



## Upcoming Events

- BH Community Economic Development Board Meeting – March 9
- West Dakota Water Development District Directors Meeting – March 17
- Board of Water & Natural Resources – March 24-26
- BH Community Economic Development Board Meeting – April 13
- GOED Annual Conf. – April 20-21
- BHCOLG Board Meeting – April 22, 2010

## USDA Rural Development.....

The Black Hills Council of Local Governments continues to explore ways to provide better and broader services to our members. We have been working with USDA Rural Development Staff to see how we can assist with their programs. At this time, the Council will assist communities and organizations with two of their programs: the Water and Environmental Program and the Community Facilities Program. We have found that we are often combining these Rural Development programs with other funding packages in which we are involved.

The Water and Environmental Programs provide loans, grants and loan guarantees for drinking water, sanitary sewer, solid waste and storm drainage facilities in rural areas and cities and towns of 10,000 or less. These programs can also be used by sanitary and water districts as well as homeowners associations.

Community Facilities Programs are designed to develop essential community facilities for public use in rural areas. These facilities include: schools, libraries, childcare, hospitals, medical clinics, assisted living facilities, fire and rescue stations, police stations, community centers, public buildings

and transportation. Community Facility Programs utilize guaranteed loans, direct loans and grants to help finance these types of projects.

Currently, Rural Development has identified libraries as a funding opportunity with \$100 million available nationwide for public libraries. These funds are a combination of loans and grants. USDA Rural Development State Director Elsie M. Meeks has stated, *“We want to make sure that South Dakota public libraries are the opportunity to provide educational opportunities and improve public services in rural communities. Public libraries are culturally and technologically critical to rural communities that they serve.”* Libraries not only play a critical role in educating their clients but provide economic opportunities for rural communities by providing critical information and resources to local business owners.

If you have a project that you are interested in getting started, please contact our office or the Rural Development Regional Office at:

USDA Rural Development  
1530 Samco Road, Suite 2  
Rapid City, SD 57702-8007  
605-342-0301 ext. 4

## University Center - Rapid City.....

### Meet the Staff

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The University Center - Rapid City, will be located just south of Exit 61 on Cheyenne Boulevard. The University Center will provide access to higher education for students who otherwise would not be able to earn their degree. Many are your “typical” non-traditional students who currently have a job or military service men and women and families that are stationed in the area and are looking to further their education. The

59,000-square foot building will include classrooms, labs, auditorium, seminar and conference rooms, and gathering spaces for students to work in small groups. The facility will be another key component to meeting the regions workforce needs and giving people the opportunity to advance in their careers. All of the six state universities will be offering courses and degrees at the facility. The University Center is scheduled to open in early 2011.

## Director’s Perspective.....

It was an interesting year for the Council. Being my first full year as Executive Director, it brought new challenges and opportunities. We continue to explore expanding our relationship with Black Hills Community Economic Development and a move to the Black Hills Business Development Center. But what truly made this year interesting was the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) or better known as the stimulus package. What did that mean to us? There was money for many different types of projects but very little guidance on how the

programs were going to work until just before the application deadlines. We answered many questions with, “We know that there will be something but we’re just not sure how it is going to work.” Lucky for me, I have a terrific Staff that kept on top of many different issues and helped communities work through the ever- changing application landscape. I would like to thank Bill, Denise, and Lola for their hard work and dedication. 2010 should another interesting year as we have a new member in Perkins County. Always remember if you need any help, please give us a call.

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