

COSTARS Connection

The Commonwealth's Cooperative Purchasing Program
Passport to Business Opportunity and Procurement Savings

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Autumn 2020



Tom Wolf, Governor

Curt Topper, Secretary

Meet the Department of General Services Bureau of Procurement's Transportation Team

By Kim Bullivant, COSTARS Marketing Manager

Did you know that more than 1,600 COSTARS members are currently participating in the 2020-2021 Sodium Chloride (Road Salt) Contract? Year after year, many of our members procure road salt from the DGS, Bureau of Procurement's Transportation Team's sodium chloride contract, but did you know the team manages a number of other statewide roadway, and building supplies contracts that are COSTARS-participating? (See box on page 3 for complete listing).

Many of you may already be purchasing from, or are current suppliers on these contracts, but have never met or talked to the members of the Transportation Team. So, we would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to the team and learn more about the contracts they manage. Also, as an added bonus, they have each offered to briefly share how they have adapted to teleworking for the past seven months.

John Jones

Commodity Specialist

jojones@pa.gov

Bituminous Roadway Materials,
Aggregates and Anti-skid,
Sodium Chloride (Bulk Road Salt)



"Adapting to new technology and a new work environment is never easy...no matter how far technology progresses. I believe DGS BOP deserves recognition for pioneering a new path through these uncharted waters. Without policy or procedure, we have adapted on the fly by our own intuition and experience.

"There were many challenges to overcome in our new environments. Number one of these challenges was the elimination of distractions. We all have them, and finding a place to focus on the job is of the highest priority.

"This pandemic has changed the reality we live in, but change brings both good and bad. Instead of focusing on the bad, we should look to the good. Appreciating the small things. My favorite of the new smaller things is traffic. All of us have driven through the traffic of Harrisburg. Now, a busy interstate highway has the traffic of a back-country road! Rush hour is now 'slightly more busy' hour! I also appreciate having music at work. You can blast that song you have always wanted to hear! Bellow out those Billy Joel lyrics as loud as you can DGS! DISCLAIMER: Do NOT bellow out Billy Joel lyrics if you share your new workspace with another."

Michelle Scott

Commodity Specialist

miscott@pa.gov

Ready Mixed Cement, Bridge & Highway
Maintenance Materials, Waterborne Traffic
Line Paint, Bulk Evaporated Salt, Bagged
De-icing Materials (50 lbs)



"Like many people, the change to teleworking was a big adjustment. I enjoy being out and about after my workday ends so one of the biggest challenges for me was being stuck in the house!

"Not having the drive home, decompression time was difficult at first. I also found that my workday got off balance as I sometimes lost track of time, didn't take breaks or end my day at my normal time.

"I have been able to adjust though, and have found that having a dedicated workspace has been a big help. The biggest benefit for me has been the time I have been able to spend with my mother as we grieved the loss of my father earlier this year. Teleworking turned out to be a blessing in disguise for me during that time.

"I do look forward to being back in the office and back to my normal routine but until then, I'll continue to do my best at home, staying safe and healthy!"

Frolic in Fall Foliage!

By Felicia Campbell, COSTARS Marketing Manager

Ahhhh, it's fall. Can you smell it? Apple cider, crisp fall air, and pumpkin spiced everything! Fall is my favorite time of year, when families can enjoy many outdoor activities like hayrides, corn mazes, and visiting their favorite farms to select the perfect carving pumpkin.

Now is the time when the commonwealth is dressed in it's coat of many colors. The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (DCNR) reports that Pennsylvania's fall foliage season is longer and more varied than not only any other state in the nation but also across the world. DCNR has created the **Fall Foliage Facts** webpage at <https://www.dcnr.pa.gov/Conservation/ForestsAndTrees/FallFoliageReports/Pages/default.aspx> to provide weekly fall foliage reports as well as an interactive map showing the prime locations to view the magnificence of this season's colors. Roadtrip!

When not immersing yourself in the joys of fall, there is work to be done. Those beautiful leaves eventually drop to the ground and our grass and plants need rejuvenation to return in the spring healthy and hearty. As a COSTARS member, you have access to grounds keeping services and equipment contracts to allow you to maintain your land within budget.

Members can find suppliers to provide many groundskeeping services including leaf control, pruning and aeration under the COSTARS-29 Grounds Keeping Services and Supplies contract. Members doing much of their own grounds maintenance may determine it is time to replace some grounds keeping equipment. Statewide contract #4400020042 Ag/Grounds Keeping Type Power Equipment offers many COSTARS-participating suppliers who can help you secure competitively-priced equipment.

With COSTARS at your side, you can take delight in all this season has to offer. Do not be ashamed to let your inner child come out — find a big pile of leaves and jump in it! Though your mind may feel like it is 12 years old, remember your body is not — COSTARS has contracts to help with your fall-fun aches and pains too!

Winterize It!

By Felicia Campbell, COSTARS Marketing Manager

*Making a list, checking it twice. Gotta prepare for the cold and the ice.
Your Winterization Checklist from COSTARS!*

The winter season is just around the corner, and it is time to prepare our facilities for the cold, snowy winter months. Preparing for winter weather not only involves snow removal, but we also must prevent damage to our facilities from freezing water lines or ice back-up in our gutters. Staff and visitors must also be protected from the risk of slipping in icy building entryways as well as the wetness tracked indoors from the outside.

FACILITY WINTERIZATION CHECKLIST		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Action Item	Corresponding COSTARS Contract
Heating & Ventilation		
	Maintenance check on heating system	COSTARS-8 MRO
	Replace filters	COSTARS-8 MRO
	Program thermostats for facility open/close status	COSTARS-28 Energy Conservation Management Supplies COSTARS-30 Energy Consulting Services #4400020024 - Energy Supply and Management Services
	Clean vents	COSTARS-8 MRO
	Clean chimneys	COSTARS-8 MRO
Exterior		
	Clean & check gutters and downspouts	COSTARS-8 MRO
	Shut off outside faucets and sprinklers/drain water lines	COSTARS-8 MRO
	Trees & shrub pruning	COSTARS-29 Grounds Keeping Services and Supplies
Windows & Entryways		
	Check seals around doors and windows	COSTARS-8 MRO
	Check door threshold seals	COSTARS-8 MRO
	Lay interior & exterior mats to avoid slipping incidents	COSTARS-8 MRO
Snow Solutions, Machinery & Supplies		
	Maintenance/Replacement of snow removal devices	COSTARS-8 MRO COSTARS-25 Municipal Work Vehicles COSTARS-29 Grounds Keeping Services and Supplies #4400020042 - Ag/Grounds Keeping Type Power Equipment
	Maintenance on plow equipment	COSTARS-8 MRO
	Check/replace tires on snow removal machines & vehicles	#4400015995 - Tire, Auto, Truck OTR & Farm #4400017237 - Retread Tires
	Place initial order of road salt / bags of ice melt	COSTARS-29 Grounds Keeping Services and Supplies #6100047963 - Bagged De-Icing Materials 2020-2021 Sodium Chloride (Bulk Road Salt) Contract

With a concentration on heating and ventilation, exterior, entryways, and windows to snow solutions, the COSTARS team has prepared a checklist to help your facility winterization efforts.

To learn more about the COSTARS-exclusive and statewide COSTARS-participating contracts listed on the checklist visit www.dgs.pa.gov/COSTARS
>Member Information
>Members Area >Search Contracts >COSTARS Contracts or Statewide Contracts.



Meet the DGS Bureau of Procurement's Transportation Team, *cont.*

Lilly Peek

Commodity Specialist
lkpeek@pa.gov

MRO, Walk In Building Supplies (Lowes), Carpet & Resilient Flooring, Reinforced Concrete Pipe



"I have adapted well to the teleworking environment and I favor it over sitting in my cubicle with no privacy!

"Some of the other advantages I've enjoyed include: no commute, saving time, saving gas and no stress from traveling in heavy traffic or inclement weather. I can also work in my PJ's if I want!

"I also enjoy the flexibility teleworking provides, for example, accessing my work e-mails from my iPhone, etc."

Jamon Fogarty

Acting Commodity Manager
jafogarty@pa.gov



"With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic our team and entire bureau was abruptly thrust into the reality of working from home. As expected, there were some early growing pains not just from the technical aspect but also having to adjust to working in a totally new environment.

"As we often do though, our team overcame these challenges and has done an excellent job adapting to and embracing the telework transition. We are now 7 months in, and things are running just as smoothly as we could have hoped.

"I couldn't agree more with the sentiments of my team, in that it's important to take a step back and appreciate the benefits telework has afforded us. I know I certainly do NOT miss my hour-long commute to and from the office.

"It's also nice to be able to get out at lunch time or at the end of a long day and enjoy this terrific fall weather. After all, 'working too hard can give you a heart attack-ack-ack-ack!' (How's that, John?)

Contract Update

The Sodium Chloride (Bulk Road Salt) contract has been renewed for a final year and prices have largely remained the same across the state, give or take a few counties.

Members should continue to be mindful of meeting their 60 percent minimum commitment.

As we saw this year, suppliers are not always willing to waive storage fees and with this being the final year of the contract, it is very likely to be the case following this winter as well.

Need Building Supplies?

Members may not know that there is a Walk-In Building Supplies contract available through Lowes.

The contract features a seven percent point-of-sale discount with use of a Lowes key fob savings card.

Interested members can learn how to apply for a savings card here at <https://www.lowesforpros.com//naspo-value-point.html>.

Members can also reach out to Lilly Peek for more information.

Transportation Team Contract Offerings

- Sodium Chloride (Bulk Road Salt) - #4400015749, 4600015752, 4600016277, 4600016363, 4600016362 & 4600016361
- Aggregates & Anti-Skid, Bituminous Plant Mixed Materials - #5610-15
- Liquid Bituminous Materials Bituminous Stockpile Patching Materials - #6100047339
- Ready Mixed Concrete and Cement/Concrete Products - #4400021508
- Bridge & Highway Maintenance Materials - #4400022316
- Evaporated Salt (Bulk) - #6100037519
- Bagged De-Icing Materials (50 lb.) - #6100047963
- Waterborne Traffic Line Paint - #4400049615
- Posts and Accessories - #6100045791/6100050881
- Reinforced Concrete Pipe - #6100049491
- Carpet & Resilient Flooring, including installation - # 4400020402
- Walk-in Building Supplies (Lowes) - #400016354
- Maintenance Repair and Operations (MRO) - #4400016344

**Please note that although these contracts are all COSTARS enabled, not all contracted suppliers may be participating.*

To search the Transportation Team's contracts listed above, visit the Search Contracts page on eMarketplace at <http://www.emarketplace.state.pa.us/BidContracts.aspx>

Save on Fuel Costs with Fleet Fuel Program

COSTARS members who took advantage of the substantial savings available through the WEX fleet fuel program in 2020, under statewide contract #4400020592 WEX Fleet Card Services, received a total annual rebate of \$518,621!

Does your organization maintain a fleet of vehicles? Check out the WEX Fleet Card Services contract to learn how to control fueling and vehicle costs. This fuel card program simplifies fueling with purchase controls, spending limits, powerful online management tools and acceptance at 95 percent of fueling stations.

Additionally, as a new account incentive, WEX and Sunoco will be offering a \$0.25/gallon rebate for new customers in the beginning of December. Watch your email for more information from WEX, coming soon!

For more information about this program, or if you have any questions, contact WEX customer service at 1-866-527-8870.



Used Vehicle Auction

As you may already know, COSTARS vehicle contracts only allow for the purchase of new vehicles.

If your organization is interested in purchasing used vehicles, be sure to attend the next Commonwealth of PA Used Vehicle Auction on Dec. 8 at the Manheim Keystone Pennsylvania Auto Auction located at 488 Firehouse Road, Grantville, PA 17028.

All auctions begin at 10 a.m. Prospective buyers should register from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday before the sale.

To learn more visit the Bureau of Supplies and Surplus Operations Vehicle Management page at <https://www.dgs.pa.gov/Vehicle-Management/InformationForPublic/Pages/default.aspx>.



The Reporter - August

The Montgomery County Board of Commissioners recently authorized a series of contracts related to the COVID-19 pandemic totaling more than \$17 million. The county's information and technology solutions and CDW Government of Chicago entered into an agreement for equipment, which is available through a contract via the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Cooperative Purchasing Program, COSTARS. The "laptops and various computer accessories" would be used by "county employees and contact tracers" in a remote setting.

Williamsport Sun-Gazette - September

Commissioners approved the purchase of a haul truck from Cleveland Brothers for use at the county landfill. The purchase through COSTARS, the state cooperative purchasing program, includes a trade-in of two county vehicles.

The Progress - September

Work began Monday to upgrade the building at Coach Andy Evanko stadium, Curwensville. The structure, housing team facilities, public restrooms and official's changing rooms for the Curwensville Area School District, will be renovated including a new 1,000-square foot facility for public restrooms. Materials will be purchased from Lezzer Lumber Co. through the state's cooperative purchasing program, COSTARS.

Cranberry Eagle - October

Middlesex Township is moving closer to replacing a culvert under Overbrook Road, according to information township engineer Jeff Mikesic. The township needs to install a pipe that's at least 128 by 83 inches. This would stay within 50-year flood mitigation requirements established in township code. The pipe and accompanying materials were quoted through COSTARS, the state's cooperative purchasing program.

Butler Eagle - October

Butler City Council agreed to buy a 2021 Pierce Arrow XT 100 mid-mount tower ladder truck from Glick Fire Equipment Co. of Zellenople through the COSTARS cooperative purchasing program.

Cherokee Tribune & Ledger-News - October

Council members voted to authorize the city to sign a purchase agreement for a 2021 model ladder truck and two pumper trucks from a state cooperative purchasing program known as COSTARS.

The Progress - October

Clearfield-Lawrence Township Airport Authority approved applying for additional grant funds related to COVID-19. The authority approved using the funds to replace its 1989 Caterpillar loader with a new 920 Caterpillar small wheel loader, two snow plows and a snow blower from Cleveland Brothers, Clearfield. The loader, plows and blower will be purchased through the state's cooperative purchasing program, COSTARS.

The Reporter - October

In other business, county leaders authorized a series of COVID-19-related contracts totaling more than \$1.6 million. An agreement with Oliver Mechanical, of Morton, Pa., covers the "installation of HVAC air handlers for the Montgomery County Correctional Facility" in Eagleville, according to the contract. The "equipment and services" were made available via a contract from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's cooperative purchasing program, COSTARS.



Image provided by *The Progress*

NEW!

The COSTARS Team is always searching for stories in the news about COSTARS members who are saving money by purchasing through the COSTARS Program. Tell us about your successful money-saving purchases and we will be sure to include them in our next edition of the COSTARS Connection newsletter!

Share your success story online via our new "Share Your COSTARS Savings Success Story" web-page on the COSTARS website at <https://www.dgs.pa.gov/COSTARS/Pages/Success-Story.aspx>.



Learning Virtually with COSTARS

By Felicia Campbell, COSTARS Marketing Manager

We started 2020's series with a COSTARS Program Advisory Group webinar where we provided a refresh on searching contracts as well as solicited member feedback on the program

from the group. Other topics in this year's series included effective and efficient procurement, safety preparedness, cutting energy expenses through PSFEI's energy contract, first responder gear and vehicles, IT and municipal vehicle upgrades, and forging ahead with discounts through purchasing and fleet card program incentives.

This year's series focused on increasing service efficiency and capabilities by capitalizing on competitively priced contracts such as COSTARS-40 Security and Surveillance Systems and Fire Alarm Systems, Equipment, Products and Services, statewide contract #4400020024 Energy Supply and Management Services ITQ, COSTARS-12 Emergency Responder Equipment and Supplies, COSTARS-13 Emergency Responder Vehicles, COSTARS-35 Furniture and Window Treatments, COSTARS-3 IT Hardware, COSTARS-25 Municipal Work Vehicles, COSTARS-26 Passenger Vehicles, and statewide contract #4400020592 Fleet Card Services.

We had planned for two supplier webinars in 2020. Due to the unexpected transition from in-office work to teleworking, only one supplier presentation took place. There was overwhelming supplier interest in this session, resulting in more than 130 participants! Supplier education will continue to be a focus in 2021's webinar plans.

Virtual education will be plentiful in 2021. We intend to continue with a webinar series similar to the 2020 series, for existing as well as potential members and suppliers. Additionally, in lieu of the live 2021 PA Procurement Expo, and in an effort to preserve the health and safety of all participants, we are considering hosting a collection of virtual educational sessions as an alternative.

The 2021 webinar series as well as the potential virtual Procurement Expo educational offerings are currently in the planning stages. We want to hear from you! What topics would you like to explore? Let us know by responding to our Educational Topics Survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WXXH796>.

"Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other."

~ John F. Kennedy

The COSTARS Program's mission is to supply COSTARS members with competitively priced DGS contracts for cost-effective and efficient procurement of supplies and services.

As members and suppliers utilize benefits of their COSTARS participation, they may have questions about COSTARS processes or need to train new users of COSTARS within their organization. The COSTARS team provides participants with many training options to keep their procurement train on track.

Online Training Modules

Offer users step-by-step instructions on specific COSTARS processes:

Member Training Center

Visit www.dgs.pa.gov/COSTARS > Member Information > Members Area Button > Training Center option in navigation panel to the left.

Supplier Training Center

Visit www.dgs.pa.gov/COSTARS > COSTARS Supplier Information button > COSTARS Training Center link in the center of the page.

Previously Recorded Webinars on YouTube

Visit www.youtube.com > Type PACASTCMS into the search bar > select the PACASTCMS link > select Playlists, then select Pennsylvania Department of General Services to view Member and Supplier presentations.

Technology Council of Central PA and DGS Deliver IT Procurement Update

Representatives from the Department of General Services, (DGS) Bureau of Procurement (BOP) joined the Technology Council of Central Pennsylvania (TCCP) in their recent IT Procurement Update on Oct.29. This event was designed for TCCP member & non-member technology vendors, whether they are already doing business with the commonwealth or not.

The virtual event's topics included information on how to register as a supplier with the commonwealth, bidding on COSTARS-exclusive and statewide contracts, new contract updates as well as process and program updates within BOP, emergency procurement, an overview on registration, the new goal setting program by the Bureau of Diversity, Inclusion, and Small Business Opportunity (BDISBO), and how to engage IT delivery centers in 2020/2021.

Presenters included Technology Council of Pennsylvania President & CEO Ann Hughes, Office of Administration, Enterprise Tech. Services Office Chief Technology Officer Sean Crager, DGS BOP Chief Procurement Officer Janice Pistor, COSTARS Marketing Manager Felicia Campbell, BOP Associate Commodity Manager Thomas Schwartz and BDISBO Procurement Liaison Audrey Smith.

This event was successful in building on TCCP's mission to connect members and potential members from organizations in the commonwealth to promote technology and fuel economic development.



COSTARS On The Road

COSTARS Marketing Managers make it their mission to spread the message about the COSTARS Program, recruit new members and suppliers, and provide training about the program. Marketing Managers Kim Bullivant and Felicia Campbell travel throughout the commonwealth speaking at conferences, workshops and seminars sponsored by associations, suppliers, universities, legislators, chambers of commerce and others.

To submit a request for a COSTARS representative to speak or conduct a training session for members or suppliers at an upcoming event, please contact Kim or Felicia at toll free telephone number 1-866-768-7827 or email to GS-PaCostars@pa.gov. The COSTARS Marketing Team's Calendar of Events is also available on the COSTARS website on the COSTARS Program Resources page.

Recent Events

Sept. 18	Senator Santarsiero Webinar
Sept. 22	COSTARS - Equipped to Serve Webinar
Oct. 6	COSTARS - Purchasing and Fleet Card Programs; Forge Ahead with Discounts Webinar
Oct. 27	40th Annual PA Aviation Conference - Virtual
Oct. 29	Tech Council Virtual Procurement Session
Nov. 4	COSTARS - Effective and Efficient Procurement Webinar

Upcoming Events

Dec. 2	GreenGov/Local Climate Action Program (LCAP) Virtual Forum
Dec. 8-9	Tri-State PTAC Mega-Matchmaker - Virtual

Stay tuned for more information about the 2021 COSTARS Webinar Series coming soon!



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COSTARS Connection

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Further information on the COSTARS program is available by phone at 1-866-768-7827 or by visiting the COSTARS website at www.dgs.pa.gov/COSTARS.

At DGS, our mission is to help government operate more efficiently, effectively, and safely - delivering exceptional value for all Pennsylvanians.