



# News Release

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DATE  
For immediate release

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## *USDA launches information campaign to help faith-based, community organization obtain loan program information*

PORTLAND--USDA Rural Development initiated a pilot program to educate faith-based and community organizations on the Rural Development Community Facilities Guaranteed Loan Program and connect them to local lending institutions.

“To further support our rural communities in Oregon, faith-based and community organizations are encouraged to telephone **Suzanne Fitzgerald at (503) 414-3330 in our Portland Office or toll free at 1-866-923-5626 ext 3330** to receive the information they need about the available resources,” said Lynn Schoessler, state director for USDA Rural Development in Oregon. “We remain committed to helping faith-based and community organizations get access to federal resources to enhance their capacity to serve their communities.”

Through an Executive Order on December 12, 2002, President Bush incorporated USDA into his Faith-Based and Community Initiative. As part of its faith-based and community focus, USDA ensures that faith-based and community organizations have equal access to USDA programs and benefits and works in conjunction with the Department's many mission areas to reach out and educate faith-based and community organizations about USDA programs and benefits. The best opportunities for federal assistance to faith-based and community organizations are outlined on USDA's faith-based and community initiatives Web site at <http://www.usda.gov/fbcj>.

USDA Rural Development's [community facilities loan guarantee program](#) allows lenders to finance and facilitate essential community facilities such as health care clinics, police and fire stations, schools and child care centers. Through this program, USDA can provide a lender a guarantee of up to 90 percent of the total loan amount. In fiscal year 2003, the average loan guarantee was \$1.6 million with a range from \$55,000 to \$22.5 million.

Local contact information is available on USDA's Rural Development Web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov> under [USDA Rural Development--State and Field Office Locations](#).

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. As a venture capital entity, Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. Additional information about rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or on USDA's Web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

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

**USDA Rural Development is an equal opportunity lender, provider, and employer. Complaints of discrimination should be sent to: USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Washington, DC 20250-9410**