



NEWS RELEASE

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USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT ANNOUNCES FUNDING FOR ORANGE COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICE DISTRICT #1

VIDOR, TEXAS, September 18, 2006-- Bryan Daniel, USDA Rural Development State Director, today announced Orange County Emergency Service District #1 was selected to receive a \$1,375,000 loan and a \$200,000 grant through the agency's Community Facilities Loan and Grant Program. This effort is part of the USDA Rural Development mission to help rural areas build and enhance essential community facilities.

"USDA Rural Development Community Facilities Programs help rural communities keep pace with the needs of their rising populations," said Daniel. "Rural residents can utilize our programs to help provide essential public services that will enhance the quality of life for all rural residents."

The funds will be used to replace the fire station in Vidor, Texas that was completely destroyed during Hurricane Rita in September 2005. The facility will consist of 15,000 square feet and will provide a cover for vehicles and equipment, include meeting and training rooms, kitchenette, sleeping quarters, restrooms, and office space. The District provides fire and rescue services to the City of Vidor, Rose City, Pine Forest, and unincorporated western Orange County.

In Fiscal Year 2005, \$31.8 million in Community Facility Direct and Guaranteed Loans and over \$900,000 in grants were obligated in Texas. Funds are used to enhance the quality of life for residents of rural areas by providing the means for construction, expansion, or enhancement of community facilities, telecommunication and distance education programs, and water and waste disposal systems. These programs are important because they supply a number of growth opportunities to communities with improved utility facilities, increased job availability, and technology and educational resources. Since 2001, USDA Rural Development Community Programs have awarded \$1.8 billion for these purposes, and touched the lives of more than 1.16 million households in the process.

USDA Rural Development strives to see that rural citizens can participate fully in the global economy by providing technical assistance, funding, and other programs that help rural Americans build strong economies to improve their quality of life. For further information regarding USDA Rural Development Programs, contact the Angleton Local Office at (979) 849-5251, Extension 4, or visit our website at <http://rurdev.usda.gov/tx/>.

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