

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
0572-0124
Weather Radio Transmitter Grant Program

A. Justification

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

The Rural Utilities Service (RUS), an agency delivering the United States Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Utilities Programs, hereinafter referred to as Rural Development, is requesting an extension of the paperwork collection in support of the Weather Radio Transmitter Grant Program.

Under the authorization of P.L. 106-387 (FY 2001 Appropriations Act), the President of the United States and the United States Congress made \$5 million (later reduced to \$4,989,000) in grant funds available to facilitate the expansion of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Weather Radio and Alert System into rural areas that are not covered or are poorly covered at this time. The Weather Radio and Alert System is a nationwide network of radio stations broadcasting 24 hours a day from National Weather Service offices to alert people of approaching dangerous weather and other emergencies, including natural, environmental and public safety alerts. Thousands of people die or lose property annually because they did not know soon enough about hazards, disasters or emergencies. The NOAA Weather Radio and Alert System covers all major metropolitan areas and many smaller cities and towns. This program provides grant funds for use in rural areas and communities of 50,000 or less inhabitants. Applications are processed on a first-come, first-served basis until the appropriation is used in its entirety.

2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the Agency has made of the information received from the current collection.

Applications are submitted by entities to Rural Development via hard copy. The applicant will submit a grant application that contains those items set forth in the FY 2001 NOFA and will enter into a Grant Agreement with the Agency if their project is selected. Rural Development will use the submitted information to determine the following:

Application

Information submitted in an application is used by Rural Development to determine that adequate coverage in the area does not already exist and that the proposed coverage will meet the needs of the community; design requirements are met and, that the funds needed to complete the project are adequate based on the grant and the matching portion from the applicant.

Grant Agreement

This form is used by the Agency and grantee as a contract for receipt of grant funds.

FORM APPROVED UNDER OTHER OMB NUMBER

SF 270, "Request for Advancement or Reimbursement", (0348-0004); This form is used to request advances of funds under the grant.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g. permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection.

Rural Development is committed to complying with the Government Paperwork Elimination Act (GPEA). If additional funding for this program is received, this program will be made available for electronic submission through Grants.gov.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above.

Each application will be for a new project and new purpose, therefore information to determine feasibility will be unique and will not be duplicated. The Agency has reviewed other Department grant programs in determining what information to require for the grant application.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities (item 5 of OMB Form 83-1), describe any methods used to minimize burden.

The Agency believes it has minimized the burden on both large and small entities and that the required information is the least amount needed to monitor the grant funds.

6. Describe the consequences to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

The submission of the required information is required at the time the application for the grant is made and is project specific and therefore, could not be submitted less frequently. Also, once funding for a transmitter for a specific unserved area has been made, no future funding for that particular area would be available again.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:

- a. Requiring respondents to report information more than quarterly.

There are no such requirements.

- b. Requiring written responses in less than 30 days.

There are no such requirements.

- c. Requiring more than an original and two copies.

There are no such requirements.

- d. Requiring respondents to retain records for more than 3 years.

There are no such requirements.

- e. That is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study.

This collection does not involve statistical information.

- f. Requiring use of statistical sampling which has not been reviewed and approved by OMB.

This collection does not involve statistical information.

- g. Requiring a pledge of confidentiality.

There is no such requirement.

- h. Requiring submission of proprietary trade secrets.

There is no such requirement.

8. If applicable, identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice soliciting comments on the information collection. Summarize public comments received and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the Agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, reporting format (if any), and on data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

As required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), a notice to request comments was published on January 11, 2007 at 72 FR 1314. No public comments were received.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than reenumeration of contractors or grantees.

No such decision has been made.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or Agency policy.

No assurances have been made. Information submitted to RUS by borrowers is covered by provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552).

11. Provide additional justification for any question of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior or attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.

There are no questions of this nature.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.

The Agency estimates the burden to be 30 hours, determined as follows:

5 grants X 6.00 hours = 30 hours

The Agency estimates the cost on respondents to be \$900.00 determined as follows:

5 grants X 6.00 hours X \$30.00 (Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics) professional time = \$900.00.

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information.

(a) Total capital and start-up cost component (annualized over its expected useful life); and

There are no capital or start-up costs involved with this collection.

(b) Total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component.

There are no operational and maintenance or purchase of services costs involved with this collection.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal Government.

The cost to the Federal Government to collect and evaluate this information is estimated to be \$2587 based on the following calculations:

Review of Grant Application and Follow-up

\$43.12 hr. (GS-13/5) X 6 hrs. X 10responses = \$2587

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in items 13 or 14 of the OMB Form 83-1.

This is a revision of a previously approved package. There is a decrease of 648 burden hours. This is a result of the program using all of the appropriations to award grants. However, there are five (5) applications that are still active. This package reflects the burden hours associated with the remaining applications.

16. For collection of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication.

There are no plans for publication.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

There is no such approval requested.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in item 19 on OMB 83-1.

There are no exceptions.

B. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods.

This collection does not involve statistical methods.