



# NEWS

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TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

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NOTE: Photos are available online at [www.tdhca.state.tx.us/ppa/media/index.htm](http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/ppa/media/index.htm)

## **10 Homes for elderly, disabled completed in Luling, Lockhart**

### **TDHCA provides \$572,000, partners with local leaders for home construction**

(AUSTIN) — Ten Caldwell County families who once lived in substandard conditions are now enjoying sturdy new homes thanks to funding from the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) and the efforts of Luling and Lockhart officials. In 2006, the cities applied for and received \$286,000 each from TDHCA's HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program's Single Family Owner-Occupied (OCC) Housing Assistance program to assist homeowners in need of home repairs such as roof repair or replacement, and electrical system and plumbing repairs, or reconstruction. Their success was celebrated this week in a series of events that culminated with each homeowner receiving the keys to their new home.

Five homes in Luling and five Lockhart homes that were deteriorating and beyond repair were torn down in 2007 to make way for the new homes. Neighbors, friends, and family members joined the homeowners, and local, regional, and state officials for ribbon cutting ceremonies that marked new, healthy beginnings for those whose homes were once falling down around them.

Mary and David Coe, owners of one of the homes rebuilt in Luling, raised 15 children in their old two-bedroom home. "That house was so small and so cold," said Mary, reflecting on her old home. "I won't miss having to stuff crumpled newspapers in the cracks around the windows to keep the cold wind out. I know I'm going to really appreciate this new house."

Dorothy Brown of Lockhart, who is 77 years old and lives on less than \$12,000 a year, was unable to make the needed repairs to her dilapidated home. "When they told me it was time to leave my old home, I got out just like they said," she explained happily. After her old home was removed, she would visit the site now and again to watch her new home being built. "I rushed in one day when the door was open and saw the washer and dryer inside. Nobody told me I was getting a washer and dryer inside. I went to cry," she said.

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"I'm proud of the partnership that officials from the cities of Lockhart and Luling formed to stretch these federal funds and deliver these great homes to our neighbors in need," noted Representative Patrick Rose, who kept a close eye on the administration of the program. "I commend the leaders from both cities who purposefully selected similar floor plans, and secured and coordinated local contractors to expedite construction and optimize building costs. I also want to thank TDHCA for working with us to make these homes possible."

"These funds have a dramatic and positive impact on rural Texas households, many of them elderly persons and all of them in serious need of help," said Michael Gerber, TDHCA Executive Director. "These are among our state's most vulnerable residents; they don't have the funds to make the necessary repairs themselves, and rural communities often don't have the resources to help. We are extremely pleased to make this funding commitment to small town Texas."

In addition to the HOME program funds Lockhart and Luling received, each city provided matching funds in the form of \$17,000 worth of donated labor, materials and site work. The cities also waived a total of \$3,500 in taxes and fees, and contributed cash for appraisals, surveys and legal services. Their generosity provided for the additional driveways, washers, dryers, and upgraded refrigerators with icemakers, which were originally beyond the scope of the projects.

The new homes include accommodations for elderly or disabled homeowners. For example, to support elderly homeowners, reconstructed homes include grab bars and seats in the shower stalls. For non-elderly homeowners, the showers are blocked for future installation of such modifications. Wider doors are installed for disabled homeowners, as well as easy access thresholds to allow unobstructed wheelchair access throughout the home.

#### **About The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs**

*The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs is the state agency responsible for affordable housing, community services, energy assistance, and colonia housing programs. The Department annually administers more than \$400 million through for-profit, nonprofit, and local government partnerships to deliver local housing and community-based opportunities and assistance to Texans in need.*