



# NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Rural Development

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## **Agriculture Secretary Vilsack Announces Support to Improve Electric Infrastructure and Services in Rural Communities**

### ***More than 33,000 Customers in 21 States Will Benefit***

WASHINGTON, April 28, 2010 - Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced that rural communities in 21 states will benefit from guaranteed loans provided by USDA to improve electric service delivery to more than 33,000 customers.

“The Obama Administration believes that modernized infrastructure is a necessary part of the foundation for long term economic stability and prosperity in rural America and this funding will help rural utilities build and upgrade essential electric infrastructure to help communities thrive,” Vilsack said. “These investments will improve local service, create jobs and expand economic opportunity in rural areas.”

The funding is being provided by the Rural Utilities Service electric program at USDA Rural Development. The loans will help build more than 2,405 miles of new distribution lines and upgrade more than 1,822 miles of existing distribution lines. These investments are part of the Obama Administration’s commitment to bring improved infrastructure to rural communities.

For example, Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative in West Virginia (Grant, Hampshire Hardy and Pendleton Counties) and Virginia (Nelson, Augusta, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Shenandoah, Harrisonburg and Staunton Counties) has been selected to receive a \$25 Million electric guaranteed loan to serve 1,977 new consumers, build 191 miles of new distribution lines and three miles of transmission lines, make improvements to 127 miles of distribution lines, and make other system improvements.

The Navajo Tribal Utility Authority in Fort Defiance, Ariz., has been selected to receive a \$103.1 million loan guarantee to build 600 miles of new distribution lines, 37 miles of transmission lines and make improvements to 153 miles of existing distribution lines. These investments will serve 4,982 new and current customers in Arizona, New Mexico and Utah.

The Dixie Electric Power Association in Laurel, Miss., has been selected to receive a \$39.7 million loan guarantee to improve electric service delivery to 6,520 new and current consumers. The utility will use the loan to build 316 miles of distribution lines and make improvements to 172 miles of existing distribution lines.

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Committed to the future of rural communities.

“USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.”

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The loan guarantees announced today total \$364.3 million and are part of USDA Rural Development's annual budget; they are not funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. For more information on USDA's electric program, please visit the following USDA website: [www.usda.gov/rus/electric/index.htm](http://www.usda.gov/rus/electric/index.htm).

Below is the complete list of rural utilities selected to receive a USDA guaranteed loan. Funding of each loan recipient is contingent upon the recipient meeting the conditions of the loan agreement.

#### Alabama

Clarke-Washington Electric Membership Corporation - \$15,992,000 loan to serve 2,240 new customers, build 114 miles of new distribution lines, and make improvements to 34 miles of distribution lines.

#### Arizona, New Mexico and Utah

Navajo Tribal Utility Authority - \$103,128,000 loan to serve 4,982 new and existing customers, build 600 miles of new distribution lines and 37 miles of transmission lines, make improvements to 153 miles of distribution lines and make other system improvements.

#### Georgia

The Little Ocmulgee Electric Membership Corporation - \$9,500,000 loan to service 1,782 new customers, build 111 miles of new distribution lines, and improve 263 miles of existing distribution line.

Southern Rivers Energy, Inc. - \$16,400,000 loan to serve 1,822 new customers, build 168 miles of new distribution lines, and upgrade 291 miles of existing distribution lines.

#### Iowa

Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc. - \$7,568,000 loan to serve 320 new customers, build 30 miles of new distribution lines and make improvements to 41 miles of existing distribution lines.

#### Kansas

The Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative Association, Inc. - \$6,715,000 guaranteed loan to serve 832 new and existing customers, build 66 miles of new distribution lines and make system improvements to 36 miles of existing distribution line.

#### Kentucky

Jackson Purchase Energy Corporation - \$26,753,000 guaranteed loan to serve \$1,474 new and existing consumers, build 83 miles of new distribution lines, and make system improvements to 25 miles of existing distribution lines.

## Michigan

The Ontonagon County Rural Electrification Association - \$5,000,000 loan to serve 321 customers, build 25 miles of new distribution lines and improve 50 miles of existing distribution lines.

## Minnesota

P.K.M. Electric Cooperative, Inc. - \$6,250,000 guaranteed loan to serve 149 new customers, build 29 miles of distribution lines and make improvements to 60 miles of existing distribution line.

## Mississippi

Dixie Electric Power Association - \$39,688,000 guaranteed loan to serve 6,520 customers, build 316 miles of distribution lines and make improvements to 172 miles of existing distribution lines.

## Missouri

New-Mac Electric Cooperative, Inc. - \$16,000,000 guaranteed loan to serve 1,357 customers, build 95 miles of distribution lines and make improvements to 46 miles of existing distribution lines.

## Montana, South Dakota, and Wyoming

Southeast Electric Cooperative, Inc. - \$3,486,000 guaranteed loan to serve 72 new customers, build 31 miles of distribution lines, and upgrade 1 mile of existing distribution line.

## North Carolina

Four County Electric Membership Corporation - \$45,000,000 guaranteed loan to serve 4,265 customers, build 139 miles of distribution lines, 14 miles of transmission lines and improve 63 miles of distribution and 22 miles of transmission lines.

## North Dakota

Roughrider Electric Cooperative, Inc. - \$4,000,000 loan to build 18 miles of new distribution, make improvements to 64 miles of distribution lines that service 205 new customers.

## South Dakota

Lake Region Electric Association, Inc. - \$4,317,000 loan to build 31 miles of new distribution lines and make improvements to 34 more lines. The project will serve 228 new and current customers.

Kingsbury Electric Cooperative, Inc. - \$1,045,000 loan to build 14 miles of new distribution lines and make improvements to 22 and make other system improvements. The project will serve 64 new customers.

#### Tennessee and Kentucky

Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation - \$20,000,000 loan to provide service to 4,000 new customers and make improvements to 258 miles of distribution lines.

#### Virginia and West Virginia

Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative - \$25,000,000 loan to serve 1,977 new customers by building 191 miles of new distribution lines, three miles of transmission lines and make improvements to 127 miles of distribution lines.

#### Washington

Public Utility District No. 1 of Mason County - \$8,555,000 loan to service 420 new customers, build 14 miles of new distribution lines, two miles of transmission lines and make improvements to four miles of distribution lines.

USDA, through 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 \$134 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, audiotope, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202.720.2600 (voice and TDD).