

## **County receives award for excellence in digital communications**



### ***Kitsap Electronic Notification Service keeps residents informed***

(Port Orchard, WA) Kitsap County, along with the Norwich County Council in the United Kingdom, was recently selected to receive the GovDelivery Excellence in Digital Communications Award. “This award celebrates agencies that take an innovative approach to improve communication and service to the public through effective communication channels, cross-promotion, and compelling content,” said Jennifer Kaplan from GovDelivery. The award is to be presented to the Board of County Commissioners during their regular meeting Monday, October 24.

The award was given, in part, because of the County’s booth at this year’s fair. At the booth residents could sign up for the Kitsap Electronic Notification System (KENS) powered by GovDelivery. They could also learn about the other ways residents can stay informed. “We want to keep residents informed, and KENS is a great way to leverage information as it becomes available,” said County Communications Manager Doug Bear. “Residents pick from a menu which subjects interest them, and then choose how frequently and by which method they want to be notified,” said Bear. Resident can choose immediate notification, daily notification or weekly notifications sent to their email address, or as text messages to their mobile device.

KENS is just part of a multi-faceted strategy to increase communication. The County now posts information to a Facebook site ([www.facebook.com/kitsapwa](http://www.facebook.com/kitsapwa)) and other social media sites. “Using social media allows us to leverage text-based messages and enhance them with pictures and video,” Bear added. The County’s Flickr site ([www.flickr.com/photos/kitsapcounty](http://www.flickr.com/photos/kitsapcounty)) is used to post pictures and the Vimeo site ([www.vimeo.com/kitsap](http://www.vimeo.com/kitsap)) is used to post video. In addition to these resources the County is adding a Twitter feed soon. “The upcoming winter weather season provides a great opportunity to leverage these services and keep more people in the know during storms and snow events,” said Bear.

In addition to social media the County is using a few special web sites to increase communications. Kitsap 24/7 ([www.kitsap24x7.com](http://www.kitsap24x7.com)) is a new site that alphabetically lists over 125 links to services available through the County and other government agencies. The Kitsap 1 web portal ([www.kitsap1.com](http://www.kitsap1.com)) allows residents to report problems online, and search a knowledge base library designed to help them find the information they are looking for. Links to either of these services are available from the County’s home page at [www.kitsapgov.com](http://www.kitsapgov.com).

“It’s not perfect,” Bear said, acknowledging that residents are sometimes still frustrated trying to communicate with local government, “Our goal is to continue to explore methods increase communication and take advantage of opportunities presented by emerging technology,” said Bear. For those without computers or internet access Bear recommends Kitsap 1 (360.337.5777) as the starting point for County information.

Click on the links below for other articles about Kitsap 1 and the services offered.

Additional resources:

Article from the October issue of Washington State Recycler's Association magazine

Link to article published by GovDelivery: <http://www.govdelivery.com/blog/?p=7>

Kitsap County home page: [www.kitsapgov.com](http://www.kitsapgov.com)

Kitsap Electronic Notification Service:

<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WAKITSAP/subscriber/new>

Kitsap County Facebook site: [www.facebook.com/kitsapcounty](http://www.facebook.com/kitsapcounty)

Kitsap County Flickr site: [www.flickr.com/photos/kitsapcounty](http://www.flickr.com/photos/kitsapcounty)

Kitsap County Vimeo site: [www.vimeo.com/kitsap](http://www.vimeo.com/kitsap)

Alphabetical listing of services (Kitsap24/7): [www.kitsap24x7.com](http://www.kitsap24x7.com)

Electronic reporting & knowledge base: [www.kitsap1.com](http://www.kitsap1.com)