

## USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT AWARDS FUNDING TO THE VILLAGE OF VANDUSER FOR WARNING SIREN

On Thursday, September 18, 2008, Missouri Rural Development State Director Morris Westfall joined elected officials and local Rural Development staff in presenting the Village of Vanduser with a mock check in the amount of \$7,500. The check represents the funding awarded to the Village to purchase and install an early storm warning siren.

U.S. Senator Christopher “Kit” Bond stated, “Storm warning systems are vital to community safety and emergency preparedness. I commend the Vanduser community leadership and the USDA Rural Development staff for their dedication and hard work to make this project a reality.”

The Village of Vanduser is located in a rural area surrounded by acres of agricultural farmland and known for large damaging storms. When severe weather hits the area there is very little communication reception available, and the only warning available to the citizens is provided by the fire department driving up and down every street notifying residents to seek shelter. The funding provided by USDA Rural Development has allowed the Village to purchase a storm siren with enough coverage area to notify all residents of the Village in case of severe weather.

“We can’t control the weather, but we can make sure Missourians know that storms are coming so that they can take shelter and stay safe,” U.S. Senator Claire McCaskill said. “Thanks to this federal funding, the Vanduser community will be able to purchase a new storm warning siren to protect its residents in the event of a natural disaster.”

“There is no substitute for the early warning a siren can provide in a rural area. For so many residents, the siren is the only signal that a dangerous storm is approaching or a tornado has been sighted. Folks in Vanduser will be safer because of this improvement to our early warning response system, and I appreciate the attention of USDA Rural Development to this community need,” said U.S. Representative Jo Ann Emerson.

The funding for the warning siren is provided through USDA Rural Development’s Community Facilities (CF) Program. In addition to warning sirens, the CF loan and grant program also provides funding to help rural communities finance essential community facilities, health services, and the purchase of equipment which will provide vital services to rural residents. Some examples include financing an ambulance, fire trucks, police vehicles, firefighting equipment, jaws-of-life, rescue vehicle, 911 dispatch center, justice center, abuse center, public safety building, medical clinics and hospitals.

Clay Graviett, Mayor of Vanduser, said, “The Village of Vanduser would like to thank Rural Development for helping our small community in obtaining an early warning siren. In the event of a



Pictured left to right: Councilman Dale Keith, Rural Development State Director Morris Westfall, Clerk Diane Verble, Mayor Clay Graviett, Councilwoman Jane Hanback, Rural Development Specialist Cathy Walters, and Scott County Economic Developer Joel Evans.

national disaster, the siren will help our community be better prepared. Ever since the devastating tornado in May of '86, people tend to become very anxious during bad weather and tornado season. We really appreciate Rural Development's help in obtaining the siren."

"This kind of assistance mirrors USDA Rural Development's mission and being committed to the future of rural communities," said Westfall. "Appreciation is extended to our Federal elected officials for supporting USDA Rural Development. They have been strong proponents for the necessary funding for essential services for rural Missourians."

Further information regarding any of the USDA Rural Development programs is available by contacting the Charleston Rural Development Office at [cathy.walters@mo.usda.gov](mailto:cathy.walters@mo.usda.gov) or by calling 573-649-9947, ext. 4. Rural Development's web site is: [www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo).

**"Committed to the future of rural communities."**

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