

GRAND OPENING OF BELFIELD FIRE HALL

BELFIELD, May 29, 2009 – USDA Rural Development Acting State Director, Donald Warren, today presented a ceremonial check for \$220,230 to the city of Belfield, on behalf of the Belfield Fire Hall, during grand opening ceremonies.

“This project will enhance the safety of the rural residents of Belfield and the area, which is another vital element of the services Rural Development brings to rural North Dakota,” said Warren. “We are proud to be here and be part of the grand opening celebration.”

Located on the south side of town at 304 Main St. S., and outside the 100/500 year flood plain, the new 60x80 foot four-bay metal building has been in use by the Belfield Volunteer Fire Department since early January. It houses two fire trucks and an ambulance that is used by the city of Belfield and surrounding areas.

There are 20 volunteer firefighters.

“We broke ground April 1, 2008, and moved into the new hall early January,” said Belfield Fire Chief Kevin Hushka, who has been a member of the department for 16 years. “The department hopes that in the future it will be able to replace the pumper truck,” continued Hushka.

The last fire hall was built in the 1950’s. The roof needed to be replaced, the training area and storage bay were too small, no dressing area, and the storage facilities no longer met National Fire Protection Standards, along with other accessibility issues.

The building cost about \$482,261. USDA Rural Development provided a grant for \$60,675 and a low-interest 30-year loan for \$159,555 supported by city tax revenues. Other funding partners include Department of Commerce, N. D. Energy Impact Grants, Belfield Fire Department, Belfield Ambulance Department, and the city of Belfield.

In Fiscal Year 2008, USDA Rural Development provided **\$38.1 million** in housing programs, **\$54.7 million** in business and community programs, **\$577.5 million** in electric programs, and **\$17.9 million** in telecom programs to North Dakota residents.

USDA Rural Development’s mission is to increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for rural residents. Rural Development has invested more than \$111 billion since 2001 for equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. More than two million jobs have been created or saved through



Left, Leo Schneider, mayor; Donald Warren, acting state director; and Kevin Huska, fire chief.

these investments. Further information on rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

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