



Office of the Chief
Records Officer for the
U.S. Government

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April 19, 2021

Ms. Andrea R. Jenkins
United States Department of Agriculture
Enterprise Services Division, Rural Development
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250-0742
andrea.jenkins@usda.gov

Dear Ms. Jenkins,

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) received a report from Rural Development, dated March 24, 2021, regarding the loss of United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) records due to black mold.

The report states that, on March 1, 2021, black mold was discovered in 2 file drawers of 2 file cabinets at an office located in Washington, DC. The damaged files covered the Rural Utilities Program relating to “proof of title” for Wyoming and Utah borrowers. Upon discovering the files, USDA determined they were a hazard to health and took action to destroy them. All files were maintained by a unit that was disbanded in the 1980s and were covered under a temporary disposition authority (NC1-221-80-1, item 33), and were past their disposition date.

Based on the information that you provided, the reporting requirements of 36 CFR 1230.14(a) have been met and NARA considers this matter closed. However, for future reference, when agencies identify damaged records that are a menace to health or property, they are required to inform NARA immediately in accordance with 36 CFR 1229.10 to request approval to dispose of contaminated records. Please refer to NARA’s procedures for the emergency disposal of contaminated records.

Sincerely,

LAURENCE BREWER
Chief Records Officer
for the U.S. Government