

THE BUYERS NETWORK

DECEMBER 2007 - VOL. 17, ISSUE 12

THE BUYERS NETWORK is Published Monthly by the Purchasing Division of the West Virginia Department of Administration to Promote Better Value in Public Purchasing

Lead Time Crucial for Inclusion in West Virginia Purchasing Bulletin

The **West Virginia Purchasing Bulletin** serves as the Purchasing Division's primary advertising mechanism for purchases expected to exceed \$25,000. This online listing of all bidding opportunities is available with secured access to all vendors currently registered who have paid the required annual \$125 fee.

The Bulletin is updated each Friday and made available to vendors on the Purchasing Division's web site at <http://www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/newbul.htm>. The information in this online publication includes

the requisition number; a description of the project; pre-bid conference date, time and place (if applicable); and the bid opening date and time.

When an agency has a solicitation expected to exceed \$25,000 to be processed through the Purchasing Division, it must remember that administrative processing lead time is necessary for all purchases.

To ensure the information listed in this Bulletin is complete and accurate, the Purchasing Division buyers must

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Important Information

The **West Virginia Purchasing Bulletin** is designed to encourage vendors to do business with the state. This Bulletin contains information on purchasing requirements in excess of \$25,000. A new issue of the **West Virginia Purchasing Bulletin** advertising new bidding opportunities will be posted on the Purchasing Division's website, www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase, on a weekly basis. The Bulletin is system-secured on the Internet; therefore, you will need your vendor number and check number paying the current annual fee to access the **West Virginia Purchasing Bulletin** on the Internet. To subscribe to this publication and participate in the competitive bid process, a completed Vendor Registration and Disclosure Statement (Form WV-1) and an annual fee of \$125.00 is required. The WV-1 form is available on our web site.

To obtain information on proper vendor registration procedures, contact the Purchasing Division at 2019 Washington Street, East, P.O. Box 50130, Charleston, WV 25305-0132.

Bid packages containing completed specifications may be obtained by using the following methods:

- Visit our offices at 2019 Washington Street, East, Charleston, WV.
- Call 1-304-558-2306.
- Visit our web site to download or order bid packages (see address above).
- Fax your request at 1-304-558-3970.
- Mail your request to the address listed above.

Please provide the following information for each bid package: RFQ number, State Buyer's name, complete business name and mailing address, Federal Employer's Identification Number (FEIN) and/or Social Security Number, and name and telephone number of a contact person we may call for clarification. If you have any questions concerning specifications, contact the appropriate State Buyer by calling 1-304-558-2306 or for callers within West Virginia, call our toll-free number 1-800-243-7298.

Change Made to Fixed Asset Requirement



The Purchasing Division has recently instituted a change to the fixed asset documentation requirements.

Effective immediately, all state agencies must enter into the West Virginia Financial Information Management System's Fixed Asset Module any computers with an original acquisition

cost of \$500 or more. This is a change from the previous requirement that assets costing \$1,000 or more must be documented into an agency's inventory.

This change is at the recommendation of the Legislature's Post Audit Division. This policy applies to computer equipment only. Questions regarding this change should be directed to Ken Frye, Assistant Purchasing Director of the Program Services Section, for the Purchasing Division at 304-766-2626.

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THE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Maintaining Positive Vendor Relations Vital to State Procurement

By Dave Tincher
State Purchasing Director

Continuing to enhance our business relationships with the vendor community should be an incentive to all state procurement officers. It is vital for us, as representatives of the state of West Virginia, to maintain positive vendor relations.

But, there are times when vendors with whom we enter into contracts do not meet our expectations. How do you deal with these types of situations?

Vendor performance and product quality are crucial in the state purchasing process. We have expectations, which are outlined in our specifications, and when these expectations are not met, it is our responsibility to inform the respective vendor of such inferiorities and demand action in resolving the prob-



lems found. In these cases, agency purchasing personnel are to contact the vendor in a timely manner and voice their

concerns. Complaints should be resolved expeditiously and courteously by the state agency.

One of the key points in resolving vendor performance issues is to maintain good communication between the agency and vendor. If verbal communication does not resolve the problem, the agency should put the complaint in writing to the vendor.

An article is included on page 5 in this issue of *The Buyers Network* which provides more information on the vendor performance process. You are strongly encouraged to document positive and negative feedback to the Purchasing Division, which will be considered in future purchasing transactions.

Purchasing Division Bids Farewell to Two Long-Time State Employees

The Purchasing Division said good-bye last month to two long-time employees to retirement.

In a bittersweet departure, John Johnston and Debbie Harrison were looking forward to different goals that they have set for themselves and their families during this new phase of their lives.



John Johnston

With 35 years of service, John served as a senior buyer in the Acquisition and Contract Administration Section. He was named the Department of Administration's **Employee of the Month** in July of 2004. During the past several years, he worked as the dedicated buyer for the Division of Highways.

With more than 27 years of state government service, Debbie was an



Debbie Harrison

executive assistant in the Communication and Technical Services Section. She conducted interviews, wrote articles, and took photographs for different publications produced in the division.

Their engaging personalities, sense of humor and positive attitude are missed by the Purchasing Division employees and those in state government with whom they interacted.

We wish John and Debbie the best during their retirement years.



The Purchasing Division Staff Wishes You and Your Family a Wonderful Holiday Season!

Statewide Contract Spotlight...

Imperial's Success Bedded in Quality

Imperial Bedding, Inc. opened its doors in 1969. There's a reason why this family operation is still going strong while competing with bigger regionally and nationally-owned manufacturing companies.

"Our commitment has always been to quality first," said co-owner Ronnie Rowe. "We do our best to build a durable product that will offer the utmost in comfort and once we start to sell with a retailer, we stay with them for good."

Such perseverance has paid off in another way for the Huntington-based company, which has 85 employees.

Imperial Bedding was pleased to be awarded its first statewide contract for mattresses and box springs (BEDDING07A) this past October to supply mattresses and box springs.

"I just got off the telephone with Pipestem Resort State Park," Rowe said during a recent busy day. "We've been taking orders for most of the state park lodges and we are selling many dorm mattresses for the state colleges and specialty mattresses

for hospitals and nursing homes."

As a manufacturer, Imperial Bedding sells and distributes its products through more than 400 retail dealers in seven states. Rowe credits the philosophy his mother, Evelyn Cochran, instilled when the two founded the company 39 years ago.

"She always said we'll always try to do everything a little bit better than our competitors," recalled Rowe. "If the industry standard is to make slats on a box spring three inches wide, we would make it four. We do this with all of our products."

Rowe, who now co-owns the business with his sister, said Imperial Bedding is the nation's exclusive manufacturer of Temper Coil, which the company makes from a specialty machine bought overseas. Rowe said the individual-pocketed eight inch coils offer the "utmost in comfort and durability" in the company's mattresses, which he added, are available for state agencies.

Tom Shriver, superintendent at Hawks Nest State Park, said he is glad Imperial Bedding is a statewide vendor.

"Ronnie has offered a custom design mattress for the state parks. He worked with us personally on it. He has improved the mattresses greatly over what we used to use. What we have now holds up great to the continual use we have at our lodge," Shriver said. "It's refreshing to see a West

Virginia company that provides excellent service and a superior product. I would highly recommend Imperial to anyone."

Many others seem to agree. "Business has been really good of late with many new accounts. The orders are coming at us right and left," Rowe said. "I think it speaks to the quality of our commitment to our product." For more information about Imperial Bedding, Inc., contact:

Ronnie Rowe, Co-Owner
PO Box 5347
Huntington, WV 25308-0347
304-529-3321 (office)
304-525-5317 (fax)
www.imperialbedding.com

This contract is available on the Purchasing Division's web site at: www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/swc/BEDDING07A. Prior to using any statewide contract, agencies are encouraged to check the web site for contract provisions that may apply.

*In each issue of **The Buyers Network**, the Purchasing Division will highlight one of our statewide contractors. Providing information about the company and the products offered on the statewide contract, this feature will help familiarize our agency purchasers with our business partners.*

West Virginia Code, §5A-3-5, authorizes the Purchasing Director to promulgate and adopt standard specifications based on scientific and technical data for appropriate commodities and services. *This establishes the quality to which commodities and services to be contracted for, by the state must conform. These standard specifications are used to establish statewide contracts for commodities needed on a repetitive basis. **No agency may be exempt from using statewide contracts without prior written approval from the Purchasing Director.***



Imperial Bedding, Inc. of Huntington is the statewide vendor for mattresses and box springs. The family-owned company has been in business for 39 years.

And the Survey Says...

2007 Agency Purchasing Conference Proves Beneficial

According to evaluation forms submitted by participants of the 2007 Agency Purchasing Conference conducted on October 9-12 at Stonewall Resort, this annual training event met the educational training needs of our state agency purchasers.

Based on 110 responses, 95% of the participants rated the overall conference as "excellent" or "good." The remaining 5% rated the conference as "fair."

The organization of the conference received a 98% rating of "excellent" or "good," with the remaining 2% as "fair."

"Gaining feedback after our conference is a valuable exercise," according to Purchasing Director Dave Tincher. "The opinions of our agency participants are important to us. We take their opinions seriously and utilize many of their ideas in planning future training events."

Listed below are some of the results attained from the evaluation analysis:

REGISTRATION

| | |
|----------------|-----|
| Excellent..... | 80% |
| Good..... | 19% |
| Fair..... | 1% |
| Poor..... | 0% |

ORGANIZATION

| | |
|----------------|-----|
| Excellent..... | 63% |
| Good..... | 35% |
| Fair..... | 2% |
| Poor..... | 0% |

OVERALL OPINION

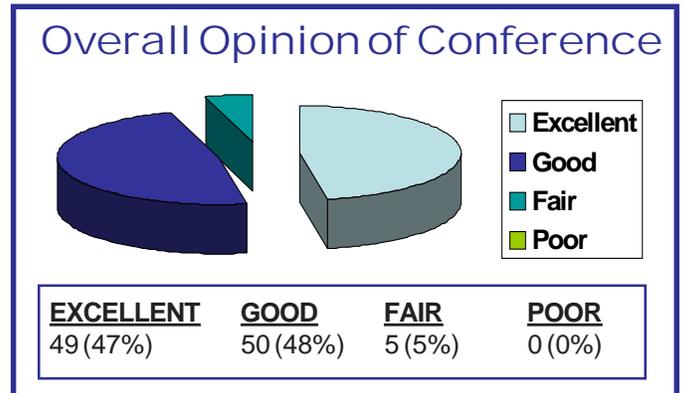
| | |
|----------------|-----|
| Excellent..... | 47% |
| Good..... | 48% |
| Fair..... | 5% |
| Poor..... | 0% |

The respondents indicated they would like to see more classes for beginners as well as more hands-on workshops.

Some of the general comments included praise for the game show format in learning at the banquet with

our own version of "Agency Feud"; the quality of the information presented in the workshops; the emphasis of the state law, rule and handbook procedures; and the helpfulness and accessibility of the Purchasing Division staff.

The Purchasing Division appreciates the feedback of this year's conference participants. Planning is beginning on the 2008 Agency Purchasing Conference. More details will be reported in this publication as they become available.



What's State Government Buying?

(This information is compiled from the West Virginia Purchasing Bulletin. The purpose is to provide an awareness of the variety of products and services being procured in state government. Only a small sample of solicitations are listed.)

- ◆ **Division of Natural Resources**
Request to provide various styles and quantities of binoculars.
- ◆ **Division of Public Transit**
Request to prepare and implement a safety, security and emergency procedure plan and conduct appropriate safety and security training.
- ◆ **Department of Education**
Request to provide an online testing platform for career and technical education end of course testing.
- ◆ **State Police**
Request to provide digital imaging and electronic document management solution.
- ◆ **Division of Highways**
Request to furnish labor, equipment and materials for tree trimming and power shearing of trees and brush.
- ◆ **Department of Environmental Protection**
Request to provide new monitoring well installation and maintenance at 14 landfills.

Unhappy with Your Vendor's Performance? What Should You Do About It?



To address complaints from state agencies regarding vendor performance, a procedure is in place which assists agency procurement officers in resolving problems experienced with the quality and delivery of commodities and services offered by vendors.

According to Section 10 (Quality Assurance) of the **West Virginia Purchasing Division Procedures Handbook**, quality assurance is a partnership involving the state agency, the vendor and the Purchasing Division. The agency establishes the quality level by the specifications and the Purchasing Division seeks to reduce cost and maintain quality through the competitive bid process.

When quality expectations are not met, the procedures below outline steps agencies should follow:

1. Review the contract for protective measure and for specific instructions, if available, on verifying or processing performance issues.



2. Contact the vendor in an attempt to verbally resolve the problem. If the customer service representative is not helpful, speak to the office manager or supervisor about the issue.
3. If verbal communication does not resolve the problem, document the attempt in writing. Send all documentation and correspondence to your agency procurement officer, who should attempt to resolve the problem in writing to the vendor.
4. Agencies should maintain the documentation made toward resolution for future reference.
5. The complaint should only be forwarded to the Purchasing Division if all attempts have failed in resolving the problem. In the case of a complaint relating to a statewide contract, the Purchasing Division may become more involved depending upon the nature of the contract.
6. If the agency cannot resolve the problem, the **Vendor Performance Form** (WV-82) should be completed, accompanied by a memorandum from the agency procurement officer addressing the issues of the complaint, what steps or actions have been made by the agency in resolving the problem, and what end result the agency hopes to realize.
7. The agency should attach a copy of the bid specifications and the purchase order to the formal complaint. Complaints received without the aforesaid information will be returned to the agency procurement officer for the appropriate documentation.

“To prevent possible problems in the future, agency purchasers need to review contract language when bid specifications are being written,” according to Karen Byrd, Assistant Purchasing Director of the Acquisition and Contract Administration Section. “It is important that agencies establish *reasonable* demands for vendors to meet and to document those demands in writing not relying on verbal agreements.”

Should a problem at the agency level become serious or repetitive, the Purchasing Division should be informed of these situations with adequate documentation as stated above. “It is not that the Purchasing Division does not want to be involved in the resolution of vendor complaints,” Byrd explains. “The initial attempts need to lie with the user, the agency, who has first-hand knowledge of the product specifications and the performance level that is not being met. The Purchasing Division is available to assist when the agency meets obstacles they cannot overcome.”

To attain the **Vendor Performance Form** (WV-82) or any other required Purchasing Division forms, please feel free to visit Appendix B of the **Purchasing Division Procedures Handbook** at: <http://www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/Handbook/2007R2/handB.htm>.

Current Statewide Contract Update

(As of November 15, 2007)

This page includes a listing of current changes made to statewide contracts issued by the Purchasing Division. Information and dates listed in this **Current Statewide Contract Update** are subject to change. All statewide contracts are available online at www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/swc. For more information, please contact Senior Buyer **JoAnn Adkins** at (304) 558-8802 or via e-mail at joadkins@wvadmin.gov.

Contracts Awarded

| <u>Contract</u> | <u>Description</u> | <u>Vendors</u> | <u>Effective Date</u> |
|---|--------------------|--|-----------------------|
| MV08 [A-G] | Motor Vehicles | [A] Bill Kelley, Inc.; [B] Country Club Chrysler; [C] General Truck Sales; [D] Glen Dale Motor Co.; [E] Matheny Motor Truck Co.; [F] Stephens Auto Center; [G] Hurricane Chevrolet | 10/22/07 |
| PC [A-C] | Police Cruisers | [A] Stephens Auto Center; [B] Hurricane Chevrolet; [C] Country Club Chrysler | 11/15/07 |
| LAN07 [A-C, DA, E-G, HA] | Local Area Network | [A] Alpha Technologies; [B] Advanced Technical Solutions; [C] Citynet LLC; [DA] Ebridge Consulting LLC; [E] Enterasys Networks Inc.; [F] Qwest Communications; [G] Pomeroy Computer Resources; [HA] Verizon Network Integration | 12/15/07 |

Contracts Under Evaluation

| <u>Contract</u> | <u>Description</u> | <u>Bid Opening</u> | <u>Under Evaluation</u> |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| SBUS08 | School Buses | 10/15/07 | Yes |
| ABATMNT08 | Asbestos Abatement | 10/22/07 | Yes |
| FOOD08 | Food Items | 10/15/07 | Yes |
| ITECH07 | Temporary Staffing IT Services | 11/07/07 | Yes |

Contracts Out for Bid

| <u>Contract</u> | <u>Description</u> | <u>Pre-Bid Meeting</u> | <u>Bid Opening</u> |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| NTIRES | New Tires | N/A | 01/02/07 |
| UNIFCOM08 | Voice, Web and Video Conferencing | N/A | 11/07/07 |
| SYMC07 | Symantec Products | N/A | 12/12/07 |
| LDPHONE08 | Long Distance Service | N/A | 12/13/07 |
| SIP08 | Server/Computer Peripherals | N/A | 12/18/07 |
| ENCRYPT08 | Encryption Services | N/A | 12/19/07 |

Contracts Renewed

| <u>Contract</u> | <u>Description</u> | <u>Vendor</u> | <u>Expiration Date</u> |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------|
| SYSFURN07 [B, C, F] | Systems Furniture | [B] Capitol Business Interior; [C] Contemporary Galleries; [F] G.F. Office Furniture | 10/31/08 |
| ITECH06 [A] | Temporary Staffing IT Services | Access Services | 08/31/08 |
| PPHONE05 | Pay Phones | Embarq | 12/31/09 |
| LIGHT07 | WV Electric Supply | Lighting; Bulbs | 01/31/09 |
| PHOTO07 | Camera Supplies | Camera Boutique | 01/31/08 |

Contracts Extended

| <u>Contract</u> | <u>Description</u> | <u>Vendor</u> | <u>Extension Date</u> |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| LDPHONE [A] | Long Distance Service | Sprint Communication | 12/31/07 |
| RSHEET05 | Reflective Sheeting | 3M Company | 12/31/07 |

Contracts Reviewed

Statewide contracts are reviewed approximately three months prior to the actual expiration date.

DECEMBER

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| INKCRT | Ribbon and Laser Toner |
| LIGHT | Lighting; Bulbs |
| PAINT | Paint and Supplies |
| PHOTO | Photography Supplies and Film |

JANUARY

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| CEREAL | Breakfast Foods |
| CLRM | Classroom Furniture |
| CPIPE | Corrugated Pipe |
| CRENTAL | Car Rental Services |
| DFS | Disposable Food Supplies |
| ERCYCL07 | Recycling of Electronic Equipment |
| SANPAP | Sanitary Paper Supplies |
| TRAVEL | Travel Management Services |

PURCHASING CONNECTION

SYSFURN07 Statewide Contract Details Outlined



Furniture systems are among the most frequently purchased items by state agencies. Under the statewide contract, SYSFURN07, furniture systems include filing cabinets, desks, bookcases, chairs, and tables.

Procurement officers are advised to thoroughly review the SYSFURN07 contract when the need arises to obtain items and/or the design and reconfiguration services offered by one of nine vendors servicing this contract.

Once specifications are established and agreed upon, the contract states that “the contractor shall provide all labor and material necessary for a complete installation as shown on the floor plan attached to the specifications. This includes such work as leveling, installing accessories, alignment, wiring (if required), etc. Data and phone wiring will be the responsibility of the agency.”

According to statewide contract senior buyer JoAnn Adkins, vendors typically do not charge a design fee. “The SYSFURN07 contract allows for the vendor to charge a fee if asked for design assistance. As noted in the contract, the vendor’s design fee is limited to \$30 an hour with a \$500 maximum per project and it is to be reviewed and accepted by the using agency,” she said. “But I have found it’s common that vendors do not charge, which of course is a good arrangement.” Once a project is completed, an acceptance inspection of the installation will be performed when specified by the agency or by an agency’s representative. For more information about SYSFURN07, contact JoAnn Adkins at joadkins@wvadmin.gov or 304-558-8802.

Purchasing Bulletin Continued from Page 1

be offered sufficient time to perform a complete review of each **Purchasing Requisition** (WV-35) received prior to submission to the Bulletin.

This review ensures the specifications contained are in accordance with state law, rule and procedure. The buyer’s availability to review new requisition information is contingent upon work already received or in progress. It takes time to thoroughly review proposed bid information.

State agency representatives are encouraged to provide as much lead time as possible for the Purchasing Division buyer to prepare for the

requisition to be included in the **West Virginia Purchasing Bulletin**.

Although accuracy always prevails over speed, the Purchasing Division is committed to processing all transactions in an expeditious manner. But, it is imperative to allow sufficient time for the buyer to perform a thorough review prior to beginning the advertising process. It saves time in the long run.

For additional information, contact your agency’s assigned buyer within the Purchasing Division. For a complete listing of agency assigned buyers, visit <http://www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/byrassign.pdf>.

Helpful Additions Made to Purchasing Division’s Web Site

The Purchasing Division strives to keep our web site interesting to our customers, by adding new information, such as statewide contracts; this monthly online publication, **The Buyers Network**; and bids opened most often daily.

One of our online features gaining attention is the web page for Contract with Piggyback Provisions, found at <http://www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/piggyback/default.htm>. In addition to statewide contracts issued by the Purchasing Division, other contracts exist which contain provisions allowing agencies and political subdivisions to piggyback. This page lists all approved contracts available for piggybacking for agencies’ review.

Another helpful tool has been added to the Bid Opening Index at <http://www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/bids/default.html>, which provides a central area for all bids received and opened for solicitations since June of 2006. Although this addition was a notable step forward in customer service as well as being an open-government initiative, there was one setback. Online visitors had difficulty finding certain bids when the bid opening date was unknown.

Since most visitors to this site did not have the requisition number, a search box was added, to enabling them to search by request for quotation (RFQ) number. Now customers have two ways to find bids in which they are interested: by clicking the bid opening date or by entering a specific RFQ number in the search box.

The Purchasing Division welcomes any suggestions for improvement to our web site. Simply submit them to our Technical Services Manager Dan Miller at dmiller@wvadmin.gov.

Questions?...Just Ask Us!

Are you unsure of certain purchasing procedures? Do you need information on the current state travel regulations? Do you have a question regarding travel requests? Would you want to know what surplus property is available?

If you need additional information concerning any function within the Purchasing Division, complete the form below and return to the address below. You also may forward your request via e-mail.

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2019 Washington Street, East
P.O. Box 50130
Charleston, WV 25305-0130
E-Mail Address: dholley@wvadmin.gov



Name _____
Organization _____
Address _____
Telephone Number _____
E-Mail Address _____
Need Information about _____

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