



NEWS RELEASE

1303 SW First American Place, Suite 100, Topeka, KS 66604-4040
Voice (785) 271-2701, FAX (785) 271-2708, WEB www.rurdev.usda.gov/ks

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Contact- Harold Alford (785) 271-2701

Storm Shelter Funding Announced By USDA Rural Development

Topeka, KS. – USDA Rural Development State Director Chuck Banks announced today that the Agency will again offer funding in 2008 for the state's Rural Storm Shelter Program. This Program provides low interest loans and/or grants to help finance storm shelters for very-low income homeowners living in eligible areas of Kansas.

“Severe weather can strike unexpectedly, often with serious personal consequences. As Kansans were again reminded last year, violent storms and the unfortunate loss of life underscores the need for improved home safety measures. The installation of an approved storm shelter offers important added safety and security when severe weather strikes. USDA's Rural Storm Shelter Program provides eligible homeowners an excellent opportunity to protect themselves and their families,” commented State Director Banks.

USDA Rural Development's Rural Storm Shelter Program can also assist homeowners with other necessary improvements or repairs. Many households across Kansas have benefited with this USDA assistance. Funds have been provided for energy efficiency improvements such as installing insulation, replacing windows or new heating systems, along with roof repair or replacement, siding replacement, and providing sanitary water and waste disposal systems.

Eligible program applicants must meet income guidelines for the county of residence, the home must be owned and occupied by the applicant, and the property must be located in a rural area or a community of less than 20,000 populations. Assistance is provided at a 1% fixed interest rate and/or by a grant. The maximum loan is \$20,000 with a repayment term not to exceed 20 years. Grants may be available for applicants 62 years of age or older who do not have repayment ability for a loan. Grants are sometimes combined with loans to increase the amount available for repairs.

State Director Banks encourages homeowners interested in the Agency's Rural Storm Shelter Program to contact their local USDA Rural Development office, or they may call the state headquarters at 785-271-2720. Applications will be accepted until funding is exhausted.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs that support increasing economic opportunities and enhancing the quality of life for rural Americans. As a venture capital entity, USDA Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure in rural America. Since 2001, USDA Rural Development has delivered over \$1.2 billion to Kansans covering all Agency programs, supporting well over \$6 billion in future economic development for the Sunflower State. 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

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