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(Neb.)-USDA Rural Development Assists Needs Of Rural Nebraskans



By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 12/28/2012 11:13 AM

(LINCOLN)-Infrastructure investments in rural communities help create jobs and boost economic development. USDA Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack says, "Quality hospitals, schools and libraries are the building blocks for a vibrant rural America."

That is true in Nebraska, especially with Critical Access Hospitals that serve rural residents.

Over the past seven federal fiscal years, USDA Rural Development has assisted 18 Critical Care Access hospitals in Nebraska through nearly \$197.5 million in funding. The Community Facilities funding came in the form of \$64,851,000 in loan guarantees, \$132,351,300 in direct loans and \$250,030 in grants. Five hospitals received financing through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. These projects entailed additions, renovations and equipment to total new facilities.

"It is vital to keep rural healthcare in line with today's medical needs. Updated hospitals also help to recruit physicians to the area and also allow rural residents to receive medical attention closer to where they live," said Maxine Moul, Nebraska state director of USDA Rural Development.

The following is a list of recipient hospitals that USDA Rural Development assisted in funding beginning in federal fiscal year 2006. Guaranteed lenders and the applicants also assisted in the financing of various facilities.

- Chadron Hospital built a new hospital with \$17.8 million in assistance.
- Box Butte General Hospital of Alliance will use \$23 million in a loan to renovate and add to its facility.
- Cheyenne County Hospital of Sidney is building a new hospital with \$40 million in a loan and loan guarantee.
- Community Hospital of McCook used \$32 million for an addition and renovations.
- Memorial Community Health, Inc. of Aurora utilized \$18,340,000 for hospital additions and renovations.
- West Holt Memorial Hospital of Atkinson received \$1,454,000 for lab equipment and renovations.
- Brodstone Hospital of Superior used \$6,101,000 to build an addition and for renovations.
- Community Hospital in Syracuse purchased Emergency Medical Records (EMR) equipment with \$726,000 in funding.
- Dundy County Hospital of Benkelman. used \$1.7 million to renovate its facilities.
- Henderson Hospital utilized \$2,150,000 for an addition and renovations to its hospital.
- Community Medical Center in Falls City built a new facility with \$18 million in funding.
- Providence Medical Center in Wayne received \$6 million for an addition and renovations.
- Warren Memorial Hospital of Friend purchased EMR equipment and completed a renovation with funds of \$471,000.
- Fillmore County Hospital of Geneva utilized \$12.6 million to build a new hospital.
- Pender Community Health Care built a new hospital with assistance of \$14 million.
- Rock County Hospital of Bassett received \$76,830 for EMR and generator equipment.
- Gothenburg Memorial Hospital utilized \$3 million for an addition and renovations.
- Niobrara Valley Hospital of Lynch renovated its hospital with \$33,500 in funding.

The Direct and Guaranteed Community Facilities Loan programs provide financing for community service facilities to communities with a population of 20,000 and under. Facilities eligible for financing include fire and rescue buildings and equipment, streets, utilities, community

centers, libraries, senior citizen centers, day cares, airports, industrial parks, hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, and assisted living facilities. USDA Rural Development guarantees loan funds normally up to 80 percent with a one percent fee. Tax-exempt bond issues are not eligible for a guarantee.

USDA Rural Development is committed to the healthcare and well being of rural Nebraskans. For more information on the Community Facility Guaranteed and Direct Loan programs, contact Natalie Furrow in North Platte at 308-534-2360, ext. 1129 or Natalie.furrow@ne.usda.gov.

For additional information on RD projects, please visit Rural Development's new interactive web map featuring program funding and success stories for fiscal years 2009-2011. The data can be found at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/RDSuccessStories.html>.

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