



West Virginia Housing
Development Fund



West Virginia
**PROPERTY
RESCUE** Initiative

Report to the Joint Committee on Government & Finance West Virginia Property Rescue Initiative Update

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by Erica L. Boggess,
Acting Executive Director,
WV Housing Development Fund





West Virginia Housing Development Fund



The West Virginia Property Rescue Initiative (WVPRI) (House Bill 2810) mandates that the Fund allocate \$1 million per fiscal year for five years beginning July 1, 2015 and ending July 1, 2019 for a revolving loan program available to counties and municipalities for identification, purchase, removal and rehabilitation of dilapidated properties. Additionally, the WVPRI provides technical assistance to communities to acquire and/or remove dilapidated properties from their communities.

To be eligible, cities and counties must have the authority to acquire and/or demolish the property and the structures to be razed must constitute a health and safety hazard. Assistance is provided in the form of a loan.

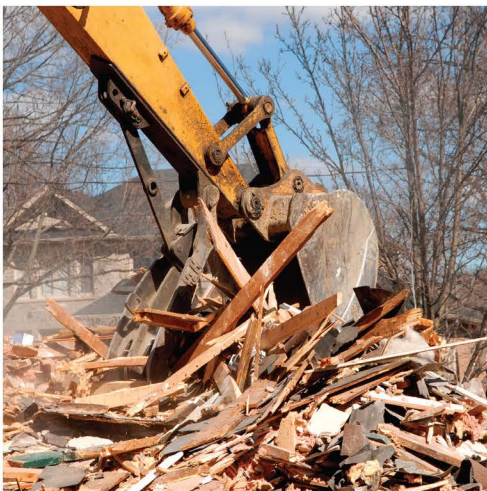


As of Nov. 30, 2016, the Fund reports the following activity:

- July 1, 2015 - \$1 million deposit to PRI account
- July 1, 2016 - \$1 million deposit to PRI account
- Two loans of \$250,000 each to the city of Parkersburg.

Technical assistance has been provided through a contracted partnership with The WV Community Development Hub (The Hub), Northern WV Brownfields Assistance Center (NBAC), and WV Land Use & Sustainable Development Law Clinic (Law Clinic) to conduct outreach efforts to promote the WVPRI and provide guidance to communities.

These outreach efforts include regional WVPRI Technical Assistance workshops, online webinars, email and newsletter announcements, outreach support from partner organizations and direct calls to municipalities.





The Fund, NBAC, Hub, and the Law Clinic held six workshops in:

- Montgomery (Oct 9, 2015)
- Huntington (Feb 5, 2016)
- Cacapon State Park (Feb 19, 2016)
- Weirton (March 4, 2016)
- Beckley (March 18, 2016)
- Buckhannon (April 1, 2016)

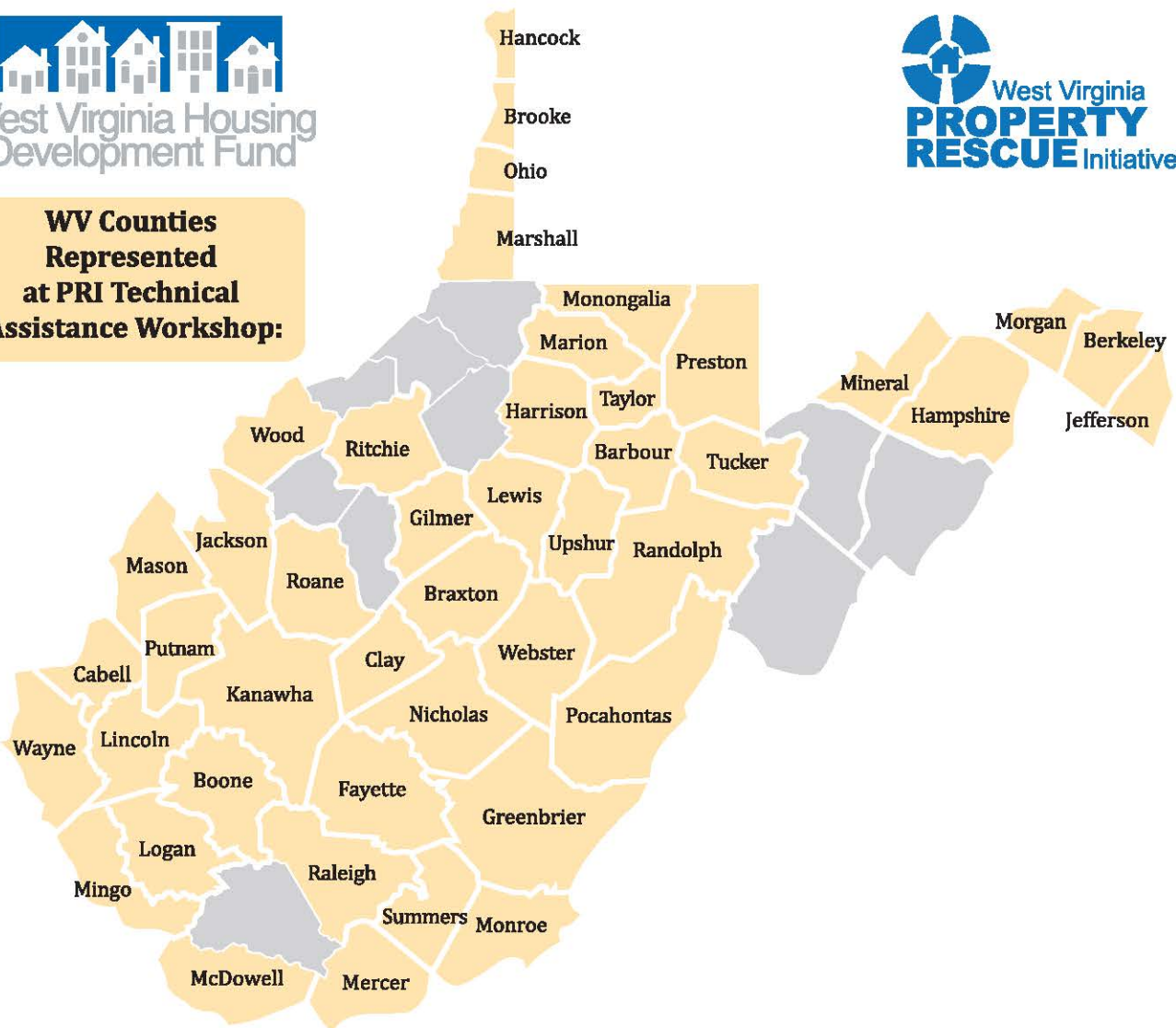
The 379 workshop attendees represent 100 communities from 45 different counties and 160 organizations.

Communities represented at PRI Technical Assistance Workshop:

East Bank	Marmet	Shepherdstown
Elkins	Martinsburg	Shinnston
Fairmont	Masontown	Slatyfork
Farmington	Middleway	Sophia
Fayetteville	Montgomery	Spencer
Gassaway	Morgantown	St. Albans
Gauley Bridge	Moundsville	Summersville
Glasgow	Mount Hope	Sutton
Glenville	New Cumberland	Terra Alta
Grafton	Nitro	Thomas
Great Cacapon	Oak Hill	Union
Hamlin	Parkersburg	War
Hendricks	Parsons	Wayne
Hinton	Pax	Webster Springs
Huntington	Peterstown	Weirton
Hurricane	Philippi	Welch
Inwood	Pickens	Wellsburg
Kenova	Point Pleasant	West Hamlin
Keyser	Princeton	Weston
Kincaid	Ranson	Wheeling
Kingwood	Ravenswood	White Hall
Lewisburg	Reedsville	Whitesville
Logan	Richwood	Williamson
Madison	Ripley	
Marlinton	Romney	



**WV Counties
Represented
at PRI Technical
Assistance Workshop:**



Direct Outreach

Phone calls and personal communication: The NBAC, Hub, and Law Clinic directly contacted municipalities in the target areas of each PRI technical assistance workshop to encourage attendance, resulting in a total of 51 communities reached via direct phone call or conversation. Additionally, the Business Development Corporation (BDC) assisted in providing outreach to communities in the northern panhandle.

Email blasts: The NBAC and Hub utilized their mailing lists to conduct significant outreach. The Hub's mailing list includes approximately 5,200 recipients and the NBAC's mailing list includes another 636 recipients. Three email blasts per workshop were sent to all recipients announcing each regional workshop as well as an additional email follow up to workshop attendees. Additionally, the WV Blight Beat newsletter continues to promote application for PRI technical assistance monthly.

Webinar: The NBAC and the Fund hosted a webinar on the WV PRI and upcoming workshops for 38 attendees, a recording of which is available online at wvredevelopment.org.

Supplemental information session: The NBAC, Hub, and Law Clinic also hosted a PRI technical assistance meeting upon request of the WV Association of Counties to provide information to municipal and county leaders from Braxton and Tucker counties who were unable to attend a workshop.



Fund staffers also met one-on-one with representatives from Beach Bottom, Belle, Bethany, Charles Town, Chester, Delbarton, Durbin, Elkins, Gassaway, Fairmont, Handley, Hinton, Martinsburg, New Cumberland, Nitro, Point Pleasant, Piedmont, Romney, Salem, Wellsburg and Weston. Fund staffers also met with representatives from the West Virginia Municipal League, Hancock County Assessor's Office and Fairmont Community Development Partnership.

Media mentions: WVPRI received positive coverage in the following media outlets: Charleston Daily Mail, Commissioners' Corner (the newsletter for the County Commissioners Associations of West Virginia), Decision Makers, The Register-Herald, WTOV, The State Journal, WDTV, The Exponent-Telegram and The Weirton Daily Times.

Online engagement: The Fund devoted a page on its website to WVPRI. Visitors can read an overview of the program, download the WVPRI program guide and program application and find links to agencies we partner with to help carry out this initiative. Licensed contractors, developers, nonprofit organizations, disposal companies and landfills who want to be considered for demolition opportunities can also fill out a web form to register as a resource to assist communities and municipalities. The page has been visited more than 20,000 times since it was created in July 2015.

