



HAC News

**CONGRESS IMPOSES CONDITIONS ON RD OFFICE CLOSINGS.** The omnibus appropriations act for FY 2008 prohibits closing RD offices until the impact on cost and program delivery is determined, and requires reporting the justification for any closure or relocation to Congress at least 60 days in advance. (See *HAC News*, 7/3/07, reporting the possibility of some office closures.) Visit <http://thomas.loc.gov> to access the omnibus act and a joint statement by the appropriations committees expressing concern about office closures, printed in the December 17, 2007 *Congressional Record*, pp. H15761-62.

**FARMWORKER HOUSING ADDED TO RENTAL PRESERVATION PROGRAM FOR FY 2008.** The FY 2008 omnibus appropriations act makes Section 514/516 properties eligible for RD's Multi-Family Housing Preservation and Revitalization Restructuring Program. In FY 2006 and 2007, RD has offered these "MPR" funds through a NOFA published in the spring. The omnibus act is available at <http://thomas.loc.gov/home/approp/app08.html>.

**FARM BILLS INCLUDE PROVISIONS ON FARMWORKERS AND RURAL DEFINITIONS.** The Senate and House versions of H.R. 2419, the 2007 Farm Bill, have some differences related to rural housing. Both bills would create a new Farmworker Coordinator position at USDA. Section 6402 of the Senate bill would expand Section 514/516 eligibility to include processing workers and Section 11061 would authorize emergency grants to public agencies and nonprofits with farmworker experience to help during disasters. The House bill would require USDA to examine its varying definitions of "rural" and recommend better ways to target funds, while the Senate would change the definition of "rural" for community facilities and business programs; the definitions for housing and water/wastewater programs would not be affected. Both versions of H.R. 2419 are available at <http://thomas.loc.gov>.

**USDA RD SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSING STAFF CHANGES.** David Villano has been named Assistant Administrator for Telecommunications in Rural Development's Rural Utilities Programs, and Philip Stetson is Acting Deputy Administrator for Single Family Housing. See [http://www.ruralhome.org/infoAnnouncements\\_2007RDStaff.php](http://www.ruralhome.org/infoAnnouncements_2007RDStaff.php).

**RD EXPLAINS THERMAL REQUIREMENTS FOR MANUFACTURED HOUSING.** Administrative Notice 4322 (Dec. 18, 2007), listing HUD standards that meet RD thermal requirements for new manufactured homes in specific counties, is available at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/reg/an/an4322.pdf> or from RD offices. Contact William Downs, 202-720-1499, [william.downs@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:william.downs@wdc.usda.gov).

**HUD AMENDS HOME EQUITY CONVERSION MORTGAGE REGULATIONS.** The technical changes become effective on an interim basis on February 7, and comments are due March 10. See *Federal Register*, 1/8/08, pp. 1433-36 or <http://www.regulations.gov>. Contact James Beavers, HUD, 202-708-2121.

**HAC LAUNCHES NEW RURAL HOMELESSNESS CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM.** Offering technical assistance, audio-web trainings, and online information for organizations serving rural homeless populations, RHCBC is operated by HAC with help from the National Alliance to End Homelessness. Selected organizations working in high need communities will also receive grants to pursue capacity building activities. Visit <http://www.ruralhome.org/rhcbindex2.php> or contact RHCBC staff at 1-877-842-RHCB or [RHCBinfo@ruralhome.org](mailto:RHCBinfo@ruralhome.org).

**HUDCLIPS WEBSITE CHANGED.** The site providing access to HUD policies, procedures, notices, and more moved to <http://www.hud.gov/hudclips> on January 1. Some resources have been replaced by links to other sites; for example, there now a link to the *Federal Register* online rather than a list of the most recent two weeks of FR notices.

**HEALTH AND HOUSING INFORMATION AVAILABLE BY EMAIL.** The Alliance for Healthy Homes offers an email newsletter and two listserves – Leadnet and Healthyhomesnet – for discussion of environmental health hazards in substandard housing and distressed communities. Visit <http://www.afhh.org> for more information or to subscribe.

**WEBSITE TO TRACK HOUSING ISSUES IN PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN.** The National Low Income Housing Coalition's Housing2008.org site offers information about the presidential candidates' views on housing issues and a nonpartisan forum for discussing housing issues. Visit <http://www.housing2008.org> or email [info@housing2008.org](mailto:info@housing2008.org).

**SAVE THE DATES FOR THE NATIONAL RURAL HOUSING CONFERENCE 2008: WORKING FOR CHANGE, BUILDING OUR FUTURE!** The conference will be held December 3-5, 2008 in Washington, D.C. Watch for registration information in the *HAC News* and at <http://www.ruralhome.org/Conf2008/index.php>.

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