director Bobby Lewis.

Funds may be used to purchase first responder vehicles and equipment such as fire and police and medical emergency vehicles, emergency generators, computers, snow plows, truck plows and other essential equipment. The 14 states and the amount of funding they will receive are listed below.

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Committed to the future of rural communities.

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Arkansas, \$1,162,000 grant

Iowa, \$2,712,118 grant; \$18,900,000 loan

Kan., \$10,450 grant

Ky., \$933,433 grant; \$58,500 loan

La., \$342,527 grant

Mich., \$202,000 grant; \$873,000 loan

Mo., \$827,395 grant; \$44,700 loan

Miss., \$383,770 grant

Nev., \$11,000 grant

Tenn., \$200,000 grant

Texas, \$687,193 grants; \$133,870 loan

Wash., \$1,000,000 grant; \$1,943,800 loan

Wis., \$703,360 grant; \$125,000 loan

W. Va., \$130,200 grant; \$203,000 loan

USDA, under its Rural Development mission area, administers and manages more than 40 housing, business and community infrastructure and facility programs through a network of 6,100 employees located in 500 national, state and local offices. These programs are designed to improve the economic stability of rural communities, businesses, residents, farmers and ranchers and improve the quality of life in rural America. Rural Development has an existing portfolio of more than \$130 billion in loans and loan guarantees.

Rural Development serves as the lead Federal entity for rural development needs and administers program assistance through its housing, business, community and infrastructure programs. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

Further information on USDA Rural Development may be obtained by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>. In West Virginia, call 1-800-295-8228 to be put in touch with the appropriate personnel serving your county. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202.720.2600 (voice and TDD).

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