

COSTARS Connection

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



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES

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Tom Wolf, Governor
Curt Topper, Secretary

NEW COSTARS-exclusive Contract Electronic Bidding!

As of Feb. 7, 2022, suppliers submitting a bid to be awarded a COSTARS-exclusive contract will now submit their bids electronically. The Department of General Services' COSTARS and IT teams have been diligently working on the creation of a long-awaited electronic bidding portal for the submission of new bids since Spring of 2021.

Prior to 2022, the bidding process for COSTARS-exclusive contracts involved a hard copy "bid package" consisting of lengthy PDF and Excel worksheets. The PDF was the cumulation of multiple documents explaining the bidding process, contract terms and conditions, specifications, and other important information. The Excel worksheet, also known as the bid item workbook, was the document the suppliers used to define product categories, manufacturers, and pricing standards they would offer to members under the awarded contract. Suppliers found this process a daunting task and, in many cases, the approval process would take 6-8 weeks until a supplier received an awarded contract.

As the world experienced changes due to the pandemic, it became very clear that an electronic bidding platform would be the most efficient and cost-effective way for new suppliers to bid on COSTARS contracts. There would no longer be a need to pass hardcopy bids from one individual in the approval process to the next. Instead, the platform allows for a workflow that automatically alerts the next approver when it is their time to review the bid. Bidders no longer need to pay for postage when submitting a bid, nor do they incur the time loss of their bid's travel from the post office to DGS. The wait time for a bidding supplier to be awarded a contract will also be lessened. The COSTARS team expects the award process to drop to the 4-6-week timeframe for a bid's progression to the award phase.

This change will also benefit COSTARS members in several ways. Bid item workbooks were often hard to read because of photocopy degradation or handwritten submissions. The electronic bids will have a much more standardized presence providing more consistency to members during their supplier search. Also, many of our members recommend participation in the program to suppliers they speak with about projects. The shortened approval process allows members faster access to new suppliers, providing a more efficient procurement process for members and the ability for suppliers to begin working with these new clients quickly.

As current contracts are renewed throughout 2022, suppliers will resubmit their bids through the electronic bidding portal. By March of 2023, all COSTARS-exclusive contracts should be in the new contract configuration with a contract number assignment in the electronic bidding's contract numbering format.

Interested in bidding on a COSTARS-exclusive contract?

Click to view the
Guide to COSTARS Contracts
to find the contract that fits
your products and services.



Ready to bid? Visit www.dgs.pa.gov/COSTARS >
COSTARS Supplier Information > COSTARS Electronic Bidding Opportunities

A program overview and electronic bidding demonstration can be
accessed by viewing our recorded webinar for new suppliers,
"[COSTARS: Your Portal to Local Public Procurement Sales.](#)"

GreenGov for the WIN!

By Jarod Ganci, COSTARS Marketing Manager

Have you heard of the [GreenGov Council](#)? This special program is co-chaired by the departments of General Services, Environmental Protection, and Conservation and Natural Resources. Their goal is simple, yet extremely essential in today's world - to educate and encourage the incorporation of environmentally sustainable practices into the commonwealth's policy, planning, operations, procurement, and regulatory functions. They partner with the Penn State Sustainability Institute to keep up on best practices and deliver valuable information about how you can implement changes in your organization today!

Recently, GreenGov has committed to working with state agencies to reduce overall energy consumption by 3 percent per year by 2025, as well as replace 25 percent of the state passenger fleet with Battery Electric Vehicles (BEVs) and Plug-in Hybrids Electric Vehicles (PHEVs) by 2025. In line with this initiative, **COSTARS-25 and COSTARS-26 offer Alternate Fuel Conversions and Alternate Fuel vehicles** to COSTARS members. There is also a **statewide contract** offering **Green (Eco-Friendly) Vehicles** that members have access to. If you are a COSTARS member in need of new vehicles for your fleet, you may consider environmentally sustainable options available through COSTARS-participating contracts to help you save money while also saving the planet!

On that same note, if you are wondering how to implement sustainable practices into your organization's facility, **COSTARS-17 Waste, Recycling and Materials Handling Containers** provides goods and services related to the disposal and removal of waste/recycling materials. Contact one of our suppliers who is participating in COSTARS-17 to see how you can get access to Recycling and Material Handling Containers, Commercial and Industrial Waste Compactors, Dumpsters (rear and front load), Shredders, and Trash/Recycling Containers (indoor and outdoor). To learn more about these and other COSTARS contracts visit our website at www.dgs.pa.gov/COSTARS or contact us at GS-pacostars@pa.gov.



Finding "Green" in COSTARS Contracts

Environmentally sustainable products and services can be found in many COSTARS contracts.

COSTARS-Exclusive Contracts

COSTARS-5 Janitorial Supplies
COSTARS-8 Maintenance, Repair and Operation (MRO)
COSTARS-26 Passenger Vehicles
COSTARS-28 Energy Conservation Management Supplies
COSTARS-29 Grounds Keeping Services and Supplies
COSTARS 30 - Energy Consulting Services
COSTARS 33 - Street Lighting, Parking Meters & Street Furniture
COSTARS-41 Stormwater Management Products and Services

COSTARS-participating, Statewide Contracts

4400020404 - Carpeting and Resilient Flooring
4400012521 - Dilution Control
4400012531 - Dishwashing Chemicals
4400015790 - Green (Eco-Friendly) Vehicles
4400016344 - Maintenance, Repair and Operations
998002 - Supplies Manufactured & Services Performed by Persons with Disabilities - Janitorial Supplies
4400011997 - Various Fuels, Tank Wagon Delivery
4400023919 - Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations

GreenGov Council News

Sustainability Webinar Series

The following webinar series, hosted by the GreenGov Council and Penn State University Sustainability Institute, is free and open to the public. If you would like to attend any of these webinars, complete the [webinar series survey](#) to register and receive the webinar log in information.

Sustainability and Resilience in the Community

Date: March 11, 2022 / 1:00 p.m. - 1:45 p.m.

Speaker: Maureen Krouse, MPH, MCHES, Manager of Community Health and Outreach, Lankenau Medical Center

This webinar will focus on programs to develop more resilient foodways that improve community health as well as actions that help to build community engagement around local food and healthcare systems.

Household Carbon Reduction, Part 1: Energy Saving Utility Programs

Date: April 8, 2022 / 1:00 p.m. - 1:45 p.m.

Speaker: Joseph Sherrick, Supervisor, Technical Utility Services, Policy & Planning, Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission

Representatives from the PA Public Utility Commission will give an overview of utility energy-saving and rebate programs such as the PAMPowerSwitch, PAGasSwitch and current Act 129 incentives and protections available for customers.

[Sign up for the GreenGov Council Newsletter](#) to learn more about the council's efforts and become aware of future, green educational opportunities.

Commonwealth of PA RESTOC Program

By Felicia Campbell, COSTARS Marketing Manager

The Commonwealth and COSTARS unite in PPE Procurement! PPE procurement for a common cause.

The effects of COVID-19 on day-to-day procurement strategies were felt not only locally, but globally during the height of the pandemic. Like most goods in the United States, the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) market supply is based on demand. The U.S. PPE supply chain has minimal ability to rapidly surge production so PPE shortages proved challenging during this turbulent time. Pennsylvania found itself competing not only with the Federal government and other states but also with other countries, multi-national organizations and companies as it attempted to source PPE. Simply put, the market for PPE suddenly became the "wild west," with PPE pricing soaring by the hour.

In order to provide optimal health security for our citizens, the commonwealth, through the Department of General Services (DGS), has created a new program designed to retain an ongoing stockpile of PPE categories that can serve state and local public response entities through an emergency. The Replenishment of Emergency Stockpile Through Ongoing Cooperation (RESTOC) program's mission is to encourage and facilitate participation of COSTARS members and governmental agencies to procure PPE through the commonwealth's stockpile to ensure best value of tax-payer money and maintain proper stock rotations.

The commonwealth is committed to retaining a 60-day crisis level of inventory on all PPE categories in the stockpile. We encourage all COSTARS members to utilize the RESTOC program for all PPE procurement in RESTOC available product categories to ensure the commonwealth's PPE remains up-to-date and ready for deployment in any emergency.

Product Categories Available Through RESTOC

- Surgical Masks
- N95 Masks / KN95 Masks
- Face Shields
- Gloves
- Gowns
- Coveralls
- Alcohol Prep Pads
- Hand Sanitizers
- Disinfectant Wipes & Sprays

HOW DOES PROCUREMENT THROUGH RESTOC BENEFIT YOU?

Cost Savings!

Combined COSTARS member and state agency PPE purchases through RESTOC supplier contracts allows for reduced costs of these materials.

Ease-of-use!

RESTOC contracts are simple to locate. They will be assigned a contract number on eMarketplace and members will order directly from the supplier using that contract number.

Be a Part of the Solution!

With procurement through RESTOC, you ensure emergency responders are prepared with PPE in an emergency. PPE will be fresh and ready for deployment with no interruption from supply chain challenges.



The RESTOC Program is expected to launch in the summer of 2022.

Watch future newsletters, the [COSTARS website](#) and COSTARS social media for announcements on the launch date and instructions on purchasing from RESTOC.

See page 4 of this newsletter for information on a webinar, coming in April, which will provide more details on this new program!

2022 COSTARS Webinar Schedule

The COSTARS marketing team is laser-focused on educating COSTARS members and suppliers on COSTARS program benefits. We have created an exciting line-up of webinars helping our participants build on what they already know about the program to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of member procurement processes and provide suppliers with knowledge of member needs so they can better serve their clients.

We hope you have the opportunity to join us for one or many of this year's sessions. **Visit our event calendar found at www.dgs.pa.gov/COSTARS > Program Resources to register for a COSTARS webinar.**

<i>Date</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Event Type</i>
4/5/2022	RESTOC Program: The Commonwealth and COSTARS Unite in PPE Procurement	The commonwealth's Replenishment of Emergency Stockpile Through Ongoing Cooperation (RESTOC) program will launch this Summer. Join the COSTARS team to learn more about this PPE procurement opportunity.	Member Webinar
5/10/2022	Level Up: Become a COSTARS Superstar!	Join the COSTARS team for an informative session that will explore the best practices of using the program to help you get most out of your member benefits!	Member Webinar
6/7/2022	A Guide to COSTARS Marketing	I am a supplier who holds a COSTARS-exclusive or a statewide, COSTARS-participating contract. How do I engage with COSTARS members? How do members know about the products and services I offer at a competitive price? These questions and more are answered in this Supplier Guide to a Successful Member Experience. Suppliers will learn how to locate the member contact list and create impactful marketing to make them top of mind when a member needs the products and services they offer.	Supplier Webinar
9/27/2022	Missing Pieces? Exploring COSTARS-enabled Statewide Contracts	When you search for contracts in the COSTARS program, do you typically search only COSTARS-exclusive contracts? Did you know there are more than 100 statewide contracts available for COSTARS members in eMarketplace? In this session, we will focus on the products and services our members may be missing out on from these statewide contracts. Many members are not aware these contracts offer many products that may compliment products purchased from COSTARS-exclusive contracts? Do your vehicles need tires? We know where you can find them!	Member Webinar
10/12/2022	Navigating the Sodium Chloride Program	The Sodium Chloride (Bulk Road Salt) contract is one of the most-used contracts by COSTARS members. It also is the contract that we receive the most questions about through our customer service phone number and email account. Join us for an in-depth discussion about this contract where you'll learn about the deadlines around this program and the terms and conditions to participate in the program each year.	Member Webinar

Links to COSTARS webinar recordings can be found at www.dgs.pa.gov/COSTARS >

COSTARS Process - Online Trainings.

This webpage is organized in two sections: Member Trainings and Supplier Trainings.



COSTARS in the News



November

New Castle News - The New Castle Area School District school board approved an agreement with Keystone Sports Construction to replace the synthetic turf on the athletic field at Taggart Stadium and replace the rubberized surface on the track at the football stadium at 815 Cunningham Ave. The board also approved a contract with The Garland Co. Inc. to provide design and bid management services for replacing the first-floor roof of the George Washington Intermediate School and the roof on the Croton Administration building. The district used contracted suppliers from the COSTARS Cooperative Purchasing Program and therefore was not required to advertise for bids for the project.

December

Tribune-Review - Greensburg Salem School District made use of the state's COSTARS bidding program to buy a Ford F250 pickup and a snow plow from Smail Commercial Center a high-roof cargo van from Kenny Ross Ford, and a new high school dishwasher from TriMark.

The Times Leader - The Luzerne County Convention Center Authority approved the purchase from Johnson Controls, through COSTARS, the state's cooperative purchasing program, of two replacement HVAC units.

The Daily News - Shirley Township officials okayed two proposals - one for a chassis and one for upfit features - in order to add a new work truck to the township fleet. The 2022 Chevrolet Silverado MD four-wheel drive regular cab work truck chassis will be provided by Turner Chevrolet and the customization will be performed by MJR Equipment of Harrisburg. The township secured both quotes via the state's COSTARS program.

Daily Courier - Perry Township supervisors approved construction of and equipment for a playground in Wickhaven through the state COSTARS Cooperative Purchasing program. Grants from the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and Fayette County helped to cover project costs.

Meadville Tribune - Meadville Area Water Authority board members unanimously approved the purchase of a new front-end loader. The 2022 CASE 321F compact wheel loader will be purchased from Groff Tractor and Equipment of Cranberry. The purchase was made through COSTARS, the state's cooperative buying program.

The Citizens Voice & Sunday Voice - The Wilkes-Barre city council approved the spend for vehicles and projects, including an ice skating rink for Public Square. The administration chose Sport Resource Group, a vendor in the state's COSTARS cooperative purchasing program, to provide a standalone rink system. The council also authorized the administration to purchase four 2022 police vehicles from Rottet Motors in Tamaqua and to have Kovatch Inc. upfit the vehicles as well as two special-purpose vehicles from Polaris Sales, Inc.. The vehicles, including two Ford Police Interceptor Utility caged SUVs, one Interceptor Utility uncaged SUV and one Ford F-150 Police Responder pickup, Polaris Ranger Crews side-by-side, and a Polaris 570 Premium quad, and the upfitting were purchased from the state's COSTARS cooperative purchasing program.

Standard-Speaker - The Butler Twp. Board of Supervisors approved the purchase of municipal door controls from NRG from the COSTARS program.

January

Standard-Speaker - Sugarloaf Twp. supervisors agreed to buy a police vehicle which they will buy from a supplier whose bid has been approved by the state's cooperative purchasing program, COSTARS.

The Times Leader - The Hanover Area School Board approved a copier lease agreement from Jay's Business Systems, Inc. The deal is being made through the state's COSTARS system.

Butler Eagle - Adams Township moved forward with the purchase of a new 2024 Peterbilt winter maintenance plow truck and a new drum-style model 12XP Intimidator chipper. Both pieces of equipment are being purchased through the state COSTARS cooperative purchasing program.

The Times Leader - Wyoming Valley West School Board approved the purchase of a 2022 Chevrolet Express 2500 Cargo Van from Bonner Chevrolet Co., Inc. The purchase is made through the state COSTARS system.



COSTARS Program Evolution, the Sequel

As you can tell from the Electronic Bidding article on page one and the staff promotions announced in the Autumn, 2021 newsletter, the COSTARS team is undergoing many changes to support the growth of the COSTARS program. As promised in the last newsletter, we are excited to introduce you to our newest team members!



Please welcome the COSTARS newest Commodity Specialist, Shelbie Pickering. Shelbie is originally from the village of North Bend in Clinton County, PA. The village is nestled in a small valley surrounded by the picturesque mountains of the Sproul State Forest that is known for colorful fall foliage, hunting, fishing, hang gliding and camping. She moved to Cumberland County in the early nineties to pursue a professional career following graduation from business school.

Shelbie started her employment with the commonwealth in 1994 at an independent state agency called the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council (PHC4), and she made several lifelong friends during her tenure there. Initially, she was part of the PHC4's support staff and then acquired a position in the agency's Fiscal Department as a Purchasing Agent. Shelbie transferred to the Department of General Services in 2008 with the Bureau of Vehicle Management as an Administrative Assistant and strived to document the maintenance of nearly all the vehicles in the commonwealth's fleet. Shelbie transferred to the Bureau of Procurement in May 2010 to become a Management Technician on the Transportation Team. In 2013, she became a Commodity Specialist on the Energy Team and though she enjoyed her time there, she recently decided that a career change would be nice. She wanted to experience a different side of procurement, so she accepted a position with the COSTARS Team. Shelbie's husband, Jeff, is also from her hometown and employed by the Commonwealth as well. Jeff is an avid hunter and is retired from the Army National Guard. She has a daughter, Emeline (Emily) and granddaughter, Ava, who live locally.

In her spare time, Shelbie enjoys spending time with close friends, taking multiple camping trips with her family every year in their travel trailer, and going to the beach. She also enjoys doing a variety of crafts, home improvement projects, is an avid walker, loves a challenging cardio workout, teaching the kiddos at church and spending time with her family at their small house settled in the mountains of her hometown. You can contact her at spickering@pa.gov or by phone at (717) 703-2947.



Over the past several months, COSTARS has been without a Management Technician. In comes Ray Laurent! He spent six years in the U.S. Air Force as a Aircrew Egress Technician. During that time he was responsible for a variety of duties including hazardous material waste and equipment management. Following his time in the military he completed his Bachelor of Science in Human Resource management. He then spent several years in the transportation sector working his way up from recruiting to Account Manager for Covenant Transport. He moved to Pennsylvania in 2019. He and his girlfriend, Heather, live in Harrisburg with their dog, Prancer. When he's not working he enjoys traveling, reading, visiting historical sites, and playing chess.

In this new position, Ray will be manning the phones and answering any questions members and suppliers have about the COSTARS program, as well as statewide contacts. His position is vital to the success of COSTARS and we are happy to have him join our team! You can contact him at GS-pacostars@pa.gov or 1-866-768-7827 for any information regarding the COSTARS program.



COSTARS is pleased to announce that we have another new member to the team! Meet Jarod Ganci, our new COSTARS Marketing Manager. He was born on a beautiful sunny day in Honolulu, Hawaii. Being a part of a military family, he has lived all over the county and the world, most notably in Vicenza Italy from 2008 - 2011. Jarod went to college at Coastal Carolina University in Conway, South Carolina and received a Bachelor's degree in Business Management. While attending college, he was also involved in the AMA (American Marketing Association) and held a Student Assistant position in the Spadoni College of Education. He misses the bright and sunny beaches of South Carolina but is glad to move up north where he can enjoy colder weather.

After graduating from college, Jarod got an internship working as a junior marketing manager with a civil engineering firm in Mechanicsburg, PA. He learned the ins and outs of marketing in a service-related industry. After completing his internship, he was offered a full-time position as a Business Development Manager, where he put his marketing and sales skills to good use. Looking to change up his career path and delve into more marketing activities, Jarod is happy to now be promoting the COSTARS program and brings some amazing skills to the table. Jarod will be working on spreading the word about the COSTARS Cooperative Purchasing program to every corner of the commonwealth by developing and delivering trainings, webinars, in-person presentations, and representing COSTARS at expos and conventions. He is excited to work for a program that is essential to the economic development of not only the Greater Harrisburg Area, but all of Pennsylvania.

You can contact him at GS-pacostars@pa.gov or 1-866-768-7827 for any information regarding the COSTARS program.

COSTARS in the News (cont.)

January (cont.)

Standard-Speaker - Carbon County commissioners approved a proposal from Radio Maintenance Inc. of Reading for a new microwave link from the Bear Mountain Tower to the 911 Center and for 10 portable radios for the county prison under COSTARS. Also approved from a COSTARS contract was a proposal from Keystone Fire & Security of Allentown for design, installation and training on a video and audio recording system for the Emergency Operations and Training Center.

The Times Leader - The Wilkes-Barre City Council is entering into a lease-purchase agreement for two 2022 Mack 20-yard garbage packmasters from Triple Cities Mack. The vehicles will be bought through the state's cooperative purchasing program, COSTARS.

The Sentinel - The Cumberland Valley School Board approved several contracts for an HVAC/building renovation project at the Middlesex Elementary School. Projects include HVAC commissioning by HEA Engineers, of Wrightsville, paving, seal-coating and line striping by Tru-Trac Industries LLC, of Carlisle, a digital entrance site sign by Strickler Signs, of New Oxford, and a furniture, fixtures and equipment purchase for additional classroom furniture from Tanner Furniture Inc., of Harrisburg, through COSTARS agreements.

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.

Upcoming Events

April 14: Schaedler Yesco Expo

April 26: LV Meet the Buyers Expo

April 24-27: PSATS 2022 Conference

May 22-23: PSAB Annual Conference & Expo

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 COSTARS Marketing at toll free telephone number 1-866-768-7827 or email to G5-PaCostars@pa.gov. The COSTARS Marketing Team's Calendar of Events is also available on the COSTARS website on the COSTARS Program Resources page.



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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.

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