



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – June 27, 2007 Contact- Harold Alford (785) 271-2701

USDA Housing Programs Expanded For FEMA Designated Counties Special Waivers Granted for Kansas

Topeka, KS – USDA Rural Development State Director Chuck Banks announced today that the Agency has been granted expanded housing options to assist those Kansans eligible for USDA's programs living in counties designated by the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as a result of the severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding that struck Kansas beginning on May 4, 2007. USDA Rural Development administers a broad range of homeownership and home repair programs to assist eligible Kansans.

"USDA Rural Development is committed to help those Kansans, especially those living in Greensburg and Kiowa County, impacted by the tornadoes and storms that struck the State in early May. The Agency has excellent grant and low interest loan programs to help individuals and families finance rebuilding or repairs of homes in these Kansas FEMA-designated counties. These recently approved housing waivers will allow USDA Rural Development to assist even more Kansans," remarked State Director Banks.

USDA Rural Development's approved waivers to expand the Agency's rural housing programs include those provided to the Agency's Gulf states following Hurricane Katrina. Additional Agency waivers were also granted specific for Kansas needs. The USDA housing waivers granted, allowing for greater program flexibility, cover the following areas:

- Loan limits,
- Credit qualifications
- Employment or wages qualifications
- Rural property eligibility
- Energy efficiency construction

Kansas counties eligible for the expanded USDA Rural Development housing program waivers include: Barton, Clay, Cloud, Comanche, Dickinson, Edwards, Ellsworth, Kiowa, Leavenworth, Lyon, Osage, Osborne, Ottawa, Phillips, Pratt, Reno, Rice, Riley, Saline, Shawnee and Stafford. Areas eligible for the Agency's housing programs can include rural properties, along with communities up to 10,000 in population and some towns between 10,000 and 20,000 in population. For more information regarding USDA Rural Development's programs, individuals are encouraged to contact the Agency's Hays office at 785-628-3081, the Iola office at 620-365-2901, or the Manhattan office at 785-776-7582. Individuals may also visit the Agency's office in Greensburg located immediately southeast of the Kiowa County Courthouse next to the Greensburg City Hall.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. The Agency provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure in rural America. For additional information regarding all USDA Rural Development programs, contact the Agency at 785-271-2700 or visit the Agency's Kansas website at www.rurdev.usda.gov/ks

USDA Rural Development – *Committed to the future of rural communities*