

# A Story of Compassion

USDA Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

## Aid to Distressed Families of Appalachian Counties

Oak Ridge, Tennessee

Community organizations such as Aid to like Aid to Distressed Families of Appalachian Counties (ADFAC) are valuable partners in USDA Rural Development efforts to provide citizens with safe, clean, and affordable housing. By leveraging a Rural Development Housing Preservation Grant of \$91,693, and low interest loans to very low income families also made through Rural Development, ADFAC was able to rehabilitate seven substandard homes in eastern counties of Tennessee.

One of the recipients to receive home rehabilitation assistance from this program was Barbara Williams, a disabled resident of Anderson County. With the assistance provided by Rural Development and ADFAC, Ms. Williams received a combination grant and repair loan which allowed her to repair the deteriorated condition of her home, correcting the falling ceiling, dilapidated cabinetry, faulty flooring and worn floor covering. Along with the installation of an up-to-code electrical system, the funds provided her family with a safer environment.

To accommodate Ms. Williams' disability, new handicap accessible features were also added to her home. Not only has a physical improvement been recognized with Rural Development assistance, but a renewed sense of pride instilled in the homeowner and an improved quality of life realized. This was evident during an inspection and interview with Ms. Williams when she stated "My home is safe now; I can allow my grandchildren to play in the floor, and I'm not afraid they're going to get hurt. I'm not ashamed to have guests in my home anymore. It will be a privilege for me to tell my story if it will help anyone else get repairs made to their home. I could not have provided this for my family without assistance from Rural Development."

## About the Organization

The mission of Aid to Distressed Families of Appalachian Counties (ADFAC) is to help families in urgent need with basic survival necessities and to preserve, improve, or replace existing substandard owner-occupied housing. ADFAC's goal is to restore pride and stability to neighborhoods. For the past ten years, ADFAC has consistently exceeded grant goals as well as completing projects ahead of schedule, thus reducing overall costs. This is done with leveraged Federal and State funds, as well as donations from churches and individuals. Housing rehabilitation and new construction utilizes a combination of volunteer labor, contractor labor, and client sweat equity and has resulted in repair to over 520 homes and construction of 22 new homes in the last ten years.

