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OKLAHOMA BULLETIN NO. OK130-4-4

SUBJECT: AGN – The Customer Statement and Changes to eAuthentication

Purpose: To provide information on the announcements of Customer Statements available to FSA and NRCS customers and recent changes to the eAuthentication system.

Expiration Date: September 30, 2004

Customer Statements

In the past two months, Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman, has put a special focus and emphasis on the use of eGovernment initiatives in the Department of Agriculture. The USDA Customer Statement is part of this effort. The release of the Customer Statement has been a focus at farm shows and other agriculture seminars across the country in recent weeks. The Customer Statement will allow USDA customers to view their participation, application, and payment status in various commodity and conservation programs, information on their farm loans, and their conservation plan and land unit information. More information on the USDA Customer Statement is available to NRCS employees off links from the “NRCS today” tab of the my.nrcs portal.

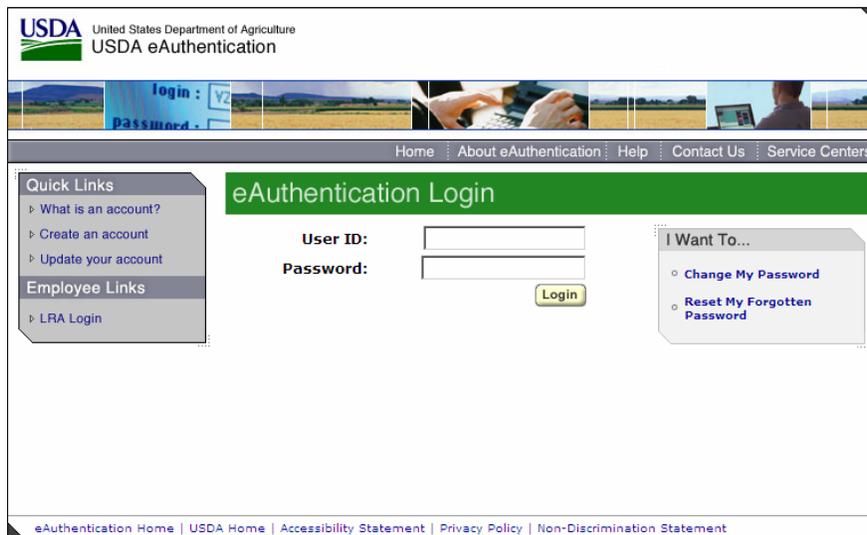
All employees should be aware that these announcements may increase the number of requests for Level 2 credentials for USDA customers. Any requests for authentication for Level 2 credentials should be directed immediately to the Local Registration Authority in the office, an adjoining county, or Suzanne Collier, Resource Conservationist at the state office, at 405.742.1234, for information on processing the request.

eAuthentication

With more applications, both internal agency applications (such as ProTracts and PRS) and external applications (such as eFile and Customer Statements), being tied to the centralized authentication system, there have been some recent changes and upgrades to the system. Users may have noticed some recent screen changes that are being brought on line when accessing NRCS web authenticated applications. See the picture of the new eAuthentication screen shown on the following page. As the agency continues to use more applications on the web farm, they are also trouble shooting some of the network issues that impact performance at various times in the web farm applications. There is a continuing effort to improve performance on the various servers and throughout the network.

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One major change in the recent eAuthentication process is in the user's ability to obtain a password should they forget their existing password. The password "hint" has been removed and a user requesting assistance with resetting their password will need to provide their mother's maiden name, their birth date, and their four digit PIN number to the eAuthentication Help Desk in order to obtain a new temporary password. Users who do not know their PIN number will need to supply the last four digits of their social security number.

With the eAuthentication changes, I want to remind all employees that this system is the 'front end' to secure USDA information. For this reason it is imperative that employees keep their login and password secure. According to USDA security policy, logins and passwords are not to be used or shared with other employees.

Employees need to learn their User ID and password. These items are often needed at training sessions and other times, when the data will not already be on the computer system and will have to be entered by the user. Employees who are having trouble getting into the system using their own login and password should double check access using a different computer. (Sometimes the employee may have clicked the button to have the password saved on their workstation, and it is the saved password that is causing the problem.) Users should not access the system under another person's login if they are having problems with their own. Users with continued problems should request assistance from Suzanne Collier at 405.742.1234 to determine whether their password needs to be reset, or they may go through the link on the eAuthentication login screen to reset their forgotten password and start with a new password.

Johnny Green, acting for:

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