

Rural Water Offers Free Simple Compliance Tool for FTC's Red Flag Rule for all Utilities and Communities

(Washington, DC) The country's largest community-based water organization - the National Rural Water Association (NRWA) is offering any utility, municipality, or association a free, simple compliance tool to comply with the U.S. Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) new federal mandate (the so-called Red Flag Rule). The Red Flag rule requires any entity where there is a risk of identity theft, to develop and implement an Identity Theft Prevention Program. The Program must include reasonable policies and procedures for detecting, preventing, and mitigating identity theft. The rule was issued by the Federal Reserve System, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Federal Trade Commission, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, and the Office of Thrift Supervision. The compliance date is **November 1, 2008** and covers all U.S. utilities.

Ed Thomas, Environmental Engineer with NRWA said, *"We are excited to offer the compliance tool for no charge to any entity that has to comply with this federal mandate. We estimate that most anyone can complete the compliance process in one hour. We have tried to make compliance as simple and clear as possible. We focused on compliance for water systems, but there is no reason a city, power utility, association, county, etc. could not use this tool for compliance. It is free, simple, and available to anyone."*

In 2002, Rural Water utilized a similar approach (and compliance tool) to implement the U.S. EPA's mandate for water supplies to conduct security assessments, which resulted in the most efficient compliance operation in the history of federal environmental mandates.

A copy of the federal rule and the compliance tool are available at: www.ruralwater.org.

