



NEWS RELEASE

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Volunteers Still Needed For Greensburg

USDA Rural Development Employees Help Homebuilders

Greensburg, KS. – With the summer season passing, students and vacationers have returned to their regular routines and the volunteer workforce in Greensburg has dwindled to just a few good Samaritans. With the recent groundbreaking of ten (10) additional new homes to be constructed under the USDA Rural Development-supported *Greensburg Community Self-Help Housing Program*, and the announcement that funding has been secured to allow for the construction of thirty (30) additional affordable single-family ‘green’ homes under this sweat-equity program, there is still a lot of work that needs to be completed.

USDA Rural Development employees recently went to Greensburg to volunteer with the self-help homeowners and Mennonite Housing Rehabilitation Services, Inc. staff to caulk, paint, build basement stud walls, and install temporary power meter services. Housing was available at Volunteer Village, hosted by Linda Howard, Mennonite Housing Rehabilitation Services, Inc., Greensburg Volunteer Coordinator.

“New affordable homes is a key component for Greensburg’s long-term recovery, to help support a greener, more sustainable future for Greensburg and Kiowa County,” commented USDA Rural Development State Director Chuck Banks. “Volunteers are needed to keep the progress going so displaced families may return to a home of their own and a feeling of normality we all would like to enjoy.”

Ms. Howard, stated, "It is not unusual this time of year for volunteering to slow down, however, there is still a lot to be done in Greensburg and volunteers, especially those with skills in the construction trades, would be very much appreciated."

Funding for the *Greensburg Community Self-Help Housing Program* is a result of the first-ever partnership between the United Way of the Plains in Wichita and USDA Rural Development. This cooperative funding arrangement allows the City of Greensburg to work with Mennonite Housing Rehabilitation Services to oversee the construction of affordable single-family homes. A total of fifty (50) affordable ‘green’ homes are planned to be constructed under this program.

The *Greensburg Community Self-Help Housing Program* includes the involvement of 19 non-profits and faith-based organizations, national energy experts, government agencies, and trade associations to help reduce the cost of the houses being built to replace those homes lost from the devastating May 4th, 2007 tornado that struck Greensburg and the region.

USDA Rural Development’s mission is to deliver programs that support increasing economic opportunities and enhancing the quality of life for rural Americans. Individuals interesting in volunteering may call Linda Howard at 316-518-6380 or learn more about the *Greensburg Community Self-Help Housing Program* by contacting Kiowa County Housing Coordinator Laura Stoltenberg at 620-723-1097 or USDA Rural Development at 620-275-0211.

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