



NEWS

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

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Contact: Gordon Anderson 512.475.4743
Jill McFarren 512.475.2844

Crystal City receiving \$510,000 in disaster funds to repair storm, flood damaged homes

TDHCA expects disaster funding to assist nine homeowners in recovery process

(AUSTIN) — The quality of life for nine Crystal City homeowners whose homes suffered extensive flood damage last summer should soon dramatically improve as the result of a recent \$510,000 disaster relief award to the city from the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA). The award was made through a portion of TDHCA's HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program reserved for income eligible households who own the home in which they live.

"Many homes in Crystal City were damaged by these horrendous storms, and most of the families have not received any financial assistance," said Senator Judith Zaffirini, who represents the area. "I am delighted that our state housing agency leaders are reaching out to help them restore and rebuild their homes and communities. They need and deserve our help, and we are happy to provide it."

Tornadoes and torrential rains struck Zavala County this past June, July and August, resulting in severe flooding in and around the county. A federal disaster declaration was issued on June 29, 2007, making the county eligible for federal assistance. Zavala County received federal funds for street and drainage repairs and affected homeowners were eligible to apply for FEMA assistance.

However, officials with Crystal City indicated to the Department that many of the homeowners were denied assistance and only one received a small grant for emergency assistance.

"The residents of Crystal City took a cruel hit from nature over the summer months, and the city is still struggling to make repairs," said Michael Gerber, TDHCA Executive Director. "TDHCA is pleased to provide these funds and help these families rebuild their lives and community."

TDHCA staff communicated with city officials regarding the potential use of HOME Program funds to respond to this natural disaster, and staff visited with city officials to provide technical assistance with the application process. Crystal City officials applied for an award, and the Department's Governing Board recently gave final funding approval.

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221 E. 11TH • AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701 • (800) 525-0657 • (512) 475-3800

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The city will utilize \$500,000 of the funds to rehabilitate or reconstruct nine homes and apply the balance toward covering administrative costs as allowed under federal rules.

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development is the funding source for the HOME Program, and funds are designed to assist households at or below 80 percent of the area median family income. Eligible applicants include eligible units of local government, public housing authorities, Community Housing Development Organizations and other nonprofit groups, and qualifying for-profit organizations.

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.