

Northwest Regional Housing Authority

Arkansas

The mission of Northwest Regional Housing Authority (NWRHA) is to promote adequate and affordable housing, economic opportunity and a suitable living environment free from discrimination. NWRHA serves the residents of Northwest Arkansas, including Baxter, Boone, Carroll, Newton, Searcy, Fulton, Izard, Stone, Madison, Marion, Washington, and Benton Counties.

NWRHA has the goal of improving the quality of life in Northwest Arkansas through the Mutual Self-Help Housing program and by managing affordable rental housing, rehabilitation of existing housing, and providing education and counseling. NWRHA also builds affordable, Energy Star efficient homes, as well as the water sense certification. NWRHA has a reputation as an innovator and leader in rural Arkansas.

Under the Mutual Self-Help Housing program, low-income individuals and families provide sweat equity to reduce the cost of constructing their homes. The participants also gain a tremendous sense of self-esteem and learn valuable skills. The community benefits from the stable households, increased property values, and a broader tax base.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development plays an important part of NWRHA being able to assist the very low-income applicants with an opportunity to own a home. NWRHA has started utilizing the USDA Section 504 Rehabilitation program in recognition of the great need for home repairs in the community that NWRHA serves.

CONTACT:

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ORGANIZATION FACTS:

Web:
www.nwregionalhousing.org
Year Founded: 1977
Location: Harrison, AR
Footprint: Local

By the Numbers:

(for 2016)

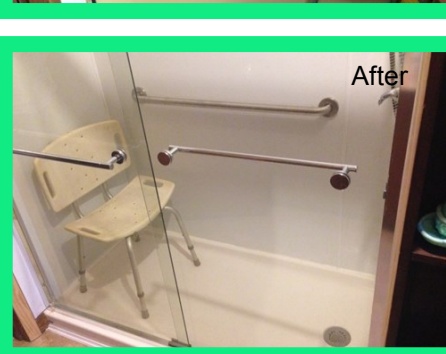
- 602 households served
- 121 clients served through community development projects
- \$2,500,000 financing secured

The Walker Family

In 2016, NWRHA was contacted by an elderly woman desperately in need of housing assistance. Mrs. La-Donna Walker, an 81-year-old resident of Green Forrest, Arkansas, was living with her husband Vernon Walker in their family home. While they had owned their home for many years, updates were needed so that they could continue to comfortably and safely age in place, but they were at a loss for how they would afford the needed repairs and renovation.



Mrs. Walker had heard about NWRHA's Housing Rehabilitation Program, and was interested to learn more. The NWRHA Housing Rehabilitation Program provides grants and loans to very-low income families to repair health and safety hazards in their homes. To be eligible for grant funding, participants 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, and be at least 62 years of age and unable to repay a loan.



NWRHA determined that the Walkers were eligible. Upon inspection of the Walkers' home, NWRHA determined that their shower was lacking in both size and efficiency for the elderly couple, and that ramps were needed to improve their mobility into the home. NWRHA staff replaced the shower and installed ramps using a Section 504 grant provided by USDA Rural Development.