



NEWS RELEASE

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Rural Development Invests More than \$260 Million *Ohio's Program Performance and Service Ranked #2 Nationally*

COLUMBUS, OHIO, NOVEMBER 6, 2007 – Ohio Rural Development staff's efforts fueled the investment of \$260.7 million throughout the state during Fiscal Year 2007 ending in October. In addition to increasing investments by more than 10 percent from last year, this year Ohio's performance contributed to Ohio being ranked #2 in program operating proficiency among all Rural Development offices since the year 2000.

"Our focus has been to meticulously evaluate and adjust our program and service strategies to ensure we're providing rural Ohioans with the best assistance we can," said State Director Randy Hunt. "We're further motivated that our efforts to improve the quality of life for rural Ohio residents has been recognized by our national leadership. It means that we're charting the right course and working cooperatively with local leadership to make the right economic development decisions for Ohio's rural communities."

The approximate funding breakdown for Rural Development during FY 07 included: Housing Program - \$158.1 million, Community Programs - \$82.1 million and Business Programs - \$20.5 million. Ohio Rural Development staff's commitment to service excellence is demonstrated by its ability to administer almost \$2 billion in state assistance since FY 01. Those efforts translated into approximately \$300 million invested annually in the state's rural communities.

Those community investments include housing opportunities for more than 2,300 Ohio families, water and sewer service for more than 17,000 residents and businesses, emergency vehicles, fire trucks, libraries, courthouse renovations and much-needed high speed broadband service. These few examples help demonstrate the kind of local community assistance Rural Development can provide. If your community is planning economic development projects or has specific economic development needs make your first call – USDA Rural Development.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life in rural communities. Rural Development accomplishes this by providing equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. Further information on rural programs call 614-255-2400, visit a local USDA Rural Development office or USDA Rural Development's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

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Committed to the future of rural communities.

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