

## Here is a sample of what some COSTARS members are saying:

**Authority**—We used to issue sealed bids for our swimming pool chemicals. After attending a COSTARS webinar, we discovered the Water Chemicals contract. Our savings over our 2012 bid price will be about \$2,000 in 2013-using the exact same supplier. COSTARS is definitely a worthwhile program. **Ronald J. Woodhead, CPRP, CPSI, Director, Centre Region Parks & Recreation.**

**County**—Allegheny County has used state contracts for many years. We have found the contracts to be effective vehicles from which to purchase a broad array of goods and services. The ability to use Commonwealth contracts is one of many tools that public purchasing professionals should keep in their "toolbox." **Thomas E. Youngs, Jr., Chief Purchasing Officer, Allegheny County**

**Township**—The Township of Lower Merion is a fan of COSTARS because the advertising, bidding, and awarding is already done for us, there is a wide variety of vendors from which to choose, and there is the opportunity to negotiate. The cost of advertising bids alone is a savings to the township and the competitive pricing from the COSTARS vendors versus outside is advantageous. All the COSTARS vendors that we have dealt with have followed through with orders, deliveries, and issues, if any. We purchase a lot of heavy equipment, vehicles, computers, and TV equipment. **Cydnee Baffa, Administrative Clerk, Lower Merion Township**

**Borough**—COSTARS streamlines the entire purchasing process, while saving the borough money and maximizing staff time. The online portal is easy to use and I'm very pleased with the pricing. It would cost us about \$300 to place an ad in our local newspaper, which we would have to do twice, plus staff and legal time to go through the formal bidding process. And I'm confident the COSTARS pricing is better than what we could get by bidding! **Ernest Dabiero, Director of Purchasing, State College Borough**

**School District**—COSTARS helps relieve a lot of cumbersome work. We're a large district, but we only have a two-person purchasing department. The prices are good; vendors provide value-added services and we avoid the time and expense of formal bidding. The school board is real comfortable and I would urge school districts which don't heavily use the program to look into it. **Scott Kennedy, Director of Operations, Central Bucks School District**

**Health**—Pinnacle Health signed up for COSTARS in 2010 as an "extension" to their use of national Group Purchasing Organizations (GPOs) in order to try to use more local suppliers. We have found that COSTARS pricing is often better than the national GPO contracts. Other health non-profits should take a look at COSTARS. It's a very good program and since there is no membership fee the ROI (Return on Investment) is infinite! **James Brennan, Director of Strategic Sourcing, Pinnacle Health**

**EMS Service**—On major purchases like rescue vehicles and ambulances, we want to deal with quality vendors with solid reputations, who will deliver on the specs that we require. The whole purchasing process is so much easier and quicker with COSTARS. **Robert Farrow, Pittsburgh EMS Division Chief**

## For more information regarding the COSTARS Program contact:

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## Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

## Department of General Services



### Member Brochure

## What is COSTARS?

COSTARS is the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Cooperative Purchasing Program, a service provided by the Department of General Services for Local Public Procurement Units within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as established by Section 1902 of Act 57 on May 15, 1998, as amended by Act 142 of December 3, 2002, 62 Pa. C.S. Section 1902, and Act 77 of July 15, 2004, 62 Pa. C.S. Sections 1902 and 2107. These acts authorize Local Public Procurement Units to participate in those contracts for supplies and services made available by the Department of General Services. Eligible Local Public Procurement Units are defined as:

- ★ Any political subdivision;
- ★ Any public authority;
- ★ Any tax-exempt, nonprofit educational or public health institution or organization;
- ★ Any nonprofit fire, rescue, or ambulance company;
- ★ And to the extent provided by law, any other entity, including a council of government or an area government that expends public funds for the procurement of supplies and services.

The Department of General Services reserves the right to review and determine eligible applicants as Local Public Procurement Units on a case-by-case basis.

## Becoming a member is easy!

To become a COSTARS member, your organization can register online at <http://www.costars.state.pa.us>.

## What are the benefits of being a COSTARS member?

**DOLLAR SAVINGS**—Volume purchasing results in lower prices; using established state contracts eliminates the need for specification development; advertising, printing, mailing, and bid evaluation.

**CONVENIENCE**—Using state contracts facilitates the purchase of goods and services by simply issuing a purchase order to the state contract supplier of record.

**FLEXIBILITY AND VARIETY**—A broad selection of commodities and suppliers is offered to our more than 8,000 program members. More than 200 state contracts, with a pool of over 2,000 suppliers, are currently available for use by participants. This variety often gives local public agencies the option of keeping their procurement dollars in their local economy, thereby helping to maintain and generate jobs and advancing local economic development.

**EDUCATION**—Free workshops, online training and a quarterly newsletter are provided by the COSTARS staff to assist members on how to use state contracts, how to purchase from specific contracts of interest, as well as other topics of interest and trends in government purchasing.

## Examples of contracts available through the COSTARS program!

### ★ **Statewide Contracts**

Vehicles  
Sodium chloride (road salt)  
Power equipment  
Recycling containers  
Backhoes and loaders  
Wireless communications services  
Gasoline and fuel oil  
Aggregates (stone)  
Carpet  
Tires

### ★ **COSTARS Exclusive Contracts**

Furniture, A/V & Musical Instruments  
Food  
IT hardware and software  
Copiers, Document Imaging & MFDs  
Janitorial supplies  
Pest control services  
Voting systems  
Fire/EMS vehicles and supplies  
Office supplies  
Graphic & Printing services & equipment  
MRO equipment and supplies  
Toiletries  
Recreational and fitness equipment  
Water & wastewater treatment chemicals and equipment  
Waste, recycling containers  
LED traffic signals  
Medical and laboratory supplies  
Street lighting and parking meters  
Municipal and passenger vehicles  
Signage  
Energy conservation supplies  
Energy consulting services  
Grounds Keeping services and supplies  
Uniforms  
Appliances, cafeteria supplies and equipment  
Heavy Equipment Rental

For a complete listing of all contracts available to Local Public Procurement Units, please visit our website at [www.costars.state.pa.us](http://www.costars.state.pa.us).