



GEAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

James W. Dvorak

Timothy C. Lennon

Ralph Spidalieri

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES • Steven Oluic PhD, Director
470 Center Street • Building 3 • Chardon, Ohio 44024-1068

May 14, 2019

Chardon Township - Berkshire Heights Residents

REF: Household Income Survey Results

Dear Resident,

As you are aware, the Geauga County Department of Water Resources recently conducted a Median Household Income (MHI) survey in the Berkshire Heights subdivision. This was done as part of an effort to obtain Federal grant funding administered by the Ohio Development Services Agency. The survey was concluded on May 10, 2019.

Of the 114 Berkshire Heights subdivision households, 102 responded to the questionnaire mailed out in March 2019. While the response rate is excellent, the survey results are disappointing in that the MHI survey indicates that only 40.0%, or 95 of 238 household members met the MHI threshold level for low to moderate income category to qualify for this grant funding. The minimum threshold required to meet the LMI standard is 51%.

Although disappointing after all of the effort of GCDWR employees, we continue to seek any and all funding available in order to offset the costs associated with the construction of a wastewater treatment plant and sewer lines that will serve the Berkshire Heights subdivision and meet the OEPA's "findings & orders."

Lastly, according to the survey questionnaire, some residents may qualify for the "Single Family Housing Repair Loans & Grants," U.S. Department of Agriculture, Section 504 Home Repair program. This program offers loans of up to \$20,000 at a 1.0% rate and/or grants up to \$7,500. The grant may be available to residents 62 or older. Please see the attachment below for more detail(s).



Single Family Housing Repair Loans & Grants

What does this program do?

Also known as the Section 504 Home Repair program, this provides loans to very-low-income homeowners to repair, improve, or modernize their homes or provides grants to elderly very-low-income homeowners to remove health and safety hazards.

Who may apply for this program?

To qualify, you must:

- Be the homeowner and occupy the house
- Be unable to obtain affordable credit elsewhere
- Have a family income below 50 percent of the area median income
- For grants, be age 62 or older and not be able to repay a repair loan

What is an eligible area?

Generally, rural areas with a population less than 35,000 are eligible. Applicants may check the address of their home to determine eligibility online.

How may funds be used?

- Loans may be used to repair, improve, or modernize homes or to remove health and safety hazards.
- Grants must be used to remove health and safety hazards.

How much money can I get?

- Maximum loan is \$20,000.
- Maximum grant is \$7,500.
- Loans and grants can be combined for up to \$27,500 in assistance.

What are the terms of the loan or grant?

- Loans can be repaid over 20 years
- Loan interest rate is fixed at 1%.
- Full title service is required for loans of \$7,500 or more
- Grants have a lifetime limit of \$7,500.
- Grants must be repaid if the property is sold in less than 3 years
- If applicants can repay part, but not all of the costs, applicants may be offered a loan and grant combination

Is there a deadline to apply?

Applications are available year round as long as funding is available, and are processed in the order they are received.

How long does an application take?

Approval times depend on funding availability in your area. Talk to a **USDA home loan specialist** in your area for help with the application.

How do I get started?

Contact a **USDA home loan specialist** in your area.

What law governs this program?

- The Housing Act of 1949 as amended, 7 CFR, Part 3550
- HB-1-3550 - Direct Single Family Housing Loans and Grants Field Office Handbook

NOTE: Because citations and other information may be subject to change please always consult the program instructions listed in the section above titled "What Law Governs this Program?" You may also contact **your local office** for assistance. You will find additional forms, resources, and program information at www.rd.usda.gov. *USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.*