

**Board of County Commissioners**  
**Agenda Request**

Date of Meeting: January 6, 2009

Date Submitted: December 12, 2008

To: Honorable Chairman and Members of the Board

From: Benjamin H. Pingree, County Administrator  
Lindsay Stevens, Assistant County Administrator  
Alfred Nelson, Housing Director  
Jackie Flowers, Section 8 Coordinator

Subject: Request Board Approval of a Resolution Establishing the 2009 Utility Allowance Schedule for the Wakulla County Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Rental Assistance Program

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**Statement of Issue:**

This agenda item requests Board approval of a Resolution establishing the 2009 Utility Allowance Schedule for the Wakulla County Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Rental Assistance Program.

**Background:**

Title 24, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 965, Subpart E., provides for all public housing residents to receive an allowance toward the cost of tenant-paid utilities. This allowance is intended to cover “reasonable consumption of utilities by an energy-conservative household of modest circumstances consistent with the requirements of a safe, sanitary, and healthful living environment.” In compliance with these regulations, the Wakulla County Section 8 Program calculates utility allowances on the basis of consumption data for essential appliances and services: water, sewage, trash collection, heating, lighting, cooking, food storage, and minor electrical appliances.

The Wakulla County Public Housing Authority Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) provides utility allowances for tenants who pay their own utility costs. These tenants are allotted a utility allowance to help pay for “reasonable and conservative” utility usage. The tenant’s rent is subsidized by the utility allowance amount in the income-based rent structure and is annualized and used as a deduction from income for participants in the Choice Voucher Program rent structure. Each year, the Agency must review the utility allowances based upon current rates. The 2009 utility rates are based on the average actual consumption for the primary types of tenant-based programs rental units (apartment, house and mobile homes); in every location served by different utility suppliers for Wakulla County, and the local jurisdictional areas of the Section 8 Voucher Program.

**Analysis:**

Attached are comparisons of the current 2003 rates to the 2009 effective rates for the utility allowance used by the Wakulla County Section 8 Program. The methodology for

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devising these allowances is detailed as part of the supporting documentation attachment. The 2009 rates are applied to the consumption for each utility then added together to determine the rate change.

Rate changes have an impact on Public Housing rental income, increasing or decreasing the Agency's income; depending upon whether rates increased or decreased. A rate increase will result in a corresponding increase in the tenant's utility allowance. This in turn will reduce their rent payments from the Agency. Rate changes do not affect agency income under the Section 8 Program. Under Section 8, rate changes affect the amount of overall housing subsidy available to participants. The households who have a 10% change in utility allowances will be recertified on the effective date. All other households will be recertified on their annual recertification date.

The 2009 utilities rates show an increase in electric, natural gas, water and sewer. The affect of this on the Section 8 Program is an increase across the board on tenant utility allowances. The overall effect of these rate changes will result in all Section 8 tenants paying \$11,858.04 less in rent.

HUD requires Agencies to review utility allowance each year. The 2009 allowance will go into effect the month following the adoption of the updated allowance by the Board of County Commissioners. Records documenting the basis for establishment and revision of Wakulla County Section 8 Program utility allowances are available at the Wakulla County Housing Service office located at 11 Bream Fountain Road, Crawfordville, Florida 32327.

**Options:**

1. Approve the Resolution to Establish the 2009 Utility Allowance Schedule for the Wakulla County Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Rental Assistance Program.
2. Do not approve the Resolution Establishing the 2009 Utility Allowance Schedule for the Wakulla County Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Rental Assistance Program.
3. Board direction

**Recommendation:**

Option #1

**Attachments:**

1. Resolution
2. 2003 Utility Allowance Schedule
3. 2009 Mobile Home Utility Allowance
4. 2009 Single Family Utility Allowance
5. 2009 Multiplex Utility Allowance
6. 2009 Semi-Detached Utility Allowance