



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Rural Development
210 Walnut • Room 873 • Des Moines, IA 50309
Phone: (515) 284-4663 • Fax: (515) 284-4110 • Web: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/ia>

Contact: Darin Leach, Public Information Coordinator
Phone: (515) 284-4747 (office); (515) 669-5691 (cell)
E-mail: Darin.Leach@ia.usda.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rural Developments

Helping Rural Communities Protect the Environment

By Timothy Helmbrecht, USDA Rural Development Acting State Director in Iowa

DES MOINES, Iowa – April 15, 2009 – Beginning in 1970 Earth Day has been recognized every April 22 as a way to renew our commitment of caring for all of Earth's natural resources.

While we are often reminded of ways to better care for the earth resources in our metro areas, rural communities and businesses around Iowa play a key part in building a safer, healthier and cleaner world.

USDA Rural Development is proud of the role we play in helping Iowans prepare the environment for future generations. Our agency will be recognizing 2009 Earth Day by hosting eight check presentations and/or community celebrations around the state on Wednesday, April 22 in South Amana, Archer, Quasqueton, Rubio, Stout, Tracy, Carpenter and Greeley.

Here are some examples of how loan and grants from our agency were used last year.

During the past year in Iowa USDA Rural Development provided nearly \$50 million in loans and grants to assist with financing water and wastewater projects in 35 rural communities to help protect Iowa's rivers, lakes and streams.

Our agency also provided \$15 million to more than 160 rural businesses and producers to assist with energy-saving and renewable energy projects including 15 large and small wind turbines, 18 geothermal heating and cooling systems, 125 more efficient grain-drying systems - data from one producer suggests his farm now saves enough energy to meet the heating needs of eight average-sized homes for a year - and four biomass projects.

USDA Rural Development also helped numerous rural Iowa businesses reduce energy consumption by financing energy-efficiency improvements such as new insulation, more efficient heating systems, windows, doors, and lighting and ventilation systems.

Committed to the future of rural communities.

"USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender."
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The owners of the Pump N Pak convenience store in Sergeant Bluff used our funds to purchase and install more energy-efficient freezers and coolers, as well as add insulation. Energy savings at the store are projected to be nearly 30 percent.

Computer Transportations Services in Breda received USDA Rural Development funds to construct a new office building utilizing many environmentally friendly features such as geothermal heating and cooling, a sensor system that raises or lowers lights depending on the light outside, cabinets made of crushed sunflowers, and an exterior composite panel made from 100 percent recycled material including milk jugs.

Make a difference this Earth Day by doing your part to care for our natural resources.

For more information about guaranteed loans, direct loans or grants from USDA Rural Development, please call (515) 284-4663, send me an email at tim.helmbrecht@ia.usda.gov or visit www.rurdev.usda.gov/ia.

USDA Rural Development has 11 offices including a State Office in Des Moines, along with Area Offices in Albia, Atlantic, Humboldt, Indianola, Iowa Falls, Le Mars, Mount Pleasant, Storm Lake, Tipton and Waverly.

- 2009 Earth Day Celebrations – Wednesday, April 22
 - South Amana, Iowa - new water treatment plant
 - Archer, Iowa – new sanitary wastewater collection system
 - Quasqueton, Iowa – bringing rural water services to Buchanan County
 - Rubio, Iowa – new individual septic tanks and development of an on-site treatment system
 - Stout, Iowa – new sanitary wastewater collection system
 - Tracy, Iowa – new wastewater treatment facility
 - Carpenter, Iowa – new sanitary wastewater collection system
 - Greeley, Iowa – rural water services are now available in community

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