



# NEWS RELEASE

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## USDA Rural Development Finances Million Dollar Facility for Highland County Water

**COLUMBUS, OHIO, Apr. 12, 2007** – Randall Hunt, state director for USDA Rural Development and Tom Boyle, president of Highland County Water Company joined today to officially open Highland's new multi-service office building. The facility was financed by Rural Development's Community Facilities Program.

"Today marks the realization of a portion of Highland County Water Company's vision and sets the stage for improved service delivery," said Hunt. "Rural Development administers approximately 40 programs designed to assist communities with planning and financing their development needs. Projects like these help to demonstrate Rural Development's ability to help build and sustain communities."

Highland Water needed to consolidate operations as part of their plan to comprehensively improve operating efficiency and customer response. Working with Rural Development, a \$750,000 funding package was formulated that financed the construction of the new 8,800 sq. ft. facility. The new building will include a Board Room that will be available for public use. It will also incorporate a meter department that will be housed, along with other functions, in the 4,725 sq. ft. basement.

Rural Development, through its programs, has worked with community leaders of Highland County to invest more than \$11 million through various programs since Fiscal Year 2001. These funds have helped Ohioans become homeowners, foster and strengthen businesses, and bring clean, safe water to communities throughout the state.

"Working with Rural Development was the key to getting this project from a vision to an actual facility; they never gave up on us and worked tirelessly until they found a way to help us," said Larry Cockrell, Highland County Water Company general manager. "We were really being pinched for space and had absolutely outgrown our previous building. Now we've got this wonderful new facility and it's certainly going to help us provide better service to our loyal customers."

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. Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in

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Committed to the future of rural communities.

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home ownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure.

Further information on rural programs is available by calling 614-255-2400, visiting a local USDA Rural Development office or by viewing USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

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Tom Boyle (center with scissors), president of Highland County Water Company, Inc., cuts the ribbon to officially open the new \$1 million dollar, 8,800 sq. ft. facility financed by USDA Rural Development. Boyle is joined by Rural Development State Director Randy Hunt, Highland County Board members and staff, legislative and civic leaders.