

THE BUYERS NETWORK

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

Purchasing Division Plans 'OPEN HOUSE' to Showcase its Staff and Services to Agencies

The Purchasing Division is pleased to announce its plans for an **OPEN HOUSE** on Tuesday, May 6, 2008 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The purpose of this event is to introduce the purchasing personnel within the state agencies to the many new faces at the Purchasing Division. In addition, this event will provide an outlet for agency personnel to learn more about the additional and enhanced responsibilities within the Purchasing Division, including such initiatives as contract management, inspection and training.

To provide a relaxed atmosphere, there will not be a structured program during the day in order to allow

for flexibility in networking and information gathering. An Information Center will be established to assist agency personnel who attend.

Tours of our facility will be available, but more importantly, Purchasing Director Dave Tincher, along with our entire staff, will be available to discuss specific purchases that are either being prepared or currently in progress.

In addition, informational stations will be set up to discuss or demonstrate services that are available through the Purchasing Division. Some of the stations will target technology/Web site, training and inspections.

Additionally, printed materials relating to various aspects of the operation will be available for agency purchasing personnel to use for reference purposes. Refreshments will be also served.

Mark your calendars today for our first-ever **OPEN HOUSE**! Additional details on this event will be forthcoming.

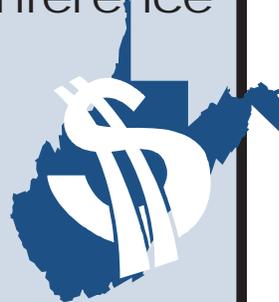


2008 Agency Purchasing Conference

**October 14-17, 2008
Canaan Valley Resort**

Turn to page 4 of this issue of *The Buyers Network* to provide us with YOUR input on this year's conference. This conference survey will assist us in our planning efforts.

Additional information will be forthcoming. Registration is expected to begin July 1, 2008. For suggestions or questions related to the 2008 agency purchasing conference, please contact Brian Holmes at (304) 558-7022 (Brian.J.Holmes@wv.gov), or Diane Holley at (304) 558-0661 (Diane.M.Holley@wv.gov).



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THE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Reaching Out to Better Assist State Agencies

By Dave Tincher
State Purchasing Director

Each and every day, the staff of the Purchasing Division has one primary goal: To get the job done as quickly as possible, and to get it done right. Because of the volume of work that is processed on a daily basis, we may not always take the time to stop and ask our customers, "Is there anything that we can do to better serve you?"

Our annual Agency Purchasing Conference is an excellent time for this type of dialogue because our staff, along with the agency procurement personnel, are together off-site with limited interruptions. Our 2008 conference is scheduled for October 14-17 at Canaan Valley

Resort. At this training event, conversations can flow more freely. We truly value this opportunity.

But the communication between the Purchasing Division and the state agencies need to be on-going throughout the year. Our assigned buyers are your agency's point of contact for not only processing the requisitions or change orders, but to share any ideas or suggestions that you may have to enhance the state purchasing process.

It is difficult since *our business* has established statutory and regulatory boundaries, but it is important to remember why those boundaries exist. We are spending our state taxpayers' money; therefore, they entrust us to do our jobs ethically and efficiently.

In an attempt to reach out to our customers, we are planning an **OPEN**



HOUSE for all agency procurement officers and their support staff on Tuesday, May 6 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Purchasing Division's office at 2019 Washington Street East in Charleston.

I will be joined by our entire staff to explain not only our programs and services, but to sit down individually with the agency procurement personnel to discuss more specific issues relating to your requisitions that are being processed. I encourage you and your staff to join us at our **OPEN HOUSE**.

We will continue to work with our agency partners in enhancing our purchasing procedures and practices to better serve state operations and, thus, the citizens of West Virginia.

Procurement Officer Profile...

Nancy Swecker Shares the Changes and Challenges Experienced throughout the Years at Division of Corrections

Since her beginnings in state government in 1976 with what was then the Department of Public Institutions, Nancy Swecker has seen great changes. Among the most significant, she said, was the increase in the spending limits imposed on agencies in processing small dollar purchases.

Changes in years subsequent, such as the changing the **West Virginia Code** in 2006 to allow agencies spending authority up to \$25,000 before going through the formal bid process within the Purchasing Division, have improved the job of procurement at the agency level, she said.

"Obviously the state of West Virginia has come a long way, and it needed to, but that was over a long period of time," Swecker said.

The director of administration for the Division of Corrections since 1989, Swecker said certain purchasing issues are often unique to the Division of Corrections because its facilities are not only scattered across the state, but they often have special concerns due to the nature of their operations.

"We basically run little towns and cities," she said, citing the Northern Correctional Facility as an example. A maximum security facility housing approximately 253 male inmates, the center has its own water plant, waste treatment, infirmary and educational operation.



Nancy Swecker
Division of Corrections

Continued on Page 7

Express Personnel Actively Assists State Agencies in Providing Temporary Workers

Express Personnel, a national temporary staffing agency with its West Virginia office located in South Charleston, is one of six vendors currently offering state agencies with temporary workers through a statewide contract (**TEMP07**).

This contract requires state agencies to initially contact the West Virginia Association of Rehabilitative Services (WVARF) for all temporary service needs before utilizing this contract. Jobs that WVARF are unable to fulfill are then filled through this statewide contract.

These positions include Accounting Technician 2; Administrative Services Assistant 1; Administrative Services Assistant 2; Custodian; Data Entry Operator; Executive Secretary; Groundskeeper; Laboratory Assistant; Laborer; Office Assistant 3; Office Assistant 2; Mail Runner; Paralegal;

and Word Processor.

Tom Wirts, the owner and general manager of the South Charleston Express Personnel, said their contract (**TEMP07B**) is their second that his company has had with the state of West Virginia. "We were involved in the temporary contract in 2003, but with this new contract, we work with many more state departments," Wirts said.

He added that while **TEMP07B** covers a wide variety of positions, Express Personnel most often fills office clerical positions, as well as general labor and landscaping help.

Some of those clerical positions have been placed in the State Tax Department, where they have earned high marks from Accounting Tech Donna Simpkins. "Of all the temp agencies I've worked with, Express have been the best for us," she said.

Express Personnel is a privately owned staffing company, founded in 1983 and franchised in 1985, with more than 600 offices nationwide. The South Charleston location is their West Virginia headquarters.

In jobs ranging from data entry to mail runner, the professionalism of the temporary employees from Express Personnel have led some to be hired for full-time positions, Simpkins said. "They do a great job of screening their workers," she said.

In addition, since Express Personnel accepts the State Purchasing Card, payment can be processed the same day that the agency receives an invoice. Express e-mails a receipt for payment on the same day.

Continued on Page 5

*In each issue of **The Buyers Network**, one of our statewide contractors will be highlighted. Providing details 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.**



Express Personnel in South Charleston is one of six vendors who fill employment positions through the statewide contract for temporary personnel (**TEMP07**). Pictured (l-r) are Staffing Consultants Ethan Davis and Becky McCord; Lead Staffing Consultant Wendy Hutchinson; Owner/General Manager Tom Wirts; and Front Desk Coordinator Amanda Newcomb.

2008 Agency Purchasing Conference

QUESTIONNAIRE



The **2008 Agency Purchasing Conference** is scheduled for October 14–17 at Canaan Valley Resort in Davis, West Virginia. Your input is important to the success of the training conferences offered by the Purchasing Division. Suggestions provided in response of this questionnaire will help us improve this annual training event. The questionnaire may be submitted electronically by visiting <http://www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/Conference/Agency/2008/survey.htm>. Or, you may wish to fax or email this questionnaire to the attention of Training Coordinator Brian Holmes, no later than April 30, 2008, at brian.j.holmes@wv.gov or FAX (304) 558-6026.

1. Would you be interested in attending classes in a track format geared towards your current knowledge of purchasing rules and procedures? Yes No

If yes, please provide suggestions _____

2. Do you prefer workshops that are broken into small workshop groups or larger group sessions?

Small Workshop Groups Group Sessions Combination of Both

3. Is one hour sufficient time to hold a workshop? Yes No

If no, please provide a suggested duration: _____

4. If you have attended previous conferences, please share your likes and dislikes of the classes and events held. Please provide suggestions for improvements: _____

5. Which topics would you like addressed at the conference?

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assigned Agency-Buyer Meeting | <input type="checkbox"/> Agency Delegated Purchasing | <input type="checkbox"/> Basic Fundamentals of Purchasing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Change Order Process | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction Purchases | <input type="checkbox"/> Contract Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Correctional Industries | <input type="checkbox"/> Fixed Assets/Inventory | <input type="checkbox"/> Fleet Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Agency Meeting | <input type="checkbox"/> Inspection Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Issues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Legislative Changes | <input type="checkbox"/> Negotiation | <input type="checkbox"/> Payment Process |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Piggybacking Contracts | <input type="checkbox"/> Purchase Order Encumbrance | <input type="checkbox"/> Prevailing Wage Rates |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preventing Protests | <input type="checkbox"/> Purchasing Game Show | <input type="checkbox"/> Purchasing Website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Requests for Proposal | <input type="checkbox"/> Requests for Quotation | <input type="checkbox"/> Sole Source Process |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Statewide Contracts | <input type="checkbox"/> State Use Program | <input type="checkbox"/> Surplus Property Program |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Technical Contracts | <input type="checkbox"/> Vendor Registration | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing Specifications |

6. What other topics would you like to see addressed at this year's conference? _____

7. Would YOUR agency like a special session at our conference to discuss specific issues related to your organization? Yes No

If yes, list the state agency and the appropriate contact information: _____

8. Other comments: _____

Thank you for your cooperation with our professional development efforts!

Stipulations Established When Requesting Professional Assistance in Designing Projects for Your Agency

Because state agency procurement personnel do not have the expertise in all areas within their organization, it is often necessary to solicit the services of external businesses to perform design services for a particular project. This need is frequently justified in order to gain the knowledge and experience to prepare the specifications that will provide the expected outcomes.

The **West Virginia Purchasing Division Procedures Handbook** details special procedures, such as soliciting design services or consultants, in Section 8 (Special Acquisitions). As noted:

8.4 Design Services or Consultant:

Any individual, corporation, or firm (except as provided by a statewide contract) paid to custom design or write specifications for a modular office system, computer system, construction or any other project or contract shall not be permitted to competitively bid to provide the product or service that was designed. This removes the possibility of the designer developing specifications that only the designer can meet or restrict another vendor from meeting. This also prevents the appearance of any impropriety, thereby protecting the integrity of the competitive bid process.

Agencies may call vendors for information or copies of specifications for consideration of a particular brand or manufacturer without jeopardizing the vendor's ability to compete in the bid process as long as the vendor does not receive compensation or any form of favoritism.

The Purchasing Division realizes the need for requesting information

from the business community and does not attempt to limit access to the "experts" in the specific area of the agency's project. However, to avoid offering an unfair advantage to a vendor, this restriction allows for an "even playing field" for all businesses who may wish to compete for the project.

The **West Virginia Code** §5A-3-3 (10) addresses the importance of providing all vendors with an equal opportunity for state business:

5A-3-3 Powers and duties of director of purchasing.

(10) Assure that the specifications and commodity descriptions in all requests for quotations are prepared so as to permit all potential suppliers-vendors who can meet the requirements of the state an opportunity to bid and to assure that the specifications and descriptions do not favor a particular brand or vendor. If the director determines that any such specifications or descriptions as written favor a particular brand or vendor or if it is decided, either before or after the bids are opened, that a commodity having different specifications or quality or in different quantity can be bought, the director may rewrite the requests for quotations and the matter shall be rebid.

Should an agency have questions regarding this procedure, the first point of contact is their own procurement officer within their agency. Agency procurement officers who need clarification should communicate their concerns or questions to their assigned senior buyer within the Purchasing Division.

Vendor Spotlight

Continued from Page 3

It is in the services, such as these, that makes Express a pleasure to work with, Simpkins said. "They have a wonderful staff," she said. "They're very friendly. They are wonderful to work with and are very efficient."

That is the goal of Wirts and the six employees which make up the team at Express Personnel in West Virginia. "We have a personal approach," Wirts said. "We believe we must personally get to know each client and each associate to enable us to make the best matches. Our goal is to help good people find good jobs and to help good companies find good people."

Express Personnel's commitment to its mission has led the

West Virginia office to be recognized as a "Circle of Excellence" office by the national headquarters the last three years.

For additional information or if you have questions concerning the services offered by Express Personnel under this statewide contract, please contact:

Tom Wirts
Owner/general manager
Express Personnel
47 RHL Blvd.
South Charleston, WV

(304) 746-8888

This contract is available on the purchasing Web site at:

<http://www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/SWC/TEMP07.pdf>



Current Statewide Contract Update

(As of March 15, 2008)

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 <http://www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/swc>. For more information, please contact Senior Buyer **Jo Ann Adkins** at (304) 558-8802 or via e-mail at Jo.A.Adkins@wv.gov.

Contracts Awarded

<u>Contract</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Vendors</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
WAN08 [A-C]	Wide Area Network Hardware and Software	[A] Advanced Technical Solutions; [B] Alpha Technologies; [C] Verizon Network Integration	04/01/08
CLRM08	Classroom Furniture	Tom Sexton & Assoc.	04/01/08
CEREAL08 [A-B]	Breakfasts Foods, Cereal	[A] AF Wendling; [B] US FoodService	04/01/08
ITECH07 [A-AC]	IT Technical Support	Various Vendors	03/01/08
MOTL08 [A-ZZ]	Hotel/Motel Accommodations	Various Vendors	01/01/08

Contracts for Bid

<u>Contract</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Pre-Bid Meeting</u>	<u>Bid Opening</u>
CRENTAL08	Car Rentals	---	04/11/08

Contracts Under Evaluation

<u>Contract</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Bid Opening</u>	<u>Under Evaluation</u>
SIP2008	Servers and PC Peripherals	03/20/08	Yes
DFS08	Disposable Food Items	02/26/08	Yes
CRENTAL08	Car Rentals	04/11/08	Yes

Contracts Extended

<u>Contract</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Extension Date</u>
DIGCOP04 [C-I]	Copiers	[C] Komax Business Systems; [I] OCE Imagistics	06/30/08
CPIPE05 [A-B]	Corrugated Metal Pipe	Contech Construction Products	06/30/08

Contracts Renewed

<u>Contract</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Expiration Date</u>
TCARD06	Travel Credit Card	United Bank	12/31/08
ITECH06 [H]	IT Technical Support	Dell Marketing	08/31/08
OFFICE07	Office Supplies	Office Max Inc.	02/28/09

Miscellaneous Action

<u>Contract</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Comment</u>
MA05SW08	Master Agreement	Oracle Corp.	Add instructions and global price list
WAN04	Wide Area Network Hardware and Software	Verizon Network Integration	Add current price
LAWN06	Lawn Maintenance Equipment	Crede Tractor Sales	Add corrected price list
CANLINE07	Can Liners	Winans Sanitary Supplies	Add written specifications
CPHONE07B	Cellular Telephone	AT&T Mobility	Remove page 11 from change order
RECMGT07	Records Management	Archive Services	Remove \$3,500; PCard language
SAFETY07	Safety Products	Discount Industrial	Add price list
DIGCOP04H	Copiers	Xerox Corp.	Add price list
ENTRZ05	Software	Software House Int'l	Update price list
SELECT07	Software	Software House Int'l	Update price list
FOOD08 [A-B]	Food	AF Wendling US FoodService	Provide clarification
PAPER06B	Paper	Unisource	Update price list

Contracts Reviewed

Statewide contracts are reviewed approximately three months prior to the actual expiration date. During this review process, the state buyer examines the specifications and the products included in each contract.

APRIL

CANLINE Plastic Trash Can Liners
ENTPRZ Microsoft Enterprise Produces
FRMTIRE Farm and Backhoe Tires

MAY

DATA Data Circuits
DIGCOP Digital Copiers
FUEL Motor and Heating Fuel
MA03SW ESRI Master Agreement
RECMGT Records Management Services
RSHEET Reflective Sheeting
SELECT Microsoft Products
SUPFOOD Supplemental Liquid Food Items
WELD Welding Supplies

Agency Procurement Officer

Continued from Page 2

Because of the specialized needs within a correctional facility, Swecker said other operational aspects are outsourced. "Corrections' expertise is in security, custody and classification of inmates," she said. "While we are trying to run a food service operation and a medical operation, we have found it best to outsource those to the professionals that have both a corrections and a service expertise."

The Division of Corrections has an annual budget of \$150 million, with about \$70 million spent on personal services, Swecker said. Operations include two work release centers, a treatment center, a youth offender center, a corrections academy at Parchment Valley and nine other facilities.

Because of the great diversity of the facilities, as well as their statewide presence, Swecker said procurement responsibility often lies at the facility level. Swecker said the business managers at the large facilities can approve purchases up to \$25,000. Beyond that, Swecker said she typically becomes part of the process. "I may be involved in developing specifications, in sending out requests for quotations (RFQs), and in reviewing bids for awards," she said. "I have to approve that final RFQ or requests for proposals (RFPs) that goes to the Purchasing Division as the procurement officer for the agency."

All procurement agents in the Division of Corrections are required to attend the annual purchasing conference to learn rule and code, but Swecker said the other training is almost on-the-job. "In running a correctional system, there are so many unique things that occur that you cannot even train for," she said.

Swecker said keeping the lines of

communication open is important. By maintaining close contact with the facilities, coping with the unique circumstances of a corrections system is often simplified. "They understand the basic rules, and they do a great job," she said.

But it is also those unique qualities that also make working in the Division of Corrections interesting, Swecker said. For example, the process of renovation, often already complicated, is compounded.

"When we do an expansion or renovation within our facilities, we have to be able to manage a current inmate population and keep our construction contractors coming in and out of our facility," she said. "You do not build the same at Huttonsville as you do at the Capitol."

As she prepares for retirement in June, Swecker said her work experience has been an invaluable one, a hands-on education. "I've learned so much in the Division of Corrections," she said.

MoneyWise...

Tips for the Thrifty

Debit Card Overdraft Costs Rise

As more people use debit cards to buy everything from gas to groceries, some are making mistakes and overdrawing their accounts. Many banks are charging high fees for the oversight.

The small-dollar transactions sometimes cost more than the debit. Research by the Center for Responsible Lending says the average fee for overdrawing a debit or checking account has reached a record high of \$27.40.

On average, for each dollar overdrawn on a debit card today, it will cost a customer more than \$2 in fees, the center found. According to Bankrate.com, a \$27.50 fee for a debit to buy a \$3 drink doesn't make sense. A suggestion: carry some cash.

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.)

- ◆ **Office of Technology**
Request to provide email archiving.
- ◆ **Department of Health and Human Resources**
Request to provide basic pharmacy services and supplies for residents of WVDHHR state-owned (LTC) facilities.
- ◆ **Department of Environmental Protection**
Request to provide an expression of interest for design engineering services for the Roaring Creek #4 / Morgan Run PA #2 projects in Preston County.
- ◆ **Department of Education**
Request to provide pre-field or post-field test alignment study of 21st century content standards and objectives and Westest 2 assessments.
- ◆ **All State Agencies**
Request to provide a statewide contract for servers and personal computer peripherals.

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.

Diane Holley, Assistant Director
Communication and Technical Services Section
West Virginia Purchasing Division
State Capitol Complex
2019 Washington Street, East
P.O. Box 50130
Charleston, WV 25305-0130
E-Mail Address: Diane.M.Holley@wv.gov



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

In This Issue... Did You Read About?

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