



# NEWS

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## TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 7, 2009

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### **Flood ravaged Roma receives \$500,000 in disaster recovery funds from state housing agency**

(AUSTIN) — Recognizing the importance of preserving single family housing in rural Texas, the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) and State Senator Judith Zaffirini have announced a funding award to repair or rebuild several homes in Roma damaged last year by severe flooding. The funds will help eligible households make the necessary repairs and maintain homeownership while providing much-needed benefits to the local economy.

TDHCA awarded the City of Roma \$500,000 in disaster recovery funds through a portion of the Department's HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program designed to repair or replace homes owned and lived in by income Texans. Through this partnership between state and city officials, the funds will help repair or rebuild an estimated seven area homes.

"The residents of Roma experienced an enormous calamity, and it is important that the state help restore its housing stock in the wake of this disaster," said Senator Zaffirini. "This type of assistance is crucial to rural Texas. Residents often do not have the funds to make the necessary repairs themselves, and smaller communities so often don't have the resources to help. I am delighted that TDHCA is funding this important project and appropriated its funding and continued commitment to Texas communities."

"Preserving rural housing stock is an important mission of the Department," said Michael Gerber, Executive Director of TDHCA. "Restoring housing after a disaster helps maintain homeownership and the viability of entire communities. This award will also help generate local construction jobs and stabilize the local tax base. We recognize that these funds won't help make the city whole again, but they should go a long way towards helping the community and its residents recover from this devastating flood."

Torrential rains fell across South Texas on August 18, 2008, with more than a foot of rain landing in Starr County. Because the region remained saturated from Hurricane Dolly, which made landfall in late July, the heavy rains resulted in severe flooding that damaged an estimated 774 homes, most of them in three neighborhoods south of US Highway 83.

The city and county in October 2008 received a disaster declaration from Governor Rick Perry, paving the way for officials with the City of Roma to apply for HOME Program funds through TDHCA to help the city meet the unmet housing needs of the community. Technical assistance for completing an application was also provided by Department staff, culminating in this award.

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The U.S. 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. For Roma and Starr County, this equals an annual income of \$36,500 for a family for four.

**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.*