

# THE BUYERS NETWORK

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**THE BUYERS NETWORK**  
*is published monthly by the  
Purchasing Division of the  
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Administration to promote better  
value in public purchasing.*

## Purchasing Division Assists Division of Forestry in Acquiring New Firefighting Equipment

The West Virginia Division of Forestry received new firefighting equipment last year, thanks to assistance from the West Virginia Purchasing Division. The equipment was unveiled and celebrated in September at Twin Falls Resort State Park, in conjunction with the Division of Forestry's biannual Fire School.

The new equipment included:

- Two Type 3 bulldozers equipped with specialized forestry and firefighting packages,
- Three Type 6 wildland fire engines designed specifically for combating wildfires,
- Six new drones equipped with thermal imaging technology to assist in fire detection,
- Eight UTVs outfitted with skid units and water tanks for improved wildfire response in areas that are hard to reach, and
- 17 pickup trucks fitted with skid units for enhanced



The Division of Forestry obtained new firefighting equipment thanks to assistance from the Purchasing Division. The equipment included bulldozers, fire engines, drones, UTVs, and pickup trucks.

Please see **FORESTRY**, page 5

## INSIDE...

- Director's Comments: Reflecting on 2024, Setting Goals for the New Year
- Procurement Officers Reminded of Email Helpline
- Purchasing Division Advises Agencies on Difference Between wvOASIS Header and Procurement Folder
- Who We Are: Inspections Unit

## Purchasing Division Publishes Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Report

The Purchasing Division is pleased to announce that it will be publishing its Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Report on its website this month. This report will provide information on the Division's accomplishments and statistical data for work completed from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024.

"Compiling the report provides an opportunity to reflect on our major achievements and start thinking about upcoming initiatives to make the procurement process more efficient and strengthen our relationships with our agency partners," said Communication and Training Assistant Director Samantha Knapp. "We are excited for all that 2025 has in store for us and the new opportunities the new year will bring."

One of the highlights of the fiscal year was welcoming new director and general counsel Samantha Willis, who joined the Division in April 2024.

The end of the 2024 Legislative Session brought the passage of several

Please see **ANNUAL REPORT**, page 4

## Reflecting on 2024, Setting Goals for the New Year

Wow, 2025! One quarter of a century. Twenty-five years, 1,300 weeks, 474,500 days. It's strange how time seems to stretch and compress all at once. Just yesterday, it felt like we were welcoming the start of the year, full of hope, resolutions, and fresh opportunities. Now here we are, standing on the edge of another chapter, reflecting on how quickly everything has unfolded.

As I look back at 2024, I am thankful to have joined you all on this journey into public procurement. I am thinking about how I want to move forward and what story I want the future of West Virginia procurement to tell. We accomplished a lot last year, but there is still so much left to achieve.

As we step into 2025, it is important to focus on our goals, both personal and professional. Setting goals isn't just about what we want to achieve, it's also about how we grow. Personal and professional growth comes from stepping outside our comfort zone and allows us to unlock hidden strengths and abilities, reaching our full potential.

I encourage you to think about what you want to achieve this year and set goals that will help you get there. Every project, every action, and every decision we make should align with a greater objective. In public procurement, that objective should include effectively procuring the goods and services needed to better serve the great people of West Virginia.

Goals also keep us focused. Whether it's a short-term project, such as completing a unique purchase, or a long-term vision, like improving time management across the board, having something specific to strive for makes even the toughest challenges more manageable and drives us to keep pushing forward.

My main goal for the Purchasing Division this year is to update and tailor our terms and conditions to some of the specific types of procurements we commonly see, starting with information technology procurements. I have members of my

team diving deep into best practices around the country and coordinating with the Office of Technology to see how we can more efficiently procure necessary technologies and ensure the protection of state data. This is a big job, but I have great people working to make it happen!

My personal goal for this year is to continue learning all I can about procurement and to identify new ways to grow my own leadership skills. I am taking some courses on NASPO's Procurement U portal aimed at growing procurement and other career and leadership skills. There are some great tools and programs right at our fingertips through organizations such as NASPO and NIGP, and I recommend that anyone who is interested take advantage of them.

So here we are, facing another new beginning. As we say goodbye to 2024 and hello to 2025, I hope you will all take a few moments to set some goals for yourselves in the coming year - whether they be personal or career goals or both. Here are some questions to ask yourself:

- What went well this past year that I want to continue?
  - What can I improve upon this coming year?
  - How do I want to feel this time next year, when I am reflecting on 2025? What accomplishments will I be glad to have achieved?
  - What tools can I use to achieve those goals? NASPO? NIGP? Purchasing Division resources? Online classes?
- Wishing you all a very Happy New Year!



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## Procurement Officers Reminded of Email Helpline

Since the launch of the Purchasing Division's Support Email Helpline, the Division has received more than 170 emails. Monitored daily by the Purchasing division's inspection staff, inquiries sent to the ***Purchasing.Help@wv.gov*** email account receive a response within one business day.

The goal of creating the Purchasing Support Email Helpline was to offer an additional resource to individuals involved in the procurement process, including those who are not designated or only do procurement as a small part of their duties.

"We strive to make ourselves available to every individual involved in procurement for the state," said Purchasing Director Samantha Willis. "If you ask for help, we make sure that question gets to the right person and provide the first step toward an answer or solution."

More than 50 different organizations from small boards and commissions to larger agencies and departments have submitted questions to the Helpline. The Purchasing Division is pleased that so many individuals are choosing to utilize this resource. While the Purchasing Division always recommends contacting

an agency's designated or assigned Purchasing Division buyer with questions, the ***Purchasing.Help@wv.gov*** email is always available if you do not know who to contact or where to start.



## Purchasing Division Advises on Knowing the Difference Between the wvOASIS Header and Procurement Folder

The Purchasing Division would like to remind procurement officers of the documents that should go in the header versus the procurement folder when working in wvOASIS.

First, try to limit the number of attachments in the header. Any documents that should live for the life of the solicitation should be placed in the procurement folder. The procurement folder is the digital version of the file.

The correct process matters most with change orders. If not done correctly, a change order will be rejected and put back to draft status to remove unnecessary documents.

The only document that should be attached to the header when submitting a change order should be the two-party agreement letter justifying or detailing the nature of the change order and any backup documents that need to accompany the justification, preferably as one combined document named as the sequential change order such as Change Order #1, #2, etc.

If issuing a change order for a standard renewal, only the renewal letter should be attached to the header. All other documents should be placed in the procurement folder. The same process should be used for a notice to proceed. Only the notice to proceed letter should be uploaded to the header. If submitting a change order for any type of cost increase request, such as an increase request for a construction project or an EOI, then the change order justification request letter and any backup documents justifying and/or detailing the cost increase should be uploaded to the header combined as a single attachment. All other documents for a change order should be placed in the procurement folder. All other documents would include but are not limited to:

- Certificates of Insurance
- Compliance Checklist
- Compliance checks such as the Secretary of State, federal and state debarment checks

- Any type of approval and/or waiver requests such as a waiver request from a statewide contract, or OT Approval, WV-65, WV-70, RFP approval forms, etc.

When submitting a requisition, ARQS/CRQS or ARQM/CRQM, the contents uploaded to the header are not as relevant because once the requisition is copied forward to the Solicitation Document, the items that were uploaded to the header of the requisition will disappear. They do not carry over. Any document that needs to stay with the requisition throughout its life should go in the procurement folder.

Once at the RFQ phase when preparing the solicitation, try to upload as few attachments into the header as possible. The fewer attachments uploaded to the header of the solicitation, the easier it is for vendors to navigate the attachments tab in wvOasis and it is less likely that they overlook any important information.

A combined document can be included in the header and can include the assembled wvOASIS document, terms and conditions, solicitation specifications, and any relevant exhibits or attachments such as maps, pricing pages, etc. Multiple files can be combined into one PDF file.

In an award document, it is recommended that the only thing uploaded into the header would be the Contract Award Document. When an award recommendation is submitted to the Purchasing Division, all those documents should go into the procurement folder. Most agencies issue their recommendation to award via email to their buyer. That email will include the WV-50, justification of a disqualified vendor, non-conflict, and any necessary approvals that are required at the time of the award such as OT approval. Emailing these documents is acceptable, but it is also highly recommended that those are placed in the procurement folder as well, along with verification checks such as Secretary of State, federal and state debarments, etc.

### STEPS FOR ADDING ATTACHMENTS TO THE PROCUREMENT FOLDER

- Go into your wvOASIS document
- Click on the View Procurement Folder button located in the lower right-hand corner of the RQS and RFQ screens. In the award, click on Related Actions and then select View Procurement Folder.
- Scroll down to the bottom and click Procurement Notes.
- Click Insert.
- Click the drop-down Procurement State box and make your selection based on the applicability of the documents to the stage of the procurement process you are in.
- Use the comment box below to label the folder, such as "Award" or "Change Order #1."
- Click Save.
- With the folder highlighted, select Attachments. You can upload as many attachments into the particular folder as you want. Individual folders for each document are not required. Once attachments are selected, click Upload, then Browse to select your files.
- Once selected, click the blue Upload button.
- If you have uploaded all the files you want, click Done. If not, click Browse to select additional files, then Upload. Repeat the process as many times as is necessary.
- When finished, click Done, Return, and then Back in the top right hand corner to back all the way out of the Procurement Folder.



# Purchasing Recognizes Latest Certification Recipient

The Purchasing Division is pleased to announce Toby Welch is the latest recipient of the West Virginia Procurement: Advanced Certification.

A senior buyer in the Purchasing Division, Welch has worked for the state for six years.

“Advanced certification represents a milestone in my career and a professional goal I’ve had for a long time,” Welch said. “I hope it enhances my credibility when collaborating with my assigned agencies, allowing me to demonstrate a standardized level of knowledge and skill. Ultimately, this certification will help facilitate meaningful partnerships, and enable me to deliver higher quality work.”

State agency procurement officers who are interested in par-

ticipating in the basic and/or advanced certification program may review the requirements at [www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/training/Certification](http://www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/training/Certification).

Any questions regarding the certification program should be directed to Courtney Johnson at 304-558-4213 or [Courtney.S.Johnson@wv.gov](mailto:Courtney.S.Johnson@wv.gov).

The Purchasing Division would like to congratulate Welch on his noteworthy accomplishment.



## ANNUAL REPORT

Continued from Page 1

bills impacting procurement, Senate Bill 217 and House Bill 5594. Senate Bill 217 authorized the state and its subdivisions to negotiate price for construction when all bids received exceed the maximum budget. House Bill 5594 exempted agencies from competitive bidding if entering into agreements with West Virginia University, Marshall University, and the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine.

As part of its initiative to standardize processes and offer helpful tools to assist agency procurement officers in the pub-

lic procurement process, the Purchasing Division introduced a new Prequalification Agreement Request (WV-41) template during Fiscal Year 2024. Under certain circumstances, state agencies are permitted to establish a list of prequalified vendors, in accordance with W. Va. Code § 5A-3-10e(b) (4), from whom they can subsequently obtain bids through a delegated process for commodities and services covered by the prequalification agreement.

A new purchasing rule filed during Fiscal Year 2024 gave agencies more autonomy related to emergency purchases. Effective July 1, 2023, agencies became authorized to award their own contracts within wvOASIS for emergency procurements exceeding their delegated threshold, pending Purchasing Division approval.

Some of the other accomplishments highlighted in this publication include:

- The Purchasing Division assisted West Virginia Lottery with making a technology purchase to meet the changing needs of its players. As part of this purchase, a contract for a cloud-based iLottery system was awarded to NeoPollard Interactive LLC. The iLottery system allows players to use an app on their mobile devices to play the same lottery games available in brick-and-mortar locations, such as Powerball and Mega Millions.
- The Purchasing Division introduced a Weekly Tip series, which was developed as part of an initiative to continuously improve its offerings to procurement officers and provided one more way to communicate with and educate agencies on the state purchasing process.
- The Purchasing Division implemented a new curriculum for its West Virginia Procurement: Basic Certification program. The curriculum consists of 12 topics that will ensure a procurement officer has the basic knowledge needed to perform their jobs.

To view this or past annual reports, please visit [www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/Annualreport](http://www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/Annualreport).



## Purchasing Welcomes New Employee

Angelina Villanueva has joined the Purchasing Division as an Imaging Operator 2.

This is Villanueva's second time with the Purchasing Division. She served as vendor registration coordinator in 2023 and for half of 2024. In December 2023, she earned a Regents Bachelor of Arts degree from Marshall University while working full time in the Purchasing Division and caring for her 5-year-old daughter.

Villanueva is also a graduate of South Charleston High School. In her free time, she enjoys baking, playing basketball, and watching sports. She primarily cheers for the NBA's Milwaukee Bucks.

"I am excited to be back and working with a great group of people," said Villanueva. "I look forward to being a valuable team member as an imaging operator."

Welcome back to the Purchasing Division!



**Angelina Villanueva**  
**Imaging Operator 2**

## Business Intelligence Report Helps with Recruitment of New Vendors

*By Technical Services Manager Mark Totten*

In an initiative to expand the recruitment of new vendors into the statewide competitive-bid process, in conjunction with wvOASIS, the West Virginia Purchasing Division developed a method to expand agencies' reach when procurement officers solicit the vendor community for necessary goods and services. With information that utilizes data gathered through the Purchasing Division's Vendor Registration program, and available to state agencies through a report in the wvOASIS Business Intelligence module, procurement officers have access to targeted vendor information that can greatly accelerate the state of West Virginia's competitive-bid process. The report, WV-FIN-VN-010, Vendors by Commodity, allows state agencies to search the vendor database using commodity codes describing what vendors indicate as their specific areas of business.

Matching commodity codes with vendor information already in wvOASIS gives procurement officers a layer of effectiveness when seeking competitive responses from the private sector. This data, available to export in a spreadsheet format, expands the state's vendor audience made aware of bid opportunities at both the agency and central levels.

The Purchasing Division and wvOASIS designed the WV-FIN-VN-010 report to require the input of only one piece of information, the commodity code. Using this information, the report instantly searches West Virginia's vendor database and outputs a list of vendors who have indicated their ability to provide the commodity input OR a commodity in a similar code family to the agency's needs.

Information contained in the commodity report includes vendors' Ordering addresses, email addresses of one or more vendor representatives, and phone numbers for the business. Agencies' immediate identification of potential vendors when planning and advertising competitive solicitations greatly enhanced the state's ability to perform market research ahead of procurements and more effectively communicate with potential vendors, all while eliminating guesswork and time spent identifying relevant vendors from scratch for the state's diverse and often unusual needs.

Buyers Network

## FORESTRY

Continued from Page 1

firefighting capabilities.

In 2023, Gov. Jim Justice signed SB 1032, which provided \$4 million toward new equipment. These funds were allocated by the West Virginia Legislature to purchase equipment to assist in fighting wildfires.

In celebrating the arrival of the equipment, Gov. Justice said, "Our hardworking forestry members deserve every bit of this new gear. These aren't just new dozers and trucks, they're difference makers in protecting our forests and citizens."

The Purchasing Division is pleased to have assisted in the purchase of the new firefighting equipment.

## THE BUYERS NETWORK

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# Statewide Contract Updates

## New Contracts

Contract	Vendor	Commodity	Effective Date
ESRI24	Environmental Systems Suite, Research Institute Inc.	ESRI Software Support & Maintenance Services	8/20/2024-8/19/2026
MR025	FASTENAL	Facility Maintenance, Repair, & Operations	1/1/2025-12/31/2025

## Contract Renewals

Contract	Vendor	Commodity	Effective Date
PAINT23	The Sherwin-Williams Co.	Paint and Painting Tools and Supplies	4/1/2023-3/31/2026
SANPAP23	Liberty Distributors Inc.	Sanitary Paper Products	1/1/2023-12/31/2025

## Expiring Statewide Contracts Tracking

(As of Dec. 19, 2024)

The following contracts are set to expire within 90 days. This information is for planning purposes and may not reflect the current status of a contract. For more information on these or other statewide contracts, please contact Buyer Supervisor Mark Atkins.

### RENEWAL IN PROCESS

DEBT23A DEBT23C DEBT23E  
DEBT23B DEBT23D

### RENEWAL REQUESTED

COMTRKRN22

### OUT FOR BID

AEBATTERY21

### EMERGENCY CONTRACT IN PROCESS

DATATRNSSE

### TO BE DETERMINED

DIGCOP22 LAR20  
EQRENT22A RECMGT22  
EPORTAL16E SYSFURN23  
FASTEN22 VOIP19

A copy of this report can also be seen by visiting the Statewide Contracts webpage or by clicking [here](#).

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Below is a list of Purchasing Division buyers assigned to specific state agencies.

BUYER	EMAIL	PHONE
<u>Supervisors</u>		
Mark Atkins	Mark.A.Atkins@wv.gov	558-2307
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