

Change Request Justification for 0572-0032

The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) is changing the method for collecting RUS Forms 7 and 12. For the year ending December 2005, RUS used a web-enabled system to collect RUS Forms 7 and 12. The web-enabled program allowed borrowers to download the needed software from an RUS website, complete the form on their computer, and upload the data to RUS via the web. Due to issues regarding electronic signatures, borrowers also submitted a hard copy signature page to the Agency. A small percentage of borrowers completed the form via paper, so the Agency continued to provide a paper copy via an Adobe PDF version of the form.

Due to information security requirements, beginning with the collection of information for calendar year December 2006, RUS has developed a completely web-based system for submission of the Forms 7 and 12. The system is called the Data Collection System (DCS). The DCS will be accessed through USDA's eAuthentication system, which provides electronic signature capability eliminating the need for the signature page.

It is estimated that the time required to complete the collection via the new system is the same as currently approved. The agency will still accept paper submissions, as necessary. It is anticipated that the number of paper filings would be very low. The system generates a blank Adobe PDF version of the form that can be used by those borrowers that need to file via paper.

RUS is requesting approval of the new system.