



FY 2009 BUDGET EXPECTED NEXT WEEK. HAC will summarize the rural housing portions of the Bush Administration's budget at www.ruralhome.org when it is released February 4 and in the February 13 *HAC News*.

HOUSE PASSES RURAL PRESERVATION TRANSFER BILL. H.R. 3873, which would expedite transfers of ownership of Section 515 rural rental properties, passed the House on January 23 and now goes to the Senate Banking Committee. A House Financial Services Committee press release is at http://www.house.gov/apps/list/press/financialsvcs_dem/press012308.shtml. H.R. 4002, a broader rural preservation bill, is still pending in the House Committee. For details and links visit <http://www.ruralhome.org/issues/preservation>.

USDA OFFERS FARMWORKER HOUSING TA GRANTS. Nonprofits and public agencies are eligible for grants to provide technical assistance to applicants for Section 514/516 Farm Labor Housing funds in the Eastern, Central, and Western regions. Deadline is March 14. See *Federal Register*, 1/29/08, pp. 5167-74, http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fedreg/a080129c.html. Contact Sue M. Harris-Green, RD, 202-720-1604.

HOUSEHOLD WATER WELL SYSTEM GRANTS AVAILABLE. USDA Rural Development offers grants to nonprofits to make loans to homeowners to construct or upgrade household water well systems for existing homes. Deadline is May 31. See *Federal Register*, 1/28/08, pp. 4809-15 or <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/well.htm>. Contact Cheryl Francis, RD, 202-720-1937, cheryl.francis@wdc.usda.gov.

GRANTS OFFERED FOR HIGH ENERGY COST COMMUNITIES. Nonprofits, for-profits, state and local governments, and tribes can apply by March 28 for competitive grants to improve energy generation, transmission, or distribution facilities for communities with high residential home energy costs. See *Federal Register*, 1/28/08, pp. 4778-90 or <http://www.usda.gov/rus/electric>. Contact Karen Larsen, RD, 202-720-9545, energy.grants@wdc.usda.gov.

SECTION 202 PREDEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM ANNOUNCED. FY 2007 Section 202 awardees can apply by February 27 for grants to cover predevelopment costs. See *Federal Register*, 1/23/08, pp. 3985-91 or www.grants.gov. Contact a local HUD office or Brenda M. Butler, HUD, 202-708-3000, Brenda.M.Butler@hud.gov.

HUD PUBLISHES ANNUAL ADJUSTMENT FACTORS FOR SECTION 8 CONTRACT RENTS. See *Federal Register*, 1/22/08, pp. 3739-52 or www.huduser.org/datasets/aaf.html. Contact David Vargas, HUD, 202-708-0477.

PUBLIC HOUSING DEMOLITION/DISPOSITION RULE CORRECTED. A notice corrects non-substantive errors in HUD's October 24, 2006 final rule. See *Federal Register*, 1/23/08, pp. 3867-68, http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fedreg/a080123c.html. Contact Ainars Rodins, HUD, 312-353-6236.

HOMEOWNERSHIP RATE FALLING. The U.S. homeownership rate was 67.8% for FY 2007's fourth quarter, lower than the fourth quarter of FY 2006 (68.9%) and the third quarter of FY 2007 (68.2%). Rates have fallen in the Midwest, South, and West since 2006 and are unchanged in the Northeast. The Census Bureau release does not provide metro/nonmetro data. Visit <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/housing/hvs/qtr407/q407ind.html>.

FUNDING CUTS MAY IMPACT AMERICAN HOUSING SURVEY. The National Low Income Housing Coalition reports that FY 2008 funding levels are likely to lead to a reduction in the sample size or number of metro areas covered by the 2009 American Housing Survey, thus decreasing the quality of the survey results. The 2011 Residential Finance Survey is likely to be canceled. See NLIHC's *Memo to Members*, 1/18/08, http://www.nlihc.org/detail/article.cfm?article_id=4820. The AHS and RFS measure national and metro/nonmetro housing quality and financing in greater detail than the decennial Census or the American Community Survey.

AWARDS OFFERED. ♦ Low Income Housing Tax Credit projects can enter *Affordable Housing Finance* magazine's Readers Choice Awards in several categories, including rural, by April 14. Visit <http://www.housingfinance.com> or contact Donna Kimura, dkimura@hanleywood.com. ♦ March 1 is the nomination deadline for the HUD Secretary's Award for Excellence in Historic Preservation. Visit <http://www.huduser.org/research/secaward.html> or contact HUD User, 1-800-245-2691.

REHABILITATION FEATURED IN RURAL VOICES. The winter issue of HAC's quarterly magazine covers rural housing rehabilitation and is free at <http://www.ruralhome.org/infoRural.php>. One print subscription per organization is free from Luz Rosas, HAC, 202-842-8600, luz@ruralhome.org. To sign up for email notices announcing new issues, visit http://lists.ruralhome.org/lists/info/rural_voices.

SAVE THE DATES FOR THE NATIONAL RURAL HOUSING CONFERENCE 2008: WORKING FOR CHANGE, BUILDING OUR FUTURE! The conference will be held December 3-5, 2008 in Washington, D.C. Watch for registration information in the *HAC News* and at <http://www.ruralhome.org/Conf2008/index.php>.