



NEWS

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Uvalde County Receives \$500,000 State Disaster Relief Grant for Home Repair

(AUSTIN) — Help with home repairs is on the way for nine Uvalde County households whose homes were damaged or destroyed by a March 2006 tornado, thanks to a \$500,000 grant made to the county today by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA). The funds were made available through TDHCA's HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program and are designed to repair or replace homes owned and lived in by income eligible households.

"TDHCA's assistance does more than rebuild houses for my constituents, it restores the center of their family lives: the home," said State Senator Carlos Uresti. "I am delighted the State of Texas is meeting the needs of families affected by this natural disaster, and commend the Department's response."

"The citizens of Uvalde County suffered tremendously in the wake of this storm, and yet their housing needs remained unmet after all available federal assistance was exhausted," noted Michael Gerber, TDHCA Executive Director. "The Department does not have a dedicated funding source for disaster relief, but by using our funds both wisely and creatively, we were able to make this award and help restore homes and lives back to normal. The citizens of Texas deserve nothing less than this level of commitment from their state government"

On March 19, 2006, a tornado ripped through sections of Uvalde County, damaging or destroying several single family homes. TDHCA staff, together with the Texas Department of Public Safety and the Governor's Division of Emergency Management, conducted a preliminary site visit March 23-24 to assess the damage. Shortly afterwards, the county was declared eligible to receive federal disaster assistance; however, unmet housing needs remained once all federal sources of funds were depleted, at which time the county was eligible to apply for state assistance.

TDHCA staff in August 2006 traveled to Uvalde County to provide technical assistance to county officials applying for disaster relief funds. An application was submitted to TDHCA in October and, after a few technical revisions, today received final approval from the Department's Governing Board. In addition to the \$500,000 grant, the county requested and received \$20,000 in administrative funds, equal to four percent of the project funds, as allowed under the HOME Program rules.

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The US Department of Housing and Urban Development is the funding source for the state's HOME Program. Created by Congress in 1990, the program provides multi-year housing strategies to strengthen public-private partnerships and provide more affordable housing via block grants. Households must earn no more than 80 percent of the area median family income to be eligible for assistance under the program.

About The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs

The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs is Texas' lead agency responsible for affordable housing, community and energy assistance programs, and colonia activities. The Department annually administers funds in excess of \$400 million, the majority of which is derived from mortgage revenue bond financing and refinancing, federal grants, and federal tax credits.