



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

# NEWS

ROD R. BLAGOJEVICH – GOVERNOR

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## **Gov. Blagojevich announces \$3.2 million in grants to help dozens of low-income homeowners remain in their homes**

*Funds will help 89 families across the State  
rehabilitate their homes and improve neighborhoods*

**CHICAGO-** Governor Rod R. Blagojevich today announced nearly \$3.2 million in federal affordable housing rehabilitation grants that will help 89 low-income homeowners in Illinois, including seniors and disabled individuals, pay for urgent home repairs and prevent them from losing their homes.

“Nobody should lose their home because they can’t afford to fix a leaking roof or update their plumbing. These federal grants will help homeowners, especially in older properties, afford costly, but necessary, repairs to their homes,” said Gov. Blagojevich.

The Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) has allocated the federal HOME funds to 13 municipalities and non-profit groups across the State to administer under the Single-Family Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation (SFOOR) Program. The Program helps to preserve and improve the State’s affordable housing stock by giving low-income homeowners financial assistance to maintain their properties and keep their homes safe.

“Under Gov. Blagojevich’s leadership, IHDA is proud to finance the creation and preservation of affordable, safe, and decent homes for low-income families throughout Illinois. The SFOOR Program ensures that the homes meet building and construction codes, and that they are safe to live in overall. The families who live in the homes benefit from an improved living environment

and the community benefits from a tidier looking neighborhood to attract potential homebuyers and investors,” said DeShana Forney, IHDA Executive Director.

Grant recipients are:

<b>Grantee</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>No. of homeowners to be helped</b>
Two Rivers Regional Council of Public Officials	Adams, Brown, Pike, and Schuyler	\$273,440	8
City of Mattoon	Coles	\$210,000	5
City of Charleston	Coles	\$210,000	5
Village of North City	Franklin	\$209,490	8
Crosswalk Community Action Agency	Franklin	\$210,000	5
City of LaHarpe	Hancock	\$370,000	10
Embarras River Basin Community Action Agency	Jasper	\$210,000	5
Project NOW, Inc.	Rock Island, Henry, and Mercer	\$410,000	10
City of Moline	Rock Island	\$330,000	8
City of Pekin	Tazewell	\$126,000	3
City of Rock Falls	Whiteside	\$168,000	4
City of Hurst	Williamson	\$209,490	8
Winnebago County	Winnebago County (excluding City of Rockford)	\$260,000	10
	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$3,196,420</b>	<b>89</b>

The grantees will award a maximum of \$40,000 to each local homeowner to pay for rehabilitation work. The current round of funding is estimated to assist 23 seniors and 15 disabled homeowners. The funds can only be spent on the owner’s principal residence and do not have to be repaid provided the homeowner continues to live in the home for five to 10 years, depending on the size of the grant. Household income limits that apply vary from 30 per cent to 80 per cent of area median income and depend on which county the homeowner lives. For example, homeowners in Rock Island planning to apply for assistance through the non-profit agency Project NOW, Inc. must not earn more than 50 per cent of the area median income, which means \$30,050 for a family of four.

“Many of the families we help are almost at the end of their mortgages but because around 80 per cent of the area’s housing stock are more than 40 years old, their homes are often in dire need of repair. The Governor’s funding is the difference between families continuing to live in their

property or having to move out,” said Marilyn Wilson-Crowe, housing director at Project NOW, Inc. “The Program also allows us to touch base with some homeowners who might need some financial counseling.” Project NOW has received a total of \$5.4 million from the State since 1994 to assist more than 194 homeowners under the SFOOR Program.

IHDA allocates funding under the SFOOR Program annually. Since 1993, IHDA has given around 2,500 low-income homeowners in Illinois financial assistance totaling more than \$63 million to repair their homes and keep them safe to live in.

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity’s (DCEO) Community Development Assistance Program (CDAP) has provided \$29.5 million to help rehabilitate 1,085 homes, serving 2,551 people over the last four years. CDAP is a federally-funded grant program that assists Illinois communities by providing grants to local governments, which are designed to help finance housing rehabilitation as well as economic development and public facilities projects. Funds are provided to DCEO from the Community Development Block Grant provided by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Creating and preserving affordable housing is one of the three major principles outlined in the Governor’s 2005 *Building for Success: Illinois’ Comprehensive Housing Plan*. The Plan called for spending earmarked for affordable housing at several state agencies to be strategically targeted to the following priority populations: very low income families; low income seniors; low income people with disabilities; homeless people and those at risk of becoming homeless; low and moderate income families and people unable to find affordable housing near jobs or transportation; and low income families and people living in existing affordable housing in danger of becoming unaffordable.

The 2005 Housing Plan was developed by the Governor’s Housing Task Force, and organized and lead by IHDA. The 35 members of the Task Force are advocates, developers, lenders, and state agency representatives, including eight Illinois state agency directors. Under the Governor’s direction, the Task Force developed “*On the Road to Success: Illinois’ Comprehensive Housing Plan 2006*” and more recently “*Affordable Housing Dimensions: Illinois’ 2007 Comprehensive Housing Plan*” which highlights how the Governor’s vision as outlined in the first Plans, is already reshaping affordable housing in Illinois.