

COSTARS Connection

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

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Summer 2021



Tom Wolf, Governor
Curt Topper, Secretary

Department of General Services Announced as a Leader in Sustainable Electronics Procurement with a 2021 EPEAT Purchaser Award

By Felicia Campbell, COSTARS Marketing Manager

The Department of General Services (DGS) has been recognized as a 2021 EPEAT Purchaser Award winner, which celebrates leaders in sustainable electronics procurement. The award comes from the Global Electronics Council (GEC), the non-profit organization that manages the EPEAT ecolabel. EPEAT allows our agency to efficiently address the lifecycle impacts of the electronics we purchase, including computers, displays, printers, copiers, network equipment, mobile phones, servers, photovoltaic modules, inverters, and televisions.

We use EPEAT in purchasing contracts to require that our vendors only provide electronics that meet strict sustainability criteria. These products are more energy efficient, less toxic, longer lasting, and easier to recycle than products that do not meet EPEAT criteria while addressing labor and human rights issues along the entire supply chain.

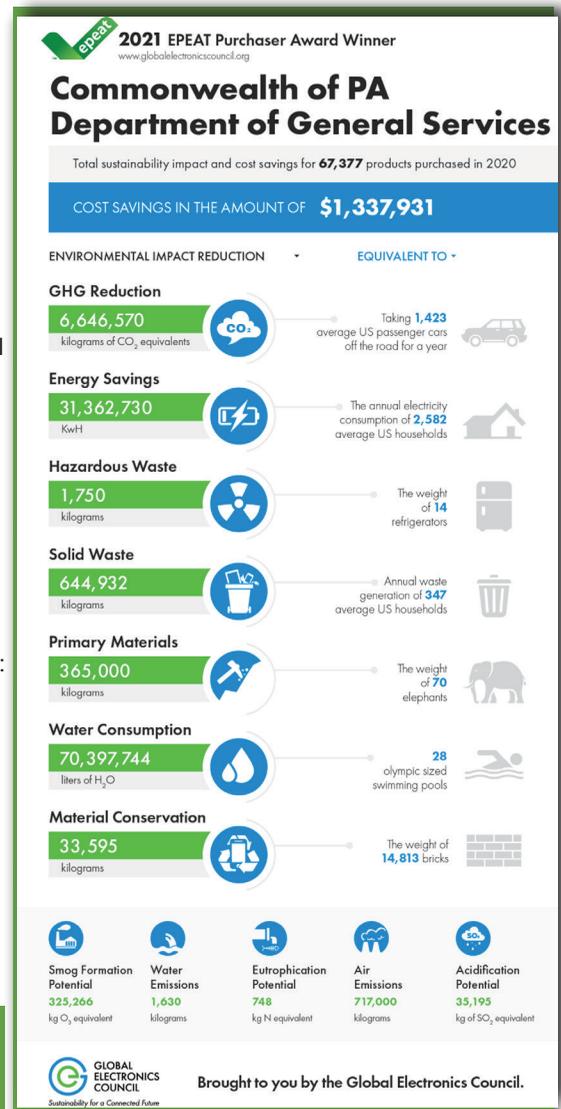
Buying these sustainable products moves us closer to achieving our goals of:

- Collectively reduce overall energy consumption by 3 percent per year, and 21 percent by 2025 from 2017 levels.
- Replace 25 percent of the state passenger car fleet with battery electric and plug-in electric hybrid cars by 2025 and evaluate opportunities for the reduction of vehicle miles traveled and incorporation of new technology where appropriate.
- Procure renewable energy to offset at least 40 percent of the commonwealth's annual electricity use and evaluate opportunities to source electricity through Pennsylvania Certified Tier I credits, and/or direct purchase of renewable power generation sited within the commonwealth.



As a winner, we received a calculation of the environmental and cost benefits associated with our EPEAT-registered purchases, as demonstrated in this infographic provided by GEC.

DGS is proud to have received this recognition and is committed to continued procurement of sustainable electronics!



Tera Akpan Retirement

After more than 18 years of service to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, COSTARS Commodity Specialist Tera Akpan is retiring. In the past 10 years, Tera has played an instrumental role in the success of the COSTARS Program; first taking on the responsibilities of management technician in 2011, and then moving to her current position as commodity specialist in 2014. Presently, Tera manages five contracts, with more than 160 authorized suppliers and nearly \$30 million in spend.



Tera began her commonwealth career at the Museum Commission in 1994. After four years with the commonwealth, she took time off to successfully open and run her own business. In 2006, she returned to the commonwealth as a clerk-typist for the Department of Corrections, finally joining the Department of General Services in 2007. Since then, she has dedicated her time to providing outstanding customer service, researching current product advancements, creating new contracts, and enhancing supplier relationships. Tera's latest accomplishments include research and development of two new COSTARS contracts, COSTARS-40 Security and Surveillance and Fire Alarm Systems and Services, and COSTARS-42 Electronic Monitoring Services and Equipment.

"I enjoyed the closeness of our team, how well we worked together, and all the fun memories at our team meetings. I would never leave a meeting without a good laugh!" Tera said. "Although I will miss everyone, I am looking forward to starting a new chapter in life with my husband and children."

Tera's warm smile and calm demeanor, fantastic sense of humor, and of course her great fashion sense will be missed, but we wish her all the best in this exciting new chapter!

DGS Executive Team Visits Penn College of Technology

Recently, the Department of General Services (DGS) executive team including DGS Secretary Topper, Deputy Secretary for Procurement Hess, Bureau of Vehicle Management Director Fiore, and Bureau of Vehicle Management Assistant Director Tomlinson visited the Pennsylvania College of Technology to learn more about the college's educational offerings and how they support state government initiatives, including one of them being the ongoing implementation of electric vehicles (EV) and EV charging stations throughout the commonwealth.

According to Patrick Marty, Penn College Chief of Staff, the group visited a variety of instructional areas with Penn College representatives, including collision repair, HVAC technology, building construction technology, and automotive.

Secretary Topper reinforced his belief in the outcomes driven by the educational model at Penn College, and it's partner Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology. "As policymakers, there is an increased call for investment in the areas these institutions already serve: providing STEM and information technology-related education; maintaining and growing industry partnerships; and strengthening of secondary education career pathways," Topper said.

Deputy Secretary Hess was especially proud to visit his alma mater, having obtained an associate degree in business management from Penn College's predecessor, Williamsport Area Community College (WACC) in 1981. Hess spoke about his time on campus, "I am proud to see my alma mater grow into such a significant educational and economic force, statewide and nationally," Hess said.

To read more about DGS' recent visit, or to learn more about Penn College, visit <https://pctoday.pct.edu/state-general-services-executive-team-tours-main-campus/>.



Secretary Topper and Deputy Secretary Hess tour the facility.



DGS executive team visiting automotive instructional area.



Assistant Director Tomlinson using the latest automotive technology learning tools.

GreenGov Council News

Tool helps you save time and money in fleet electrification planning.

If you're a local government or business considering transitioning your fleet to electric vehicles, check out the [Dashboard for Rapid Vehicle Electrification](#) (DRVE) developed by the Electrification Coalition. The DRVE tool uses your data to custom-calculate within minutes the total cost of ownership and emission factors for conventional vehicles and comparable EVs and plug-in hybrid EVs.

Rebate funding available now for electric vehicle charger installation.

A rebate from the DEP Driving PA Forward program can help you defray the cost of installing an electric vehicle charger. Rebates are available for installation of Level 2 EV chargers in a workplace, public space, or multi-unit residential building. Eligible applicants: Businesses, educational institutions, incorporated nonprofits, local, state, and federal government agencies, air quality and transportation organizations, transportation planning organizations, and parking authorities.

For more information, a webinar on how to apply, and a link to the application portal, visit [Driving PA Forward](#). Under "Grant and Rebate Programs," click on "Level 2 EV Charging Rebate Program."

Grants available now to small businesses for energy efficiency projects.

The DEP 2021 Small Business Advantage Grants program has funding available to small businesses and farmers who want to improve their operations and reduce operating costs through energy efficiency, pollution prevention, and natural resource protection.

Pennsylvania small business owners with 100 or fewer full-time employees can get 50 percent matching funds up to \$5,000 for HVAC and boiler upgrades, high-efficiency LED lighting, solvent recovery and waste recycling systems, auxiliary power units that eliminate truck engine idling, and other projects that reduce energy use. Find information on how to apply at dep.pa.gov/smallbusinessadvantagegrants.

To sign up for the GreenGov Council quarterly newsletter, visit: <https://signup.e2ma.net/signup/1933181/1790186/>.

The Post-Pandemic Classroom

By Felicia Campbell, COSTARS Marketing Manager

For the past year and a half, COVID-19 has drastically changed our lives. From our social interactions to where and how we work, our routine has been completely reimagined. Nowhere have we seen this exemplified more than in the education of our students. Our children have had to adapt to a wholly online learning environment, then, in many cases, pivot to a hybrid of classroom/online rotation of learning. This fluctuation of learning environments has affected both the children and their families as many parents had to juggle various transportation schedules during hybrid learning and help their children during at-home, online instruction periods.



No doubt, as we move back to “normality,” we will find we begin to reimagine our lives using lessons we have learned and positive take-aways during our pandemic experience. We are already seeing a transformation in the adult workplace in the way many employers now view telework. Because methods used to teach and learning atmospheres so drastically changed in a moment’s notice, we will certainly see an evolution in the classroom too.

Today’s student, using mobile devices during instruction, have become accustomed to a more informal learning setting and interactive collaboration. Furnishing for flexibility within the classroom will be key to educating children in the style that best “speaks to them.” Classrooms that can easily be modified to change to different methods of instruction will prove to be the best use of space in schools. Classrooms with mobile walls and desks with casters to help create small breakout pods, or the ability to enlarge two spaces to one large instructional space will allow teachers to easily change from lecture to collaborative workspaces with ease. The addition of soft seating will also give children the comfort of home while performing individual study in the classroom.

Prior to the pandemic, educators were investing in more technology in the classroom. This trend will likely continue as we have learned the benefits of technology and telepresence in the classroom. Enhanced audio-visual capabilities will allow teachers to bring innovative and energetic guest speakers into the classroom, virtually, allowing for a two-way interaction between the class and the speaker.

As our classrooms evolve, school districts may need to explore their infrastructure capabilities to ensure hi-tech assets are protected and efficient. IT departments may consider increasing WiFi in each classroom, look at power infrastructure/monitoring, as well as search storage and charging products like lockable device carts or multi-device charging stations for workspaces. Device management and maintenance will also become a hot topic for educational IT departments with limited staffing. These departments have absorbed much more responsibility with the deployment of one-to-one devices as well as having to troubleshoot and provide help services to the users.

Schools that find the extra workload of managing one-to-one resources may choose to procure a services model of device management. In this model, a third-party would be responsible for taking all new devices out of their packaging (and disposing of the packaging waste), configuring the devices, providing asset management tracking to get them ready for deployment, and managing the maintenance and upgrades within the device fleet.

Our children’s education is vital, so our classrooms must continue to evolve with the needs of the students of today and continue to innovate for the students of tomorrow. Just as flexibility will be key to success in a classroom setting, the COSTARS Program offers its members flexibility and competitive pricing through a quick and uncomplicated procurement process.

COSTARS-exclusive Classroom-related Contracts

COSTARS-3 IT Hardware

Desktop Computers, Monitors, and Printers • Laptops/Notebooks and Personal Computing Devices • Peripherals and Networking Gear • Barcode Equipment for Scanning and Printing • Servers and Data Storage • Items to Support Multimedia Communications and LANs • Data Communication Equipment (Computer-to-Computer) • Data Center Equipment/Appliances

COSTARS-4 Office, School and Library Supplies

Industry Standard General Office Supplies • Paper • School Supplies • Toner Cartridges (including remanufactured) • Library Books or Print Materials • Library Non-Print • Library Supplies

COSTARS-6 Software

Software (also known in the industry as “shrink wrap” software, downloadable software, on-premise software and on-premise software as a subscription • Telephone Support Services during normal business • Subscription Services including periodic updates, corrections, fixes and enhancements to the software • Maintenance including corrections of defects in the software, so that the software performs the functions described in the software’s manuals and documentation

COSTARS-30 Energy Consulting Services

Rate Auditing Services • Commercial Energy Audits • Utility Bill Auditing • Software Analysis Services • Technical Support Services • Marketing Analysis Services • Energy Monitoring, Analysis and Advice • Database Development and Maintenance Services • Brokerage Services

COSTARS-34 Theater (Auditorium) Furniture, Fixtures, Audio/Visual Equipment and Musical Instruments

Theater (Auditorium) Furniture, Seating and Storage • Accessories • Podiums, Lecterns and Stands • Fixtures • Portable Stage, Risers, and Skirting • Room Dividers, Portable Partitions, Stage Curtains • Portable Storage Cabinets, Carts, and Accessories • Portable Stage Lighting and Accessories • Audio Equipment and Accessories • Monitor Equipment and Accessories • Camera Equipment and Accessories • Videoconferencing • Video Recorders/Receivers, Video Editing Equipment and Accessories • Presentation Equipment and Accessories • Projectors and Accessories • Musical Instruments

COSTARS-35 Furniture and Window Treatments

Audio/Visual Carts, Mounts and Stands • Book, Chair and Table Caddies, Carts and Trucks • Cafeteria Furniture • Casegoods • Computer Furniture, Ergonomic Keyboard Trays and Monitor Arms • Daycare and Preschool Furniture • Demountable Walls • Educational and Dormitory Furniture • Filing and Storage Units • Freestanding Bookcases, Display Cases, Literature Racks and Shelving • Freestanding Office Furniture, Task Lighting, Panels, Partitions and Privacy Dividers • Healthcare Furniture • Laboratory Furniture • Law Enforcement Furniture, Evidence Lockers, Weapons Racks and Storage • Library Furniture • Lobby, Lounge, Reception and Waiting Room Furniture • Mailroom Furniture and Carts • Meeting and Training Room Furniture, Lecterns and Podiums • Outdoor/Patio Furniture • Seating • Studio Furniture • Systems Furniture and Accessories • Tables • Window Blinds/Shades, Curtains/ Draperies, Drapery Hardware and Interior Shutters

Statewide COSTARS-participating Classroom-related Contracts

- Commercial Furniture—4400016531
- Consulting Services ITQ—4400007410
- Desktops, Laptops, Ultra-Portable Laptops, Tablets, Rugged Devices, Non-Traditional Desktops—6100039046
- Energy Supply and Management Services ITQ—4400020024
- Master Information Technology (IT) Services ITQ—440000480
- Professional Broadcast, Audio Visual & Multi-Media Equipment—6100046056
- Re-manufactured Furniture—4400016955



Navigating the Road Salt Contract

By Felicia Campbell, COSTARS Marketing Manager

As roles in organizations change, COSTARS members often reach out to the COSTARS team with questions about how to use the Sodium Chloride (Road Salt) contract. To assist our members, we want to present best practices of using the contract as well as provide some at-a-glance resources such as a timeline of actions within the process, definitions of confusing phrases, and highlights of some of most important terms and conditions of the contract.

It is important to remember that members need to opt into the road salt contract at the beginning of each year. Members are prompted via an email which provides the dates registration is open for salt submissions. Because email is the key method to receive notices like this about the COSTARS Program, members must regularly verify that the contact information in their member profile is current. To do this, visit www.dgs.pa.gov/COSTARS > Member Information > Members Area. Login, select your organization in the drop down list and then click the **Update Membership Details** button.

When creating a salt submission form for the next season's contract, members should provide realistic amounts in both the Initial Fill Required and Winter Fill Required fields. Members should use previous years submission forms as well as historical usage data as a guide to determine the next season's required amounts. Always keep your stockpile capacity in mind as you do not want to request amounts that exceed what you can store.

Jamon Fogarty, the Transportation Team's Commodity Manager for the Bureau of Procurement at DGS, says that the intent of the program's Initial Fill and Winter Fill request is for members to be able to order enough tonnage to fill their stockpiles in anticipation of the coming winter. "We want to avoid members taking a 'just in time' ordering approach which causes suppliers to be inundated with orders immediately leading into a winter event," Fogarty said. "Just in time ordering places a great deal of strain on the suppliers' delivery network, especially if we're experiencing a string of back-to-back storms. Using an advance ordering technique also helps the suppliers plan their mine production and inbound shipment schedules. For example, they use the initial fill numbers to verify they have a certain tonnage on hand to deliver during August through November. From there, they can plan their mining & storage capacity based on the expectation they will be delivering the initial fill tonnage they are keeping on hand. If little, or no salt orders are placed during the initial fill timeframe, it creates logistical challenges at the suppliers' stockpiles because they won't have the expected storage space for the winter fill tonnage that they have coming in from their mines."

Best Practices

1. Maintain current contact information in your member profile.
2. Retain past salt submissions.
3. Maintain road salt usage data.
4. Analyze previous submissions against historical usage data.
5. Be aware of your stockpile capacity and current fill amount.
6. Submit registration for new road salt season by March 15.
7. Save new salt contract from COSTARS Members Area in August.
8. Place Initial order with supplier between Aug. 1—Oct. 31.
9. Place Winter order with supplier between Nov. 1—July 31.
10. Confirm you've met the 60% purchase requirement for the contract.
11. Contact DGS immediately in the event of ordering/delivery issues.

ROAD SALT TIMELINE			
SEASON	START DATE	END DATE	TASK
Next	1 st Week of January	March 15	Salt application submission window for the next season is open for member registration
Next	April	July	DGS has new season's salt contract out for bid to potential suppliers
Next	August 1	October 31	Timeframe to place orders from Initial Tons you reserved for current season
Next	August 1	July 31 of next year	New season's salt contract available to members in COSTARS Members Area (Newsflash)
Current	November 1	July 31	Timeframe to place orders from Winter Tons you reserved for current season
Administrative	November 1		Members to confirm member profile has current contact information
Next	December	February	Analyze previous salt submission quantities against historical usage data
Current	May	June	Confirm you have met the 60% delivery requirement for the current contract

ROAD SALT DEFINITIONS	
PHRASE	WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
Initial Tons Required*	Your submitted amount of road salt to be purchased between Aug. 1, and Oct. 31
Winter Tons Required*	Your submitted amount of salt to be purchased between Nov. 1 and July 31
Total Tons Required	Total of the initial tons and winter tons submitted in an annual road salt application
* Not to exceed the member's stockpile capacity	

ROAD SALT TERMS & CONDITIONS HIGHLIGHTS
If your organization has multiple delivery locations, you must make note of it in the Salt Delivery Details of your Salt Request. The multiple delivery locations must be within the same county. A separate Salt Participation Agreement must be submitted for any delivery not within the same county.
You may review and/or edit your salt contract participation agreement at any time during the open registration period. Any changes to your agreement will supersede previous submissions within that season's registration period.
stated needs. The supplier may charge storage fees for any entity that does not meet their 60% minimum requirement. The supplier will provide up to 140% of the tonnage requirements at the contracted price. Do not assume DGS will be able to negotiate the waiving of storage fees with your supplier.
The minimum delivery is 22 Tons, or one truckload.
The contract will permit five (5) to seven (7) business days for delivery during the winter usage period depending on your organization's stockpile capacity.
When a new contract becomes available in August, your organization must place all orders directly with the correct awarded supplier. DGS will not place orders for your organization.
Your organization may not change any contract items, options or specifications for a purchase to be considered a contract purchase. You must order the items exactly as specified on the awarded contract to be within the contract terms.
All prices will be determined by Purchase Order date; therefore, NO Blanket Delivery Orders will be authorized on this contract.

Since most of us do not have a crystal ball to predict the future or the weather, the program is designed to provide members with security and flexibility, allowing for generous minimum and maximum total purchasing limits. Members are required to purchase at least 60% of their total required tons, during the contract year, to allow them flexibility during lighter winters. In the event of a harsher winter, suppliers will allow for purchasing up to 140 percent of the total required tons at the contracted price to ensure members will have the salt needed for passable roadways.



Shout out to COSTARS Management Technician Priscilla Bills who is always ready to help COSTARS members with their road salt contract questions!



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

By Felicia Campbell, COSTARS Marketing Manager

Continuing with our "Meet the..." series, the team in the spotlight this quarter is the Department of General Services (DGS) Complex Procurement Team. This dedicated team manages 1,665 individual supplier contracts; 41 of these contracts are COSTARS-participating.

In FY19/20, suppliers on the complex procurement contracts reported sales totaling more than \$1.7 million! These contracts can provide COSTARS members with equipment and services to keep you working safely and efficiently while managing your costs.

Margie Traynor

Complex Procurement Manager

martraynor@pa.gov



The Complex Procurement team handles all non-IT high profile, high dollar, unique procurements for statewide or agency-based needs. I oversee these procurements as well as many Invitation to Qualify (ITQ) contracts and all Master Agreements.

I started my career in the private sector and gained 15 years of purchasing experience. After that, I came to the public sector and now have nearly 15 years of procurement experience.

I enjoy working here at DGS and look forward to the future here at the commonwealth.

Sonya Schurtz

Complex Procurement Consultant

sschurtz@pa.gov



My entire career has been with the commonwealth! I started as a high school intern with the Department of Corrections, SCI-Camp Hill.

After graduating, I spent 13 years between SCI-Camp Hill and Headquarters. I have held many positions in the commonwealth, working my way up the ladder, but 20 out of 25 years in service to the commonwealth have been in a procurement role.

Before my promotion to complex procurement consultant at DGS, I was the ITQ administrator where I worked closely with COSTARS members who had questions about my ITQ contracts and COSTARS-participating suppliers. The thing I enjoy most about my job is how diverse our projects are!

As complex procurement consultants, we are responsible for researching and analyzing the supply marketplace, developing business requirements, and managing supplier relationships in collaboration with internal stakeholders. We are also responsible for managing and negotiating supply agreements across our team's assigned commodities.

Kelly Frederick

Complex Procurement Consultant

kefrederic@pa.gov



I have been working in procurement for 18 years: 13 of those years with the PA State Police and five years with DGS.

I love that my job allows me to be creative and I continually develop my skills from the experience gained from each project.

My job allows me to interact with a multitude of people from various agencies, and even COSTARS members and COSTARS-authorized suppliers at the PA Procurement Expo!

Each day brings an assortment of projects and interactions, so it always keeps me on my toes.

Kelly Warnick

Commodity Specialist

kwarnick@pa.gov



Between the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, the Southeast Veterans Center and DGS, I have more than 10 years of procurement experience. I love working with the Complex Procurement team because the knowledge my manager and coworkers possess makes each day a wonderful learning experience.

Assisting other commodity specialists, agencies, COSTARS members and suppliers has made this position one of the most fulfilling jobs I have ever had.

I'm responsible for 15 ITQ Parent Contracts and 11 Master Agreements. I look forward to many more years of learning from and serving my clients at DGS.

Equipment & Maintenance Contracts:

- Helicopters
- Security, Surveillance and Fire System Maintenance
- Snow Mobile Trail Grooming Units and Associated Equipment
- Temporary Rented Power and HVAC Equipment

Service Contracts:

- Consulting
- Creative
- Facilities Maintenance
- Freelance
- Lean Management
- Security Guards
- Sanitation and Disinfecting
- Training
- Tree Trimming

Master Agreements:

- Drexel University
- East Stroudsburg University
- Harrisburg Area Community College
- Harrisburg University
- Juniata College
- Lafayette College
- Lehigh University
- Pennsylvania State University
- Temple University
- Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania
- University of Pittsburgh
- Villanova University





COSTARS In the News

June

Montgomery Media
- A contract between the Montgomery County Department of Assets and Infrastructure and Bergey's Truck Center, of Conshohocken, covered the purchase

of two 2022 Mack Dump Trucks. According to the agreement, a contract from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's cooperative purchasing program, COSTARS, provided for the purchase.

The Daily Review - Towanda Township purchased 315 tons of 1D stone and an estimated 10,000 gallons of oil through the Pennsylvania's cooperative purchasing program, COSTARS, to be applied to three township roads.

Observer-Reporter - East Washington Borough plans to purchase a Tesla Model 3, making it one of the first in the state to use an electric police vehicle. The Tesla will be available to purchase through the COSTARS Program allowing the borough to obtain the best price for the vehicle and receive it sooner rather than later. Borough council representatives said electric cars are the future, and that reducing an environmental footprint was part of their decision.

July

Altoona Mirror - The Altoona Water Authority is resurfacing the final, cracked stretch of concrete channel that carries Glen White Run on the last leg of its journey to the creek's confluence with Kittanning Run, just below the visitors center at the Horseshoe Curve. Workers from National Gunite of Johnstown will do the work based on a contract arranged through the state's COSTARS cooperative purchasing program.

Tribune Review - A new pump track at Creekside Park in Oakmont is nearly complete. American Ramp Co. crews have been working on the site since mid-June. The project did not need to go out for bid because the company is an approved vendor through the state Department of General Services' COSTARS program.

The Ridgeway Record - The Fox Township Supervisors approved the purchase of a new code enforcement pickup truck through the COSTARS (Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's cooperative purchasing program). They have opted to purchase a 2022 Ford Ranger 4x4 with a six ft. box. The quote they received is likely to decrease once the municipality discount is figured into the cost.

The Journal - Thanks to COSTARS, Spartansburg Borough will be leasing a new truck through Bob Ferrando Ford World of Girard.

The Meadville Tribune - West Mead Township Supervisors unanimously approved the purchase of a generator capable of powering nearly all of the township building's operations. The generator, is being purchased from Palco Generator Sales Corp. of Norvelt. The sale was conducted through COSTARS, the state's cooperative purchasing program.

The Journal - The Union City Borough Council voted in March to purchase a handicapped-accessible restroom building through COSTARS, a state cooperative purchasing agreement that enables participating municipalities to make purchases effectively and efficiently.

FAMILY FUN SCAVENGER HUNT!



By Felicia Campbell, COSTARS Marketing Manager

Deciding on content for newsletter articles is sometimes a challenging feat. Other times, however, a personal conversation can spark an idea that I just can't wait to write about.

Recently, I was chatting with a friend who was telling me about a Pennsylvania scavenger hunt challenge and all the wonderful adventures she

and her family have experienced this summer trying to accomplish each "task." These scavenger hunts allow her family to tour interesting sites throughout the commonwealth while spending very little money on their excursions! Better yet, their outings help to support our communities.

She described a trip, just down the road, to see a "Champion Tree," which I'd never heard of before. She also detailed a fun trip to explore the town of Jim Thorpe, reliving her childhood by smashing a penny in a souvenir coin machine, and describing some of the treasures she found when visiting a unique shop during her trip. Her animated tales of adventure made me want start my tour of the Commonwealth immediately!

As fall is quickly approaching, it is a great time to start a scavenger hunt challenge of your own. There are numerous scavenger hunt ideas available online – some commonwealth-wide and some that are town-specific. In my opinion, the best scavenger hunt is custom-made to the interests of your own family.

Before you start on your scavenger hunt, build a plan. Decide on the tasks you want to accomplish, create an excursion calendar, and set a deadline to complete your goals. The COSTARS team is offering some scavenger hunt ideas and resources you can include in your family's plan:

1. Visit a small town in PA that you've never been to (explore some ideas at [Enchanting Main Streets | visitPA](#)).
 - a. Take a picture of a unique or funny item for sale in a shop you've never visited before.
 - b. Eat at a diner or café in the town.
 - c. Find a magnet or post card with the town's name on it.
2. Keep a journal of your scavenger hunt travel highlights.
3. Photograph five historical markers ([Search Historical Markers](#) by county and topic of interest).
4. Visit a state park (there are 121 in PA—view DCNR's [State Park List](#)).
 - a. Take a picture of 3 different animals in the park.
 - b. Take a picture of a flower.
 - c. Take a selfie next to an interesting tree, large rock or waterfall.
5. Find a tourism pamphlet for a historical location.
6. Take a picture with a Champion Tree (search a list of Champion Trees at [PA Big Trees](#)).
7. Visit a city
 - a. Take a photo with an outdoor art installation or monument.
 - b. Take a selfie in front of a cool mural.
8. Visit a farmer's market (explore [Farmer's Market](#) options).
9. Attend a carnival or fair.
10. Visit a covered bridge (search [PA Covered Bridges](#)).
11. Take a historical train ride.
12. Find a souvenir coin machine to smash a penny.
13. Take a photo in front of or inside a PA college or university library (explore the Dept. of Education's [PA Higher Ed. Campus Map](#)).
14. Find a funny street sign.
15. Explore a PA Trail ([ExplorePaTrails](#) for a list of trails to visit).



COSTARS On The Road (Virtually!)

The COSTARS Marketing Team's mission is to spread the message about the COSTARS Program, recruit new members and suppliers, and provide training about the program.

Recent Events

- June 9 Technology Roadmap: What Technology Upgrades will be Keys to Your Success? Webinar
- July 13 Going Green: COSTARS Contracts That Save Your Green Webinar
- Aug. 11 COSTARS Communications Solutions Webinar

Upcoming Events



2021 VIRTUAL
PA PROCUREMENT EXPO
WWW.PAPROUREMENTEXPO.COM
Business & Government Working Together!

SAVE THE DATE
NOV. 9-10 AND NOV. 16-17

VIRTUAL EXHIBIT HALL
An exciting opportunity to showcase your products and services. More than 1000 participants expected to attend.

4 DAYS OF EVENTS & ACTIVITIES
Planned activities include live entertainment, a keynote speaker, educational webinars, awards & recognition ceremony.

NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES
Procurement and purchasing staff, buyers, decision-makers, and users are anticipated from state and local government, public authorities, fire/EMS/police, schools, non-profits, and industry.

PA PROCUREMENT EXPO '21

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 Felicia Campbell 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.



Visit our Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/PAGenServices/>



Visit our Twitter page at: <https://twitter.com/PAGenServices/>



Visit our LinkedIn page at: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/pagenservices/>

COSTARS Connection

Published by the Pennsylvania Department of General Services

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Felicia Campbell - COSTARS Marketing Manager

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.