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For Immediate Release

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Johnstown, PA - U.S. Rep. John Murtha made the following statement regarding a check-presentation ceremony to be held Thursday for Sewickley Township's sewage collection and treatment system:

"We've been working so long to iron out the funding for this project that I'm very disappointed I won't be able to attend the actual check presentation. It was apparent to us after redistricting put Sewickley Township in the 12th Congressional District in 2002 that we needed to get to work immediately to eliminate the serious health and environmental hazards that exist there because of a lack of modern sewage-treatment facilities. Congratulations to Sewickley Township officials and our thanks to RUS for all of their efforts in working with us to help bring this project to fruition."

Congressman Murtha's Sept. 22 release on the announcement of the funding follows:

Murtha: Sewickley Twp. receives \$7M grant

HERMINIE., PA, Sept. 22, 2005 - U.S. Rep. John Murtha today announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Utilities Service will provide \$6.9 million in grants for the Municipal Sewer Authority of Sewickley Township, with much of the funding coming from a national pool of money. The system will serve 1,394 users in Rillton, Sunshine, Keystone, Herminie, Cowansburg and Kimberly Estates.

The project also includes a new 440,000-gallon-per-day wastewater treatment plant to be constructed in Rillton, 199,958 lineal feet (LF) of sewer mains, 1,380 LF of force main, a pump station and a new office building.

"With the budget deficit caused by tax cuts and the war, our domestic programs have been cut, including the Rural Utilities Service," Murtha said. "So RUS didn't have nearly enough money to take care of all of our priority projects in Pennsylvania and we had to request extra money from the national pool."

"I appreciate the support of Rural Development in providing these funds because the Sewickley project addresses immediate and serious health and environmental hazards. In addition, this project opens up development opportunities and residents simply couldn't have afforded it without substantial grant assistance," Murtha added.

The funding for the project, provided by several sources, totaled nearly \$19 million:

- \$8.5 million loan USDA-RUS
- \$5.9 million grant USDA-RUS
- \$1 million grant USDA-Hurricane Ivan emergency infrastructure fund
- \$2.7 million loan PennVEST (to rebuild the Rillton lines and pump station)
- \$1.25 million tap Local share through tap fees

"Aside from the obvious health and environmental benefits for local residents, the project is part of our broader strategy to stimulate economic development," Murtha said. "Because of Sewickley Township's proximity to Interstate 70, this project creates good opportunities for growth."