

THE BUYERS NETWORK

JUNE 2008 - VOL. 18, ISSUE 6

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

New Orleans Buyers Provide Valuable Insight into Preparing for Emergency Purchases in our State

Krista Ferrell, a senior buyer for the Acquisition and Contract Administration Section of the Purchasing Division, said that attending a workshop on *Emergency Response Purchasing* during the National Association of State Procurement Officers (NASPO) Southern Regional Conference may contain some insightful information.

What was even more revealing and helpful, especially in her role as the Purchasing Division's *point of contact* for the Department of Administration's Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), was listening to the presenters who dealt first-hand with purchasing issues through the Hurricane Katrina disaster of 2005.

"I went to this meeting thinking it was going to be about emergency equipment purchases like ambulances," Ferrell recalled. "When the Louisiana officials started talking about their purchasing experiences during Hurricane Katrina, I had no idea just how difficult the process could be in a disaster. It was really eye-opening to hear how other state workers deal with emergency situations."

Of the many crucial purchasing dilemmas during the Katrina disaster was New Orleans state procurement office's inability to

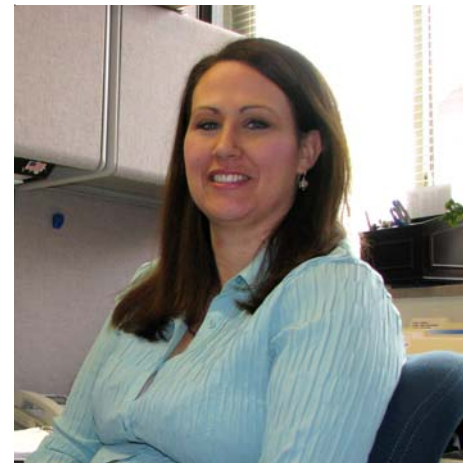
make immediate emergency purchases.

"There were many offices that could not place orders because they were without power for several days. And in other instances, procurement officials took off from their jobs to help family or friends get evacuated," Ferrell said. "In an emergency, everyone looks to the purchasing agency and those New Orleans workers during Katrina were critical in getting the goods and services needed for the clean up and recovery."

Even when emergency purchases were secured during Katrina, Ferrell said, delivery of those goods were delayed because of the hurricane's destructions. "It showed us how there can be so many pieces to the puzzle when something like this happens," she said.

For New Orleans, Ferrell said, purchasing officers from other states volunteered to place orders because the procurement duties were so overwhelming. "Listening to this session made me see emergency purchasing in a whole different light," Ferrell said. "It makes you realize how important it is to know what is in place now to be ready for a disaster."

Though West Virginia is not prone



Krista Ferrell, senior buyer at the Purchasing Division, learned a great deal about emergency purchasing after listening to those directly involved with purchasing issues during the Hurricane Katrina disaster of 2006.

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THE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Purchasing Division's Open House Enhances Positive Relationships

By Dave Tincher
State Purchasing Director

The Purchasing Division staff was pleased to open our doors to all of our agency procurement agents on May 6 during our Open House. More than 90 state agency personnel attended during the four-hour event to visit with me and my staff, particularly the buyers and inspectors as well as representatives of the programs which we administer, including Fixed Assets/State Inventory, Fleet Management, Travel Management and Surplus Property.

We also showcased our upcoming online training program relating to vendor registration. This event was everything that we hoped it would be. With an excellent turnout of agency procurement officers, it allowed our staff to build upon the positive lines of communication we have developed. There is nothing more effective than

face-to-face communication.

Many of those individuals who openly expressed their satisfaction in our Open House. I'd like to share a couple of their comments:



"As we all realize, it is so easy and convenient to use e-mail to communicate and we can lose sight of the 'personal' touch of communication and customer service. This Open House reaffirmed the Purchasing Division's commitment to a winning combination of both professional and 'personal' customer service."

Nancy Swecker
Division of Corrections

"Molly George and I are working on the education rooms for the renovated state museum. We went there hoping to meet people in the Purchasing Division that we would be working with in the future. We also wanted to get a sense of what



Janice Boggs, manager of the Fleet Management Office, chats with Mary Blashford of the state School Board Authority.

was on the state contract and how the process worked. I had no idea that we would leave your offices that day with a plan and dates for some purchasing-related activities. We definitely are off to a good start having had the benefit of coordinating our goals with the right person who will keep us informed and on track."

Nancy Herholdt
Division of Culture and History

I was pleased with the positive feedback that we received after this event. Due to its success, I hope to make this not only an annual event, but to grow upon this type of interaction and offer more activities in the near future. I extend my greatest appreciation in your dedication and proficiency in your role in public procurement.



Dan Miller, second from right, Manager of the Purchasing Division's Technical Services Unit, and assistant Erika Vance, far right, discuss the new online vendor registration training program with, from left, John Smolder of the Finance Division, Debbie Morgan and Tammy Cogar, both of WORKFORCE.



Taking a few moments to visit during the Purchasing Division Open House are, from left, Bev Midkiff, Diana Johnson, Cathy Appleton and Pam Hodges, all of the Regional Jail Authority.

Nothing 'Cryptic' about System Design Group's Desire to Serve State Agencies

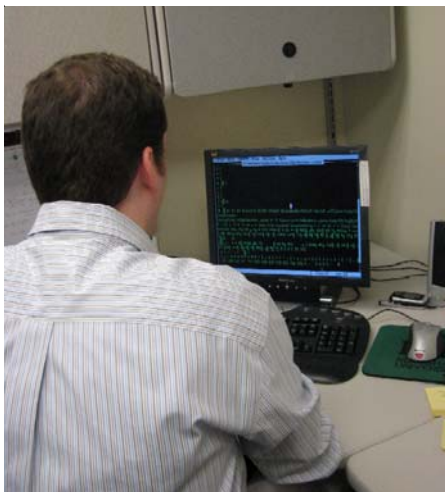
When it comes to the technological needs of state agencies, having the



proper programs and products in place is only half the equation. The other half of making technology operate effectively and efficiently is having reliable resources to make the products and programs operate at maximum capacity.

Systems Design Group Inc. is one of the companies providing the state technological expertise. Not only is this company the sole vendor on the statewide contract for technological encryption services (**ENCRYPT08**), but is also a vendor on the statewide contract for technical personnel support (**ITECH07**).

"We look not to be a 'provider' or 'reseller' to our clients, but more of a strategic advisor and trusted business partner," said Mike Neal,



Systems Design Group Inc., the sole vendor for providing encryption solutions for state agencies and political subdivisions on the statewide contract for encryption services, also serves as a vendor in providing technical services and support on the statewide contract for temporary IT personnel.

account manager for Systems Design Group.

"With this type of relationship, we want our clients, like the state of West Virginia, to feel that they can look to us for anything from solid advice to the most complex of security projects."

Encryption is certainly one of those complex security projects. Systems Design Group, founded in 1991, has 28 full-time employees and holds the software license contract for Check Point Pointsec, which is the state's standard program for full disk encryption. Neal said ensuring the program is always performing as specified, particularly with constantly-changing face of technology, is System Design's challenge.

"Our company overall maintains security certification and partner status with many of the leading security vendors in the marketplace, such as Check Point, Symantec, Cisco, and Microsoft among many others," he said. "Our professionals hold the highest of sales and technical certifications from these vendors and through independent certification groups. We provide both solutions and services around all areas of information security, risk management."

Jim Richards, Chief Security Officer of the Office of Information Security and Compliance at the Office of Technology, is pleased with the vendor's goal of offering valued service and insight.

"Systems Design Group has provided West Virginia with some interesting learning opportunities this year," Richards said. "The Office of Technology is currently launching the roll-out of hard drive encryption

to all laptop computers in the Executive Branch. Systems Design Group is a key partner in establishing the value of encryption from those who would have malicious intent."

Systems Design Group will conduct two seminars on August 7 and November 6 in Charleston for the information technology community to raise awareness about important information security issues. Neal said the seminars will address some of the most important topics in information security facing decision makers every day.

For more information about the company and the seminars, contact:

Mike Neal, Account Manager
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501 Darby Creek Road, Suite #9
Lexington, Kentucky 40509

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mneal@sdgsecure.com
www.sdgsecure.com

*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.***

Procurement Officer Profile... Philip Uy Keeps Unique Education Purchases Organized and Accurate

Things seem to work a little differently in the Department of Education, said Philip Uy, assistant director in the department's Office of Internal Operations. As the principle procurement officer, he said that typical purchases made by the department are rarely things that can be simply inventoried.

"One of the first things I noticed is that we do not buy a lot of tangible items," he said. "We don't buy gravel like the Department of Highways or a lot of pencils and paper. We tend to be buying services, and acquiring services is often difficult."

Those type of services are often consulting services on best educational practices, and training and professional development.

2008 Agency Purchasing Conference



The 2008 Agency Purchasing Conference is scheduled for Oct. 14-17, at Canaan Valley Resort and Conference Center in Davis, West Virginia.

Information on lodging, classes and events is expected to be available by July 1, the anticipated date for registration to begin.

For more information or suggestions on this year's 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).

However, those services are rarely repetitive. While it often falls into the purchasing exemptions on training, there are times when it still creates some challenge and confusion within the rules. As a result, it often means continually preparing new specifications for purchases from year to year, and ensuring that they are prepared in a way to encourage competitive bidding.

Uy came to the public procurement arena from an accounting background, following work with a Charleston accounting firm. He said that "everyone has a bit of an education background," but he prefers to leave most things to the experts. "I try not to be an obstructionist in my role as procurement officer. I try to let everyone work their magic because they read the material and they do the research," he said. "I worry more about the process."

With the structure of the state's educational system placing principle control of schools in the hands of the individual county boards of education, Uy said the Department of Education provides little direction in providing the services except for juveniles in state correctional facilities.

Although most of the purchases made by this agency are for services, the Department of Education recently released a solicitation for graphing calculators for students to use in taking the SAT. Uy calls it a rare yet pleasant circumstance for the department. "The easy ones are the tangible items," he said.

Since the Department of Education procurements are so often for



Philip Uy
Department of Education

specific service-based items within a very specialized market, Uy said there are frequently times where there will only be one bidder who can meet the specifications.

"That says to me 'We have taken it to the marketplace, and the marketplace has spoken,'" he said.

Uy was part of the Purchasing Reform committee that was instrumental in the State Legislature enacting various changes, including the increased agency delegated limit to \$25,000. He said he can understand the desire for the change, even though his own opinions run in the opposite direction. "Although I tend to be more on the conservative side, it was probably a change for the better," he said.

But the Department of Education has kept the \$10,000 limit to begin the sealed bid process, to mimic the bid process in purchasing, Uy said. Ultimately, Uy said, the purchasing process is about openness to the expertise of those around you.

"To be a good procurement officer in an agency, I think you have to be a good translator," he said. "The key is working with people who understand technical talk, and then with the Purchasing Division staff, who understands the process."

Purchasing Division Welcomes Mark Totten to Technical Staff

The Purchasing Division is pleased to welcome its newest employee, Mark Totten, who serves in the Communication and Technical Services Division as Information Systems Specialist I.

Totten is responsible for assisting the Purchasing Division with the operation of various databases used by the division's employees. This includes the TEAM and ReqTrak program. Totten also assists with the technical side of the weekly Purchasing Bulletin and performs various Web site updates along with other technical support for Purchasing Division employees.

A Belle resident, Totten most recently was one of the "founding" employees at the University of Charleston School of Pharmacy and put together the groundwork for the technology program. While there, Totten primarily managed a laptop leasing program for 160 pharmacy doctorate students and provided all levels of technology support for their machines.

Totten graduated from DuPont High School and received a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Marshall University, majoring in Management of Information Systems. He is currently pursuing a Master's degree at Marshall University Graduate College in South Charleston.



Mark Totten joins the Technical Services Unit under the Communication and Technical Services Section of the Purchasing Division.

Clarification Made Affecting Contract Management

The contract management function was established by the Purchasing Division during its initiatives in 2006. Its purpose was to review contracts to ensure that specific project benchmarks were met and to monitor the proper execution of the contract. Certain stipulations are outlined for contracts below and above \$1 million, with exceptions made for government construction contracts which are exempt by law.

These contract management stipulations are set in law, pursuant to **West Virginia Code §5A-3-9** and **CSR 148-1-7.13**, and went into effect for contracts awarded on or after July 1, 2007. One provision of the contract management program is that the agency is required to send monitoring, activity and status reports for contracts over \$1 million to the Purchasing Division no less frequently than every other month until the contract is closed out with final acceptance.

For certain contracts, a clarification was recently set forth by the Purchasing Division. While the Legislative Rule covers both commodity and service contracts, if the contracts are for commodities and there have been no further purchases or contractually required actions for either party during the reporting period, the agency may submit the signed and dated reports with a notation of "No Activity." Agencies must continue to send reports as scheduled, even if "no activity" needs to be cited again.

For questions or additional information about contract management, contact Mike Sheets, contract manager at the Purchasing Division at w.michael.sheets@wv.gov or at (304) 558-5780.

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.)*

- ◆ **Department of Administration**
Request to provide telephone help line and mailing services for the West Virginia Children's Program
- ◆ **Department of Health**
Request to provide psychological consulting services to the Bureau for Medical Services.
- ◆ **Department of Environmental Protection**
Request to an expression of interest for the design engineering services for the Jacobs Fork Complex in McDowell County.
- ◆ **Department of Education**
Request to conduct a research study to determine the characteristics for students with disabilities.

Current Statewide Contract Update

(As of May 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>
ITECH07N	Technical Support	EMC Corp.	03/01/08
SIP2008 [A-E]	Computers and Peripherals	[A] Advizex Technologies; [B] CDW Government; [C] NCompass Networks; [D] Pomeroy Computer Resources; [E] Software Information Systems	05/01/08
CRENTAL08	Car Rental	Enterprise Rent-A-Car	04/01/08

Contracts Out for Bid

<u>Contract</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Pre-Bid Meeting</u>	<u>Bid Opening</u>
MOVE08	Moving Services	05/08/08	06/10/08
ENTPRZ08	Microsoft Enterprise Products	---	06/30/08
SANPAP08	Sanitary Paper Supplies	---	05/21/08
OIL08	Oil, Lubricants and Grease	---	06/17/08

Contracts Extended

<u>Contract</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Extension Date</u>
IP06	Information	Lenovo	06/30/08
DIGCOP04 [C, E, G, I]	Digital Copiers	[C] Komax Business Systems; [E] IKON Office Solutions; [G] Superior Office Service; [I] OCE Imagistics	08/14/08
ITECH06 [K]	Technical Support	Electronic Data Systems	08/31/08
ENTPRZ05	Microsoft Enterprise Products	Software House International	06/30/08

Contracts Renewed

<u>Contract</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Expiration Date</u>
CABLE07	Data Cable	SESCO Electronics	05/31/09
CANLIN07	Trash Can Liners	Winans Sanitary	05/31/09
TEMP07F	Temporary Staffing	Winans Services	04/20/09

Contracts Renewed

<u>Contract</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Expiration Date</u>
WELD06A	Welding Supplies	Mabscott Supply	06/30/09
TAG07	Identification Tags	Correctional Industries	07/30/09
RECMGT07	Records Management	Archive Services	06/30/09
RSHEET07 [A-B]	Reflective Sheeting	[A] 3M TCM; [B] Nippon Carbide	06/30/09

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.

JUNE

A/EBATT

Automotive and Equipment Batteries

DEBT

Debt Collection Services

FASTEN

Fasteners

FILTER

Oil, Gas and Air Filters

LAWN

Lawn Maintenance Equipment

LGLOVE

Latex Gloves

SAFETY

Safety Equipment

SAT

Satellite Transponder Time

TAG

Identification Tags

JULY

FLRCOV

Carpet and Rugs

ITECH

Technical Support/Staffing

LABSUP

Laboratory Supplies

LAUNDRY

Laundry Materials

PURCHASING CONNECTION

New Statewide Contract for Moving Services Created to Assist Agencies

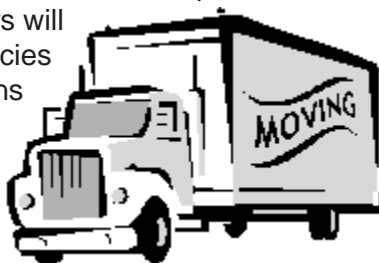
The statewide moving contract is expected to be awarded and ready for state agency usage on July 1, said Karen Byrd, assistant purchasing director for the Acquisitions and Contract Administration Section.

It will mark the first time there has been a statewide moving contract. Byrd said the decision was spurred by the knowledge that numerous state government agencies would be moving.

"There is a lot of action going on, so the decision was made to create a statewide contract," Byrd said. "This way, when the agency moves, all they have to do is make the call."

Bids will be opened in June. The contract will be on a qualification bid process, meaning all bid applications must meet certain qualification to receive the contract, and all qualified bidders will be awarded the contract. Therefore, agencies throughout the state will have a variety of options when moving time arrives.

Byrd said the contract locks in unit prices, which principle concerns being price per mile, hourly labor rates, vehicle storage rates, and packing material costs.



Purchasing Division Benefits from Governor's Internship Participation

The Purchasing Division is pleased to participate in the Governor's Summer Internship Program. Casey Hill, our summer intern, is working in the Purchasing Division's Communication and Technical Services Division.

A junior majoring in computer engineering at West Virginia University, Hill is assisting with the operation of various databases and systems that are used by the division's employees and customers. A resident of St. Albans, he graduated from St. Albans High School.

The Governor's Internship Program is an extra-ordinary learning experience for college students in West Virginia. Since its creation in 1989, the Governor's Internship Program offers high-achieving college students the opportunity to step beyond the classroom into the world of experiential learning by participating in coordinated internships in private businesses, non-profit organizations, and government agencies. Students gain knowledge of the real world work environment, learn valuable communication and leadership skills, obtain experience and gain references for the future.



Emergency Purchases

Continued from Page 1

to huge natural disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes or tornadoes, it does not mean the state can rest easy.

"We are located here in the chemical valley," Ferrell said in reference to the Charleston metro region. "A bad chemical leak could be disruptive and the state has seen its fair share of flooding. We may have smaller, more isolated types of incidents compared to other states but that does not mean we should not constantly be prepared."

The Purchasing Division abides by the established emergency purchasing rules and guidelines which have been set in place, but just as important, Ferrell said, is to know federal emergency purchasing rules, particularly Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

"If you do not follow the FEMA rules, you will not get reimbursed. You have to be careful not to take a 'clean up on the back end' mindset and think you are going to get reimbursed, cause you will not," Ferrell said. "That is why it is so important to stay educated and to anticipate because you just never know when a disaster can happen."

Ferrell said this conference was invaluable in understanding the importance of the COOP within state government. Ferrell has submitted the Purchasing Division's first version of its COOP. She is now making the revisions as directed by the Department of Administration's COOP task force. Once all the Department of Administration agencies submit their revised plans this month, the task force will merge each into one central COOP plan. Table-top exercises will be scheduled by the end of the year to test its effectiveness.

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

In This Issue... Did You Read About?

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