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The Official Newsletter of the Operational Services Division
October 2016

State Fall Fleet Event

The Operational Services Division (OSD) is hosting our inaugural State Fall Fleet Event on October 19 at Leicester Town Hall. Whether you manage a fleet or occasionally purchase vehicle-related items, you are sure to leave this event with money-saving ideas and information to achieve efficiency in your purchasing activities.

The State Fall Fleet Event will feature a variety of short presentations on topics ranging from Chapter 30B and Maintaining Your Fleet, to Green Fleet options and Surplus Property, as well as time to network. Our speakers will include representatives from the Office of the Inspector General, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, colleagues from the Department of Energy Resources and Department of Environmental Protection, and Strategic Sourcing staff from OSD. Vendors from across our spectrum of fleet-related Statewide Contracts will be on hand to speak with attendees about their products and services. The day's agenda is designed to provide participants with the resources to confidently move forward with their buying decisions. **On-site registration begins at 8:30 a.m.** We hope you will join us!

Leicester Town Hall
October 19, 2016
9 a.m. - 1 p.m.



9:00 a.m.	Check-in and Vendor Networking
9:30 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening Remarks • Overview of Chapter 30B by the Office of the Inspector General • Purchasing Light Duty Vehicles (VEH98) and Heavy Duty Vehicles (VEH93)
10:00 a.m.	Vendor Networking
10:30 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining Your Fleet: Tires (VEH97); Fuel Cards (VEH100); Auto Parts (VEH96); Glass (VEH103); Diesel (ENE40); Gasoline (ENE41); Accident and Subrogation (VEH84A) • Managing Your Fleet: Fleet Information Management System (VEH99)
11:00 a.m.	Vendor Networking
11:30 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Fleet: Preserve the Environment and Save Money • Electric Vehicle Charging Stations, Fuel Conversions, and Idle Reduction Technologies (VEH102) • Green Fleet Policy Guidance and Grants
12:00 noon	Vendor Networking
12:15 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fleet Accessories: Public Safety Equipment (HLS05); Golf Carts and Snowblowers (FAC88); Road Salt (VEH95) • Fleet Retirement: Surplus Property

Refer questions to Lana Gunaratne at lalana.m.gunaratne@state.ma.us or Lisa Westgate at lisa.westgate@state.ma.us.

Upcoming Buyer Training

Introduction to Statewide Contracts and COMMBUYS
October 19

COMMBUYS Enhancements Overview
October 19 (Webinar)

How to Comply with New Requirements for Posting Construction Bids on COMMBUYS
October 20 (Webinar)

How to Use Master Blanket Purchase Orders (SWC)
October 20 (Webinar)

COMMBUYS Procurement Training
October 24

How to Create a Departmental Master Blanket Purchase Order in COMMBUYS
October 26

COMMBUYS Purchasing for Eligible Non-profits
October 27

How to Comply with New Requirements for Posting Construction Bids on COMMBUYS
November 2 (Webinar)

COMMBUYS Enhancements Overview
November 3 (Webinar)

COMMBUYS Enhancements Overview
November 9 (Webinar)

Introduction to Statewide Contracts and COMMBUYS
November 14

COMMBUYS Procurement Training
November 15

Essentials of State Procurement
November 16

COMMBUYS Organization Administrator
November 17

Click here to see the full calendar.

Save the Date for MASSBUYS 2017!



COMMBUYS hits a new milestone with \$600MM in orders! Who will join the COMMBUYS Hall of Fame? The announcement of new inductees will be in next month's edition of *Buy the Way!*



Non-profits: Make Your Statewide Contract Purchases in COMMBUYS!

The Non-profit Purchasing Program was developed to allow eligible non-profit organizations to use Statewide Contracts to purchase commodities and services. These contracts offer pre-negotiated terms and competitive pricing in a range of categories, from office supplies, technology products, and landscaping, to groceries, athletic equipment, and pest management services. Statewide Contracts offer significant savings opportunities to non-profit buyers.

COMMBUYS, OSD's market center, makes purchasing even easier with online access to the thousands of products and services on Statewide Contract. And now, eligible Non-profit Purchasing Program organizations may use COMMBUYS, too. COMMBUYS is free to use and OSD will guide you through the set-up process.

We're holding a series of informational online webinars as well as an instructor-led course in Boston to explain COMMBUYS benefits and next steps to become a COMMBUYS buyer organization. Choose a convenient time and select the Register link to reserve a spot. We hope you can join us!

Thursday, October 27, 2016	9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Boston	Register
Monday, November 21, 2016	11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Webinar	Register
Wednesday, December 21, 2016	1:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	Webinar	Register

For participants joining us via webinar, OSD will forward details to connect to the meeting in advance of the session. If you have questions, email us at OSDTraining@state.ma.us.

Municipal Modernization: Are You Ready?

Time is running out! The Municipal Modernization Act takes effect on November 7. For local governments, a key part of the legislation is the required posting of certain bid notices on COMMBUYS. As of October 14, just 181 of the 351 cities and towns in Massachusetts have active COMMBUYS accounts. If your municipality is among the 49.5% of communities that do not have a COMMBUYS account, we urge you to take action now to ensure that your municipality is able to meet the new requirements when the legislation takes effect.

Action Steps

1. Need more info about the Muni Modernization Act?
 - Review the Charts on Procurement Procedures Effective November 7, 2016, created by the Office of the Inspector General as a guide on public procurement procedures that must be followed pursuant to the Massachusetts General Laws.
 - Attend the one of the *How to Comply with New Requirements for Posting Construction Bids on COMMBUYS* webinars hosted by OSD Training to learn how to post a bid notification on COMMBUYS.
 - Attend a Neighbor-to-Neighbor event in your area. Additional dates and locations are being added, including Carver on November 7 and Fitchburg on November 17. Contact osd-events@state.ma.us to get the updated schedule.
2. Contact the COMMBUYS Help Desk to determine if your city/town has an active COMMBUYS Account. The Help Desk may be reached by phone at 1-888-627-8283 or by email at COMMBUYS@state.ma.us.
3. No COMMBUYS Account?
 - Review the COMMBUYS Implementation Guide,
 - Complete pages 41-43, and
 - Email the completed pages to COMMBUYS@state.ma.us.
4. Recommend that your current vendors register in COMMBUYS, which will allow them to receive notices you post and also to receive notices of other opportunities in their areas of business from Commonwealth entities. Vendor registration in COMMBUYS is free and takes only a few minutes to complete. Simply advise your vendors to visit COMMBUYS.com and click the "Register" link to begin.

Remember, November 7 is just 20 days away.* We encourage you to heed our suggested advice so that your city and town will be in compliance with the new regulations.

*As of October 18, 2016

Greetings from the Inspector General's Office

Happy fall from the Massachusetts Certified Public Purchasing Official (MCPPO) Program! We hope you are gearing up for MCPPO classes this Fall! Our Fall/Winter 2016 course schedule can be found by following this link: <http://www.mass.gov/ig/publications/forms/regmcpo.pdf>. Flyers about our classes can be found by following this link: <http://www.mass.gov/ig/mcpo/seminars-and-courses/seminar-flyers-list-container.html>.

Also, as most of you know, Governor Charlie Baker signed *An Act Modernizing Municipal Finance and Government*, which goes into effect on November 7, 2016. These changes will be discussed in all MCPPO classes. To find out more about the act, please visit this link: <http://www.mass.gov/ig/publications/guides-advisories-other-publications/changes-to-chapter-30b-and-construction-laws-effective-november-7-2016.html>. We look forward to seeing you in class this semester!

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions:

- **MCPPO Director**
Joyce McEntee Emmett
(617) 722-8835
- **Senior Program Coordinators**
Judi Cimildoro
(617) 722-8836
Michelle Joyce
(617) 722-8842
- **Division Coordinator**
Alexandra Spangler
(617) 722-8889



Monthly Municipal Shoutout - Update!

With more than a million dollars in COMMBUYS transactions since July 1, 2016, the City of Quincy embraced COMMBUYS and Statewide Contracts! Congratulations to Chief Procurement Officer Kathryn Hobin and her team of experts, pictured below!



STATEWIDE CONTRACT UPDATES | OCTOBER 2016

EPP Program Nationally Recognized!

The National Association of State Procurement Officials (NASPO) recently awarded the bronze George Cronin Award to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Environmentally Preferable Products (EPP) Procurement Program. The Cronin awards recognize innovation and efficiency in state procurement, and encourage adoption of breakthrough initiatives by other states. The Commonwealth was recognized for collaborating with Connecticut, New York, and Vermont to re-bid the environmentally preferable cleaning products and programs Statewide Contract. For more information about the EPP Program, visit mass.gov/epp.

Take Our Short Office Supplies Survey!

Have you purchased office supplies from Statewide Contract OFF36 in the last six months? If so, we would like feedback about your experience. The OFF36 contract currently is up for renewal consideration, and understanding our users' past buying experiences is an important component of the Strategic Sourcing process. The survey should take **2-3 minutes** to complete. Please click here to share your feedback by **Tuesday, October 25, 2016**.

Photocopier, Facsimile, Digital Duplicator Equipment, and Service Contract Update

In the coming weeks, we expect to launch new Statewide Contract ITC66 - Copiers, Printers, and Related Devices to replace OFF32- Photocopier, Facsimile, Digital Duplicator Equipment, and Service. To ensure OFF32 product and service coverage through the launch of ITC66, we have offered contract extensions to OFF32 vendors through the earlier of December 31, 2016, or the ITC66 start date.

OSD currently expects to launch ITC66 products and services as follows:

- Category 1: Copiers, Printers, and Related Devices on November 1, 2016
- Categories 2 - 4: Digital Duplicators, Scanners, Facsimile Equipment, Service, and Supplies on November 22, 2016

As these dates become definitive, we will distribute additional information about ITC66. If you have questions in the short term, please contact Anthony Delaney at anthony.delaney@state.ma.us.



Get Ready for America Recycles Day Tuesday, November 15!

America Recycles Day* is a national initiative to promote environmentally sustainable practices and purchasing. Similar to the goals outlined in the Commonwealth's Environmentally Preferable Products Procurement Program, the day prompts consumers to learn about and take advantage of recycling opportunities and to reduce waste by buying products made with recycled content.

Take time now, in advance of America Recycles Day on November 15, to embrace the myriad ways Statewide Contract products and resources can support environmentally responsible practices with:

- tools to develop a recycling program in your facility- including on-site visits by awarded contract vendors that will access your organization's needs, make cost-effective recommendations, and provide employee training;
- thousands of Environmentally Preferred Products. Get a complete list at mass.gov/epp in the Environmentally Preferable Products and Services Guide;
- the ability to recycle a vast array of items. See below.

*America Recycles Day is a national initiative of Keep America Beautiful. [Learn more](#) and [Take the Pledge](#).

Recycling 101 - Important Statewide Contracts to Know

FAC86- Solid Waste and Recycling Services Statewide Contract, providing full waste and cost-effective recycling services for non-hazardous materials.

FAC85- Environmentally Preferable Cleaning Products, Programs, Equipment, and Supplies, including recycling containers under Category 6 and recycled content/compostable liners under Category 9.

FAC82- Hazardous/Universal, Medical, and Electronic Waste Disposal, offering comprehensive recycling solutions for hazardous waste.

FAC87- Wide range of waste and recycling containers, as well as compost bins, rain barrels, and Big Belly compactors.

Buyers may recycle a vast number of items through Statewide Contracts. Link to each Contract User Guide for details.

Antifreeze - FAC82
Asphalt, Brick, Concrete - FAC86
Batteries - FAC82 , OFF36
Construction & Demo, including Clean Gypsum Wallboard - FAC86
Electronic Waste - FAC86, FAC82
Fire Extinguishers - FAC82
Glass Containers - FAC86
Lamps - FAC82
Mattresses - FAC86, FAC90
Mercury - FAC82
Metal Cans & Containers - FAC86
Mixed Paper - FAC86

Motor Oil - FAC82
Oil Filters - FAC82
Old Corrugated Cardboard - FAC86
Organic Solvents - FAC82
Organic- Food Waste - FAC86
Organic - Leaves, Yard Waste & Floating Vegetation - FAC86, FAC88
Paints - FAC82
Paper Shredding/Secure Document & Media Destruction - FAC86, FAC96
Plastic Bottles & Containers - FAC86
Recyclable Fuels - FAC82
Redeemable Bottles & Cans - FAC86
Scrap Metal - FAC86, SSP1502

Sharps - FAC82
State Surplus Recycling - FAC78
Street Sweepings - FAC86
Tanks - FAC82
Textiles - FAC86
Tires - FAC86
Toner Cartridges - OFF32, OFF36
Vehicle Windshields - VEH103
White Goods (Large Appliances) - FAC86
White Office Paper - FAC86
Wood - FAC86



Learn about the Commonwealth's Environmentally Preferable Products (EPP) Procurement Program at mass.gov/epp.

Contact Julia Wolfe, Director of the EPP Program at OSD: julia.wolfe@state.ma.us.

STATEWIDE CONTRACT UPDATES | OCTOBER 2016

Advanced Alternative Technology Equipment, Supplies, and Services Statewide Contract VEH102

OSD is pleased to introduce a new Statewide Contract developed in conjunction with the Department of Energy Resources. The contract, slated to launch by month's end, will provide a wide range of Advanced Vehicle Technology Equipment, Supplies, and Services, including Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment, Anti-idling Technologies, and After-market Conversion Technologies. Here's a brief overview:



- **Service Category 1:** Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment, Hardware, Software, and Ancillary Services
- **Service Category 2:** Idle-Reduction Technologies for Heavy, Medium, and Light Duty Vehicles & Heavy Duty Equipment
- **Service Category 3:** After-market Conversion Technologies - All Vehicle Classes; Systems to modify vehicles and engines to run on, or be supplemented by, fuels or technologies other than ones for which they were originally designed

The VEH102 Contract User Guide is under development and will be published shortly on the Contract User Guide page. In the interim, refer questions to the Contract Manager, Charles Tuttle: charles.tuttle@state.ma.us or 617-626-1043.

Experts Needed for New Tradespersons Contract

In response to the upcoming changes outlined in the Municipal Modernization Act, OSD is looking for Department and municipal buyers to participate on the Strategic Sourcing Team (SST) to develop a tradespersons contract, providing regional construction services.

As a member of the SST, participants will work with an OSD Strategic Sourcing Lead to perform activities ranging from needs identification to performance monitoring and assessment throughout the lifecycle of the procurement. Participation does not require travel into Boston.

If you have expertise related to construction services and would like to participate, express interest to Betty Fernandez at betty.fernandez@state.ma.us.

COMMBUYS Bid Notifications for SDO-Certified Firms

In an effort to provide additional notifications to Supplier Diversity Office (SDO)-certified firms about upcoming Commonwealth bidding opportunities, the SDO is sending email notifications to certified firms of COMMBUYS bids that may be a good fit for their businesses. As new bids for departmental and statewide contracts become available, we will be emailing information to firms whose NAICS codes submitted to the SDO at the time of certification match the bid content.

Because NAICS codes are broad, you may receive notifications of open bids that may not be an exact match for your business. However, we hope you will agree that it's better to sort through a few extra emails than to miss a contracting opportunity.

The SDO's messages are for informational purposes only and should not be construed as an exclusive listing of opportunities or as a guaranteed notification about future, new, or updated opportunities. The only way to control the notifications you receive is through your customizable COMMBUYS profile.

Be a more effective bidder by registering for training! We recommend the following three classes: Connecting Your Business to the Commonwealth, Demystifying the RFR, and COMMBUYS Essentials for Sellers.

The value of your certification is in the marketing advantage you receive after your firm has been awarded a contract. Viewing and responding to bids on COMMBUYS is the first step to achieving that competitive advantage.

Take a Few Minutes to Learn Your Contract Options for Integrated Pest Management

Join Katherine Morse, Contract Manager for FAC92 – Integrated Pest Management (IPM), for a **30-minute webinar** about IPM options on SWC. Attendees will leave the session with a comprehensive understanding of the IPM approach, the compelling attributes of FAC92, and important contract guidance. The webinar agenda includes a description of available services, contract benefits and cost savings, proper use of the contract, a demo on how to solicit quotes, and a Q&A Period.

Wednesday, November 2, 2016, 2:00 p.m.

Click here to register today!

New Fixed Pricing Option Added to ENE45

In addition to the previously announced Indexed Pricing on ENE45 – No. 2 Heating Oil – buyers now may take advantage of Fixed Pricing, a fixed adder tied to the weighted average price on the New York Mercantile Exchange (NYMEX). Note that a minimum of 42,000 gallons must be purchased by the buyer organization to be eligible, though vendors have the option to enter into agreements for less than the stated minimum. Learn more in the ENE45 Contract User Guide. Refer additional questions to katherine.morse@state.ma.us.

Attention Municipalities!

New – Pay as You Throw Bags on FAC86

New Category 1A on FAC86 – Solid Waste and Recycling Services – makes available Pay as You Throw (PAYT) bags for cities and towns that participate in a PAYT program. Awarded vendors offer Imprinted Plastic Trash Bags in various colors, produced with minimum 20% recycled content. Pricing and instructions are available on the PAYT Bags List in COMMBUYS; however, contract users may request a lower price based on volume, collection frequency, or willingness to accept an alternative collection schedule.

Contact the Awarded Vendors:

Bags and Boxes Unlimited, Jeff Marcotte
Bags528@aol.com / 800-696-6702
Prompt Pay Discount: 2% for 10 days

Waste Zero, Inc., Courtney Forrester
cforrester@wastezero.com / 781-504-5604
Prompt Pay Discount: 1% for 10 days

Supplier Diversity Office Receives Honorable Mention for Innovation Efforts

OSD's Supplier Diversity Office (SDO) was awarded a George Cronin Award for Procurement Excellence: Honorable Mention for its commitment to innovation in supporting supplier diversity. The Cronin Awards, which recognize innovation and efficiency in state procurement, were presented by the National Association of State Procurement Officials (NASPO) at its annual conference in Minneapolis in September.

During Fiscal Year 2016 (July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2016), the SDO implemented a number of reforms and improvements that increased the overall success of its programs. Notable innovations include the expansion of the diversity categories recognized in the Commonwealth's Supplier Diversity Program by adding Veteran and Disability businesses and becoming the first state in the nation to also include LGBT businesses. Additionally, through research, modernization, and innovation, the SDO shifted its focus from delivering certification services and monitoring diversity spending to actively recruiting certification applicants, finding diverse bidders for

Commonwealth business opportunities, and providing buyer tools to incorporate diversity into purchasing decisions. Streamlined application forms, electronic application submission, and the availability of cross-application with other certifiers made it easier to apply for certification.

Over 10 months in Fiscal Year 2016, starting in August 2015, the SDO conducted a formal Business Process Redesign of its processes, policies, forms, technology, and practices. This table outlines the success of this effort.

Congratulations to the SDO team on a job well done! To learn about the Supplier Diversity Program, visit mass.gov/sdo.

	Before	After
State Certification Application Form	32 pages	10 pages (69% reduction)
Required Supporting Documents	Average 10 pages	Average 9 pages (10% reduction)
Joint State Certification Application for DBE Certification Applicants	32 pages	1 page (97% reduction)
Applicant Submission Methodology	All paper applications and attachments	All electronic (being unveiled in October 2016)
Document Storage	Paper files in a 400 square foot file room	All electronic document management system
Applicant Correspondence	All paper sent via US Mail	All electronic (except registered appeal notices)
Certification Renewal Form	10 pages	2 pages
Certification Renewal Frequency	Every 2 years	Every 3 years
Informal Appeal Process prior to Form Appeals	Not available	Implemented
Certification Application Site Visits	In-person site visits required for certain categories	Site visits still required; however, implemented "virtual" site visits in certain circumstances

Level Up: Vendor Training for Competitive Advantage

Whether you're a seasoned Statewide Contractor who needs a refresher, someone just starting to think about conducting business with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, or somewhere in between, the OSD Training team is here to help with a curriculum of free courses designed to get you on the road to success. Click on the course names below to register for the next session today!

- **Connecting Your Business to the Commonwealth** - Designed for businesses interested in learning how to do business with the State, this workshop includes: an overview of OSD programs and services including State and Federal Certification, Supplier Diversity Program (SDP), Small Business Purchasing Program (SBPP), and a live demonstration of where to find bidding opportunities in COMMBUYS.
- **COMMBUYS Vendor Registration** - This webinar walks you through the COMMBUYS vendor registration process from start to finish.
- **COMMBUYS Essentials for Sellers** - This comprehensive class provides vendors with all the tools needed to utilize COMMBUYS.
- **COMMBUYS Organizational Design and Maintenance for the Seller Administrator** - Attendees discover how to update their COMMBUYS vendor account information such as commodity codes and addresses.
- **How to Locate and Respond to Bids in COMMBUYS** - This webinar will take you through the process of locating and replying to Bids (Solicitations) in COMMBUYS.
- **Demystifying the RFR: Responding to the Commonwealth's Procurement Opportunities** - This class shows vendors how to respond to procurement opportunities posted by the state.
- **Selling to the State – Marketing Your Business to Public Purchasers** - This workshop is designed to help Statewide Contract vendors promote and sell their goods and services to state agencies and other public entities by providing information and tools to support their marketing efforts.

Think you might be considered a diverse business (small, minority/woman-owned, disadvantaged, etc.)? Check out the classes below to learn about becoming certified and using your certification to respond to bids.

- **Small Business Purchasing Program Overview** - Join this webinar to learn how your business can be a part of the Small Business Purchasing Program.
- **SDO Pre-Certification** - This is a required workshop for all businesses interested in applying for certification as a Minority, Woman, and/or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise.
- **Supplier Diversity Plan Overview** - This webinar is for SDO-certified businesses that are interested in learning how to use their certifications in the state procurement and purchasing process.

The Series Continues... Join us in Brockton November 2!

After a successful event in Framingham on October 13, OSD, the MA Office of Access and Opportunity, and the Office of Business Development are looking forward to the next installment of the Supplier Diversity Regional Series in Brockton on November 2! Supplier Diversity Office (SDO) certified and/or verified Minority-, Women-, Veteran-, Disability- and LGBT-Owned firms and Statewide Contractors alike are invited to join us at the The Conference Center at Massasoit for an opportunity to network with one another and resource organizations like Mass BizWorks, the Center for Women and Enterprise, the Greater New England Minority Development Council, and the Small Business Administration. The highlight of the event is a “speed networking” session in which every attendee has the opportunity to spend three minutes with each Statewide Contractor to discuss how they may be able to work together through subcontracting or ancillary business opportunities to help fulfill the Statewide Contractors’ Supplier Diversity Program spending requirements.

[Click here to register as a Statewide Contractor](#) and [click here to register as a certified diverse business](#). We look forward to seeing you in Brockton!

New Course Offering for Statewide Contractors: Selling to the State – Marketing your Business to Public Purchasers

So you’ve been selected as a vendor on a Statewide Contract (SWC). Now, all you have to do is sit back and wait for the phone to start ringing off the hook, right? Not exactly, according to OSD Trainers Annemarie Espindola and Erin Powers. “One of the issues we hear most often is ‘why am I not getting any business from my contract?’” Espindola explains. “A survey conducted by our Strategic Sourcing Services Team revealed that marketing SWCs to buyers was a major challenge,” Powers elaborates. “There are resources available to contractors, so we knew the time was right to develop a dedicated course for SWC holders, something we’ve never done before.”

Months of preparation go into developing each and every training course offered by OSD’s Training team. For each new course, the team identifies a need, gathers information on topics based on those needs, conducts research and speaks with subject matter experts, outlines the flow, and builds the content and course materials. “We look at course creation from a teaching perspective,” says Espindola. “It’s important that there’s a good balance of discussion and hands-on activities so participants get the most out of their time.”

After learning about the frustrating gap between signing a SWC and receiving business, the team dove into creating their latest offering, Selling to the State – Marketing your Business to Public Purchasers. One of the challenges was to make the content engaging for participants, Powers mentions. Training Supervisor Regina Kinney elaborates: “Some of this can be really dry, and it’s tough to make it work for a broad audience—not too prescriptive, but also not too generic. Combined with the fact that there’s no magic pill and you have to put in real grunt work, Annemarie and Erin had their work cut out for them.”

The result is a 2-hour action-driven workshop where participants identify prospective customers and where to find critical information, draft an elevator pitch, evaluate marketing programs available from OSD, and determine the types of reporting critical to assessing marketing success. Although OSD staff cannot directly help a contractor sell goods or services to public purchasers, participants of this course will walk away with valuable resources to help drive business on a contract. Powers expands, “OSD offers assistance in a variety of formats, and we want to help businesses be competitive even if we can’t be involved directly.”

The inaugural session of Selling to the State – Marketing your Business to Public Purchasers is Thursday, October 27 from 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. at One Ashburton Place, 10th Floor Training Room. [Click here to register](#) and learn more about the course and future dates.

Upcoming Vendor Training

**COMMBUYS Vendors:
Essentials for the Seller Role**
October 20

**Introduction to the
IT Small Business Incubator**
October 20 (Webinar)

**IT Small Business Incubator Pilot:
COMMBUYS and RFRs 101**
October 20 (Webinar)

SDO Pre-Certification Workshop
October 24

**Small Business Purchasing
Program Overview**
October 24 (Webinar)

**COMMBUYS Vendors:
Organizational Design and Maintenance
for the Seller Administrator**
October 25

**Selling to the State – Marketing Your
Business to Public Purchasers**
October 27

Supplier Diversity Program Overview
October 25 (Webinar)

**Locate and Respond to Bids
in COMMBUYS**
October 31 (Webinar)

**Introduction to the
IT Small Business Incubator**
November 3 (Webinar)

**IT Small Business Incubator Pilot:
COMMBUYS and RFRs 101**
November 3 (Webinar)

**Connecting Your Business
to the Commonwealth**
November 7 (Springfield)

**Demystifying the RFR: Responding
to the Commonwealth's
Procurement Opportunities**
November 8

[Click here to see the full calendar.](#)



[Click here to sign up for other email communications!](#)

About OSD

The Operational Services Division (OSD) administers the procurement process for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Executive Agencies by establishing Statewide Contracts for commonly purchased goods and services. OSD's mission is to help our government and business customers succeed in meeting their goals by providing outstanding customer service, competent advice and guidance, objectivity in our work, and to make available to our customers high quality products and services that exceed the expectations of those whom we serve.

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The City of Lawrence: A COMMBUYS Adoption Success Story

"The City of Lawrence is a model community for COMMBUYS adoption," remarks Jackie Abbott, OSD's Local Government Enablement Team Account Manager. Working closely with the City since their enablement in January 2015, she continues, "They have been dedicated from the beginning of the enablement process, and that commitment has really paid off."

Indeed, the City of Lawrence sets the bar high for municipal adoption, having spent more than \$4.15 million on Statewide Contract (SWC) purchases and completing more than 1,000 Purchase Orders (POs) in COMMBUYS, the Commonwealth's e-procurement system. With 132 active COMMBUYS users across varied departments, Lawrence's purchases range from interactive whiteboards for classrooms to heavy-duty trucks for the Department of Public Works, using 29 different SWCs.



Lawrence's Chief Procurement Officer, Rita Brousseau, a seasoned procurement professional who has devoted her 31-year career to the City, has led the team to success. Initially, the City was interested in COMMBUYS to streamline the work generated from the increased volume of POs they were completing. However, they quickly found that the benefits to using the system exceeded their expectations.

Expounding on the advantages, Rita stated, "Like a lot of municipalities, we have a small procurement office. Even though we have many buyers throughout the City, we just don't have the staff to do all of the work involved in hundreds or thousands of POs. COMMBUYS eliminates bid hunting and simplifies the entire procurement process. The State's pre-negotiated SWCs give us the confidence that we are using reputable, high-quality vendors. Using both COMMBUYS and SWCs is an innovative and practical way for us to get the work done, especially with budget and staffing constraints."

Additionally, Lawrence has been enthusiastic about the wide breadth of vendors they are able to reach using COMMBUYS. For instance, when the City recently went out to bid for textbooks, they were overwhelmed with the vendor response. Rita exclaimed, "We got 11 interested vendors!" She continued, "This vendor competition is so beneficial for a City – we truly feel like we will get the best value. That level of response never would have happened if we didn't use COMMBUYS."

When asked about her experience with the OSD team, Rita gushed, "Working with OSD has been phenomenal. They take care of the problems for you quickly, which is especially helpful when issues arise that are out of your purview. Jackie (Abbott) is amazing, and responds to any calls or emails with nearly immediate customer service." Additionally, Rita was impressed that the menu of OSD's programs and services doesn't end with COMMBUYS and SWCs. She mentions, "The team has shown us so many things that we can take advantage of that we had no idea even existed, like the Surplus Property Program. It's not just that we are improving our procurement practices – we are learning more about all of the resources available to cities and towns across the Commonwealth."

As she sits at her desk, rattling off SWCs numbers as well as any OSD staff member, Rita remarked, "I work in COMMBUYS for much of my day. It just becomes second nature." Leading by example and taking advantage of all that OSD has to offer, the City of Lawrence is able to reap the benefits of streamlined purchasing and procurement.

If you want to learn more about how COMMBUYS and Statewide Contracts may work for your municipality, visit the Local Governments webpage or contact the Enablement Team at COMMBUYSenablement@state.ma.us.