



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Rural Development
Federal Building • 75 High Street • Suite 320 • Morgantown, WV 26505-7500
Phone: 304.284.4860 OR 1.800.295.8228 • Fax: 304.284.4893 • TDD: 304.284.4836 • Web: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/wv>

Gail Bennett, Public Affairs Specialist, WV –(304) 284-4875

APPLICATIONS BEING ACCEPTED FOR RURAL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY GRANTS

MORGANTOWN, WV – March 12, 2009—USDA Rural Development Acting State Director Dianne Crysler announces the availability of competitive grants of up to \$50,000 per application from the Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) program for Fiscal Year 2009. For multi-state projects, grant funds of up to \$150,000 will be available on a competitive basis. This notice is being issued prior to passage of a final appropriations bill, which may or may not provide funding for this program, to allow applicants sufficient time to apply for and obtain leverage financing, submit applications, and give the Agency time to process applications within the current year.

The primary objective of the Rural Business Opportunity Grant program is to improve the economic conditions of rural areas. Assistance provided to rural areas under this program may include technical assistance for business development and economic development planning. Eligible applicants are non-profit corporations, public bodies, Indian tribes on Federal or State reservations and other federally recognized tribal groups, and cooperatives with members that are primarily rural residents and that conduct activities for the mutual benefit of the members.

The deadline for the receipt of applications in the Rural Development State Office is March 31, 2009. For further information, entities wishing to apply for assistance should contact John Comerci, Business and Cooperative Programs Specialist, 481 Ragland Road, Beckley, WV 25801, telephone (304) 253-9597 (extension 146), fax (304) 929-2025, or TTY/TDD (304) 284-4836. Completed applications should be mailed to the West Virginia Rural Development State Office, 75 High Street, Suite 320, Morgantown, WV 26505-7500.

Further information and application procedures can be found in today's *Federal Register* at: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/E9-5407.htm>.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life in rural communities. Rural Development serves as the lead Federal entity for rural development needs and administers program assistance through its housing, business, infrastructure and community programs. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

Further information on USDA Rural Development may be obtained by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>. In West Virginia, call 1-800-295-8228 to be put in touch with the appropriate personnel serving your county. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202.720.2600 (voice and TDD).

##

Committed to the future of rural communities.

"USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender."
To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.,
Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD).