



CountyBlZ

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BUSINESS NEWS UPDATE

Welcome!



Dan Voelpel, The News Tribune's regular business columnist for the past six years, left the paper to become the Economic Development Director for the City of Puyallup. A graduate of Auburn High School and Pacific Lutheran University where he earned a degree in Communication Arts, Dan also worked for the City of Tacoma as Communications Supervisor. A strong advocate for the local business community, Mr. Voelpel joined the City of Puyallup June 15th.

Local Purchasing Forum

To assist businesses in Pierce County gain access to local government procurement officers, the Economic Development Division, in cooperation with numerous public partners, is planning a "Local Purchasing Forum" for mid September. To have your company added to the announcement mailing list please contact Hans Kueck at 253.798.2335 or hkueck@co.pierce.wa.us

Financial News

The Small Business Administration (SBA) recently announced two temporary enhancements to existing loan programs as part of the national Stimulus effort. The SBA 7(a) Loan Guarantee Program has increased its guarantee to 90% for loans up to \$2 million made by participating SBA Lenders and will temporarily eliminate the SBA guarantee loan fee paid upfront by borrowers. Additionally, to assist viable small businesses facing immediate financial hardship, the SBA offers some temporary financial relief. To help firms refocus and redevelop positive cash flow, the SBA has implemented the America's Recovery Capital loan program. These loans are made by participating SBA Lenders for up to \$35,000, 0% interest, and are 100% guaranteed by the SBA. Principal payments are deferred for 12 months, followed by a repayment period of five years. SBA pays monthly interest to the bank. Other stipulations do apply.

Questions regarding these programs or other financial matters can be directed to Sheree Clark at the Pierce County Economic Development Division, sclark1@co.pierce.wa.us 253.798.6916, or to your bank.

More detailed information is available on the SBA website:

<http://www.sba.gov/localresources/district/wa/index.html>

Partner Spotlight



City of Lakewood: Tillicum/Woodbrook Sewer Extension

In May the City of Lakewood broke ground on a long awaited public utility project: the first phase of the Tillicum/Woodbrook Sanitary Sewer Extension. Pierce County has worked with its partners at the City of Lakewood to iron out the details to take this giant step on behalf of the residents of Lakewood and the County. The project will open up new areas for commercial and industrial development and bring jobs to the area.

The project includes the main sewer lines into Tillicum and Woodbrook, as well as storm drainage, roadway improvements, and a water main replacement in Tillicum. There are numerous benefits for the entire community.

Pierce County Council Member Dick Muri, who represents Lakewood, noted how completion of the project would have a significant positive impact on American Lake and Steilacoom Lake, by reducing the flow of nitrates into them, resulting in healthier bodies of water.

City Manager, Andy Neiditz recognized the value for future economic development. He told those gathered, “Many businesses cannot invest in areas un-served by sewer and we see many signs that this project is already generating noteworthy interest for commercial improvements.”

Mayor Doug Richardson emphasized how this project is part of a continuing effort to revitalize the Tillicum and Woodbrook neighborhoods. He lauded Lakewood residents currently served by municipal sewers. Lakewood sewer customers are paying a surcharge to cover nearly half of the total project costs through a Washington State Public Trust Fund Loan.

The project will be funded by a variety of sources. Lakewood Water District is paying \$700,000 associated with the replacement of its water lines, the Federal government will provide \$2.5 million, the State is contributing \$500,000 and other City sources are funding the majority of the remaining costs. The total project cost is estimated at some \$17 million dollars. Northwest Cascade, Inc., a local company, is the contractor for the first phase.

When the sewer extension is completed and there are sufficient connection commitments to make it operational, it will be turned over to Pierce County for operation and maintenance.

We Built It, and They're Coming!!

The County and its development partners worked diligently to make Chambers Bay a reality, and the result is an internationally acclaimed public golf course. The work is not done however! The USGA is working closely with Pierce County to ensure the course and its amenities are ready to host the events. Pierce County is working collaboratively with the City of University Place, the Tacoma Regional Convention and Visitor Bureau and others to ensure that the community is ready for two future world class events: the U.S. Amateur in 2010 and the U.S. Open in 2015. What can businesses expect? We have some guidance based on a previous tournament.

A report produced by San Diego State University analyzing the impact of the 2008 U.S. Open at Torrey Pines, California, is instructive.

Here are a few highlights from that report:

- We can expect some 250-300,000 'unique' visitors to the region just to see the U.S. Open
- These visitors may spend upwards of \$120 million for food, lodging, and souvenirs
- Opportunities for food establishments, taxi cabs, car rentals, tourist attractions, hotels and motels, bed and breakfasts are plentiful
- Fifty percent of visitors may be between the ages of 35 and 54
- Eighty-nine percent will earn above \$50,000
- And many thousands will come back for another visit

The full, 28 page report is available on the Chambers Bay website:

<http://www2.cybergolf.com/kemper/images/173/2008-US-Open-Economic-Impact-Analysis.pdf>



We will provide more information about both events in future newsletters. In the meantime, visit the Chambers Bay website: <http://www.chamberbaygolf.com>

**Chambers Bay will host the U.S. Amateur in 2010! Volunteer or get involved!
Visit www.2010usamateur.com**

Made in Pierce County

The Economic Development Division strives to make Pierce County the right choice for business. We work to preserve and improve business operations in a variety of ways - from providing an array of technical assistance, to supporting beneficial business legislation. We are ready to help obtain permits, provide loan assistance and much more. Please contact any one of us if we can assist you; our contact information is listed at the end of this newsletter.

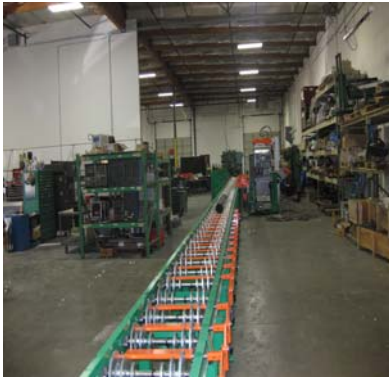
In each issue of our newsletter, we are proud to showcase a local company that has chosen Pierce County as its home. In this issue we feature a company that produces a very unique product. The company is innovative and has diversified its product mix and client list, enabling it to grow at a time when many others are having trouble.

Watts Specialties, Inc.

The EDD first made contact with **Watts Specialties, Inc.**, in 2004, when it had four employees, it now has 14.

Dave Collins, President, considers himself a lucky man. While so many other firms locally, nationally, and internationally, find themselves struggling to make ends meet during these lean economic times, Watts Specialties is not only staying above water, it is thriving. Its labor reducing and highly efficient products are used in irrigation systems, oil and water pipelines, highway sign supports, and even airport construction (Indianapolis).

The well respected business started by Don Watts in 1976 in Milton, WA, is now attracting clients world-wide with its new line of computer operated cutting and pipe moving equipment. Recently, Dave and his crew hosted a client from Russia and educated him for a week on how to achieve the maximum results from the custom designed and constructed state-of-the-art pipe cutter. Dubai and India may be the next to import these unique machines. The firm sees the international market as a major expansion opportunity evidenced by new programs installed in the machine's computer, enabling foreign operators to program instructions in their own language. Watts Specialties has grown in physical size, revenue, number of employees, and scope of operations since 2004. The **Economic Development Division** has provided the company with information on how to lower the costs of medical insurance, find good employees, finance company growth, how to sell to the government, and how to negotiate the process to sell internationally. With its modern, larger facility in Puyallup, the company continues to create and construct innovative, highly efficient products for industry. Its long-term, employees (only one has resigned since 2001 and that was to attend school) are not only skilled and motivated, but thrive on being leaders in their field. Since no two machines are alike, this requires continuous acceptance of change, constantly learning new methods and techniques, and keeping the customer's interests as the guiding principles.



The **Economic Development Division** is available to assist Watts Specialties as the company focuses on continued expansion nationally and internationally. You can learn more about the company at its web site:

<http://www.watts-specialties.com/index.htm>

Energy Conservation Programs

Puget Sound Energy (PSE) offers businesses several options to assist them reduce energy consumption and its accompanying cost. Components of the program include grants, rebates, and incentives to improve operations as well as a direct installation and maintenance program. A comprehensive summary of the PSE programs may be accessed at:

<http://www.pse.com/solutions/forbusiness/Pages/efficiencyComPrograms.aspx>

Tacoma Public Utilities offers a mix of programs to assist businesses conserve electrical energy. A key ingredient of the mix is the Conservation Loan Program. This program will pay for up to 70% of an approved project's cost at 0% interest. The loan must be repaid in five (5) years or less. Approved projects under this program may be combined with other incentives and promotions offered by Tacoma Power. For additional information on the programs and incentives please visit:

<http://www.mytpu.org/tacomapower/conserves-energy/conserves-in-your/Default.htm> or call: 253.502.8619

Lakeview Power & Light offers businesses The EnergySmart Program, funded by Lakeview Power & Light and the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA). This program helps customers upgrade rebatable equipment and streamline operations to get the highest possible energy savings. Customers of [Lakeview Light & Power](#) are eligible. Just call 1.800.230.9420 to request a visit from your Field Energy Analyst. Additionally, Lakeview Power & Light offers its customers rebates that cover up to 70% of the installation cost for energy efficient lighting retrofits in non-residential buildings. The rebate program is funded by BPA and ends in September of 2009 or earlier if the funding is exhausted. Lakeview Light & Power hired Demand Side Engineering to administer the program. Call Alan Kakaley, Program Manager, at 425.785.7709 or email him at alandse@comcast.net.

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**The mission of the Economic Development Division
is to support a business environment
that provides the foundation of a jobs-based economy in Pierce County.**

