

USDA Seeks Applications for Grants to Improve Rural Housing

Written by USDA

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STEVENS POINT, WI - U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Wisconsin State Director, Stan Gruszynski, announced that USDA is accepting applications for grants to help low and very low income rural residents repair their homes.

"For some in rural communities, needed home maintenance and repair is simply unaffordable," Gruszynski said. "This program provides support, in partnership with local non-profit organizations, for essential needs including remediation of housing health and safety hazards for rural families and residents with extremely limited incomes. In addition to preserving housing, this program helps lower housing costs through energy conservation and weatherization improvements."

Grants are provided to qualified intermediaries such as town or county governments, public agencies, community organizations, federally recognized Indian Tribes, non-profit and faith-based organizations. The grants are then distributed to qualified homeowners or owners of multi-family rental properties or cooperative dwellings who rent to low- and very-low-income residents.

Grant funds can be used to weatherize and repair existing structures, install or improve plumbing or provide access to people with disabilities. In addition, the program assists rental property owners and cooperative housing complexes in repairing and rehabilitating their units if they agree to make such units available to low- and very low-income persons.

Last year, Couleecap, Inc. received a \$22,881 grant to assist five families eliminate health and safety hazards in their homes and make needed repairs such replacing faulty furnaces, installing accessibility ramps, insulation and/or new roofs. Western Dairyland Economic Development Council, Inc. was also awarded a \$22,881 grant to help five families with rehabilitation, safety or repair needs.

For additional information on eligibility for Housing Preservation Grants, please see the [December 29, 2015 Federal Register](#)

. Pre-applications must be received by 4 p.m. Central Standard Time (CST) on March 15,

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2016. Assistance for filing a pre-application can be obtained from the USDA Rural Development Wisconsin State Office by calling 715-345-7620.

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. As the lead federal agency for rural development needs, USDA Rural Development can help rural communities and regions grow and prosper by offering a variety of financial and technical assistance programs that encourage the development of strong community and economic development strategies.

During this past year, USDA Rural Development's nearly \$577 million investment in Wisconsin helped create or retain more than 1,560 jobs, aided 3,034 families in buying their own homes and assisted more than 45 communities as they made improvements to their facilities, services, and infrastructure.

Further information on USDA Rural Development is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting the web site at www.rd.usda.gov/wi.

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