



NEWS RELEASE

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QUALITY DRINKING WATER FLOWS TO VILLAGE OF COLON THANKS TO USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT, LOWER PLATTE NORTH NRD, AND THE CITY OF WAHOO

WAHOO, NEB., December 13, 2006—The official valve turning took place today in Wahoo for a new water transmission line that will bring the 138 rural residents of Colon, Neb. a dependable supply of quality drinking water from the City of Wahoo's water supply.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development presented a ceremonial check for \$648,000 to the Lower Platte North Natural Resource District (LPNNRD), signifying USDA's investment in this water project. A Community Development Block Grant of \$211,000 also assisted.

Nebraska State Director Scot Blehm of USDA Rural Development stated, "Quality drinking water is a daily essential which we sometimes take for granted. USDA Rural Development is pleased to assist rural communities, such as Colon, to access water that meets the state regulatory requirements which ensure the consumption of healthy water."

Water from Colon's two wells exceeded the Safe Drinking Water Act's maximum contaminant levels for arsenic and uranium. The water system also experienced distribution deficiencies.

"We are really satisfied with our new water system," stated Mayor Al Gruenes, Village of Colon. "The Village is glad the switch is made and has noticed that many other towns are making the same decision."

Solutions to correct the water problems were limited. The Village was unable to afford the costs associated with water treatment, and new wells would have suffered the same water quality issues as the existing wells. The best solution was the construction of a water line from Wahoo to Colon, with the NRD taking over ownership and operation of Colon's municipal water system.

General Manager John Miyoshi, Lower Platte North Natural Resources District stated, "Small communities are struggling to meet the ever tightening EPA drinking water quality rules. The Colon project would not have occurred without the funding provided by USDA Rural Development. Colon is now assured of at least 40 years of clean, safe drinking water."

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USDA Rural Development's Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant program helped finance the water improvement project. The loan term is 40 years at 4.25 percent interest.

For additional information contact Janice Stopak at (402) 423-9683, (402) 437-5093 (TDY); 6030 S. 58th Suite B Lincoln, Neb. 68516. Visit <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/ne/>.

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