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**KDHE provides funding for new public water supply system**

**TOPEKA, Kan.** – Construction of a new public water supply system, along the Kansas River east of Lawrence, is scheduled to begin in March 2017. Treated water will be utilized by Douglas County Rural Water District No. 5 and Osage County Rural Water District No. 5, which serve rural populations in southwest Douglas County and northeast Osage County. The new system will ensure a long term water supply source for the district’s approximate 5,500 customers.

Financing for construction of the public water supply system was made possible through a loan provided by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) with joint funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Using the Kansas Public Water Supply Loan Fund, KDHE has provided a nearly \$20 million loan, in which 30 percent of the principal amount will be forgiven.

“Having a long-term reliable water supply is vital to Kansas communities.” KDHE Secretary Susan Mosier, MD, MBA, FACS stated, “Through the Kansas Public Water Supply Loan Fund to local water districts, we are able to improve and maintain our state’s water infrastructure.”

“The management and patrons of our two water districts are most grateful to KDHE and its Public Water Supply Loan Fund, and especially for 30 percent loan forgiveness.” Larry Wray Manager of Douglas County rural water district No. 5 stated, “Their support has been instrumental in making this project possible. Having such a dependable supply of good, fresh water will provide water security in our districts for many years to come.”

The full system will include a water treatment plant, wells, a storage tank, water transmission mains, a water tower, and a pumpstation.

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*KDHE’s mission is to protect and improve the health and environment of all Kansans.*