



NEWS

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 13, 2010

Contact: Gordon Anderson 512.475.4743
Jill McFarren 512.475.2844

State awards El Paso County \$1.2 million for Colonia Self Help Center operations

(AUSTIN) — The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) today awarded a \$1.2 million contract to El Paso County to fund operations of the county's Colonia Self Help Center (SHC), which promotes homeownership and self-reliance to residents living in five area colonias.

The award was made through TDHCA's Colonia SHC Program and will provide a wide variety of technical and consumer assistance to an estimated 8,533 residents living in the following colonias: Agua Dulce Units 1-5; Horizon Units 90, 91, and 94; El Paso Hills Units 1-4, Lakeway Estates Units 1-3, and Horizon View Estates Units 17, 20, 21, and 22. This assistance supports the efforts of colonia residents in improving their own living standards while making the most of limited state housing funds.

"Many colonia residents must overcome enormous obstacles just to meet the most basic of housing needs," noted Michael Gerber, TDHCA Executive Director. "The self help nature of this program reflects the 'can-do' spirit of the people and region, as well as helping maximize the state's resources. TDHCA recognizes the unique challenges found in the region, and we are committed to working with the county to help colonia residents help themselves."

Under the contract, El Paso County will among other activities help reconstruct nine homes, make repairs to another 17 homes, make utilities connections for 10 homes, provide 30 construction skills training classes, and carry out 20 classes on accessing new technology.

Funds for the Colonia SHC Program come from the state's allocation of federal Community Development Block Grant funds and are designed to benefit households earning no more than 60 percent of the area median family income. For El Paso County, this equals an annual income of \$27,360 for a family of 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, colonia housing programs, and disaster recovery housing programs. It currently administers \$2 billion through for-profit, nonprofit, and local government partnerships to deliver local housing and community-based opportunities and assistance to Texans in need.

- 30 -

221 E. 11TH • AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701 • (800) 525-0657 • (512) 475-3800

Visit us on the world wide web at: www.tdhca.state.tx.us