



# Information Technology Quarterly

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Edwin Poisson, Director, Information Technology

## County Web Site Gets New Name, New Look

*by Peggy Daniels, eGovernment Services*

On February 8, 2006, Oakland County’s public web site was updated with a new look and a new address: [www.oakgov.com](http://www.oakgov.com). These changes are expected to help improve public access to the vast amount of County information and services available online.

The decision to refresh and rename the County’s web site is a response to the site’s tremendous growth since its initial launch. Four years ago, the County’s web site had 2,000 web pages. Today it includes more than 15,000 pages, including thousands of publications and forms and numerous online services. This massive amount of online content required changes in key areas in order to make it easier for people to find the information and services they need.

The new name reflects the County’s reputation as a leader in delivering eGovernment services to an increasingly savvy technological community. The new [oakgov.com](http://oakgov.com) address makes it easier for people to remember where to find County information online, and is also much easier to communicate to others. The old web address ([www.co.oakland.mi.us](http://www.co.oakland.mi.us)) will continue to work, and visitors accustomed to using this address will be forwarded to [oakgov.com](http://oakgov.com). All County email addresses will remain the same ([username@co.oakland.mi.us](mailto:username@co.oakland.mi.us)) for now. A conversion project is currently being planned to change the format of County email addresses to [username@oakgov.com](mailto:username@oakgov.com), but all County email account holders will be notified well in advance of the change.

The design of the County’s web site now has a more updated “look and feel” that once again places the County at the forefront of progressive online government. The [oakgov.com](http://oakgov.com) address functions as a brand for the County’s online information, and the new name is integrated with the design of every page on the web site. This reinforces the name change while providing a consistent look across all the different sections of the County’s site.

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The growth of the County’s site since it first launched in 2002 also made it necessary to adjust the site’s navigation. Enhanced menus along with changes to the organization of the County’s online information provide much-needed improvements in public access. An

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# eGovernment Technology Used For Jail Overcrowding Emergency

by Peggy Daniels, eGovernment Services



When Oakland County was recently faced with a jail overcrowding emergency, administrators turned to technology to solve the problem.

The County's Criminal Justice Data Warehouse (CJDW) promotes improved cooperation between multiple agencies including the Michigan Department of Corrections, the 52<sup>nd</sup> District Court, the 6<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court, the Oakland County Sheriff's Office, the Oakland County Jail, and most recently, Oakland County Community Corrections.

With the Criminal Justice Data Warehouse, statistical information essential to proper inmate control, management and classification can be quickly processed and used to support critical decision-making.

In the midst of the recent overcrowding crisis, the Circuit Court and the County Sheriff's Office used the data analysis features of the Criminal Justice Data Warehouse to identify inmates who were eligible for sentence reduction or early release. This translated into a huge time savings for the Circuit Court Administration and the Sheriff's staff. According to Chief Circuit Judge Wendy Potts, "The data warehouse was very helpful in creating filters to help assure that persons who posed a high risk to public safety were not granted sentence reductions during the two jail overcrowding emergencies declared in 2005."

"Without the data warehouse, the emergency release process would have been reduced to a manual review of all sentenced inmates' files and resulted in substantially more staff resource time which, of course, translates into higher costs." Oakland County Corrections Administrator Ann Russell said.

"It is gratifying to see technology put to such appropriate use," said Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson. "When we put the power of technology to work for law enforcement, we're able to act quickly in a crisis. The County's investment in this area allowed our Sheriff to address an overcrowding situation at the Jail without endangering our communities."

The County plans to continue using the Criminal Justice Data Warehouse to make data-driven decisions on jail utilization in the future. To date, the Criminal Justice Data Warehouse has contributed to a 30% reduction in pending criminal dockets, producing a substantial reduction in the number of jail beds required for inmates awaiting disposition of their cases.

The Criminal Justice Data Warehouse has also been credited with assisting the Sheriff's Office Fiscal Services staff with identifying inmates eligible for the County Jail Reimbursement Program. This State funded program allows for county jails to be reimbursed for housing costs incurred for inmates that could have been sent to state prisons. The integration of information from the State's probation database into the Criminal Justice Data Warehouse has made this tedious, manual process, mostly automated and much more efficient. In just the first week of use, the CJDW allowed

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## County Web Site Gets New Name...*Cont'd from page 1*

improved site search function also helps people find what they need faster than before.

County department web sites have been updated with a new look and new features. Departments now have the ability to customize their sites with imagery reflecting the focus of their work. Department sites can also be customized with one or more new information boxes. These flexible new features allow site editors more freedom within the overall structure and design of the County's web site.

Oakgov.com also includes a few entirely new features, such as online surveys, a multimedia archive of audio and video files, and a photo gallery. Surveys will help the County collect feedback from site visitors, while the galleries showcase Oakland County's diversity and quality of life.

Everyone is invited to take a look around the new site and explore some of the new features. Questions, comments and suggestions may be directed to [egov@co.oakland.mi.us](mailto:egov@co.oakland.mi.us).

### **Fast Facts: Oakland County Web Site**

- The County's web site serves more than one million visitors each year
- More than two million transactions are conducted online annually
- Site visitors download nearly two million PDF files each year
- The three highest-grossing online services in fiscal year 2005 were Delinquent Tax Payments, Current Tax Payments, and Pay Tickets
- The three most-used online services in fiscal year 2005 were Purchase Recorded Document Profile, Order Birth Certificate, and Pay Tickets
- Access Oakland generated \$4.2 million in gross revenue for fiscal year 2005 through the collection of statutory Enhanced Access Fees
- Oakland County was named one of the nation's 2005 Top Ten Digital Counties by the Center for Digital Government

### **Oakgov.com: What the Changes Mean to You**

The County's old web address ([co.oakland.mi.us](http://co.oakland.mi.us)) will continue to work for a period of time, and site visitors will be automatically forwarded to [oakgov.com](http://oakgov.com). However, as supplies of printed materials such as business cards, brochures, flyers, forms, etc. are replaced and/or as new materials are developed, the County's web site address needs to be changed to [www.oakgov.com](http://www.oakgov.com).

At this time, all County email addresses will stay the same ([username@co.oakland.mi.us](mailto:username@co.oakland.mi.us)). However, the County plans to change the format of its email addresses to [username@oakgov.com](mailto:username@oakgov.com) and is currently planning that conversion project. When the change takes effect, all email sent to the old address will be forwarded to the new for a specified period of time. County email account holders will be notified well in advance of this change.

## OAK Reports Application

by Mary Gaissert, Application Services



Beginning January 3, 2006, selected reports from the Mainframe were delivered to recipients electronically via a web application called OAK Reports. The OAK Reports project was initiated because of the many

benefits that an electronic report offers, such as having the report available sooner, the ability to search a report for text, and the ability to email a report to another party. There are cost savings, too, including paper, printer, and delivery savings. There are currently 250 reports set up in OAK Reports and the list is growing.

The initial departments included in the project were Circuit Court General Jurisdiction, Circuit Court Family Division, District Court, Prosecutor's Office and Clerk's Office. Representatives from these departments reviewed all of their Mainframe reports and determined which ones could be received electronically. A web application was developed to control who sees what reports. Early each morning, the process obtains the reports from the Mainframe queue and creates a PDF file. It is the PDF file that is distributed electronically. To become a recipient of an electronic report, you should contact the IT liaison for the appropriate department listed above.

This application is available to other departments, as well. If you are currently receiving Mainframe reports and would like to receive them electronically, you should contact your IT liaison. To determine who your department IT liaison is, please refer to the IT Representative List available under J:\GenCounty\InfoTech\Standard.

## IT 2007-08 Master Plan Time Line

Information Technology (IT) has always played an integral role in County operations. The effective use of technology remains the only feasible



method of controlling and maintaining vast amounts of information required to efficiently and effectively operate the County.

The staff at IT takes significant pride in the Department's accomplishments and continues to strive towards more effective solutions to the County's business missions, goals, and objectives. The overall goal of the Master Planning process is to develop a clearer picture of the way Information Technology's development resources can support the County's short and long-term information needs.

The Information Technology 2007-2008 Master Plan time line has been established. At your convenience, please review the informational memo, available under the link entitled **2007/08 Master Plan** on the Project Management Office web site at [www.oakgov.com/intranet/pmo/master\\_plan/](http://www.oakgov.com/intranet/pmo/master_plan/).

If you have any questions, please contact Janette McKenna, Information Technology, at (248) 858-0893.

## Service Center ACD Updates

Based on your feedback, the Oakland County Information Technology Service Center made some changes to the Automated Call Distribution (ACD) telephone system.

As of January 6, 2006, Service Center callers have an additional option to choose from. The first three options remain the same. You still press 1 to report a Public Safety System Outage, press 2 to report a workstation issue, and press 3 to speak with a Service Center representative. The addition of a fourth option allows you to report an issue to a Service Center voice mailbox. If you have a non-urgent issue and do not have time to wait on the phone to speak with a Service Center representative, you may leave a voice message for Service Center staff at the voice mailbox. Service Center staff will check the voice mailbox regularly throughout the day.

Also, did you know that you may email the Service Center for assistance? The email address is [servicecenter@co.oakland.mi.us](mailto:servicecenter@co.oakland.mi.us). Like the voice mailbox option, Service Center staff will check for email regularly throughout the day.

In order for the Service Center to process the voice mailbox and email requests quickly, you will be required to provide your name, phone number, department, system working on, and specific problem you want to report on the voice mailbox message or email.

The Service Center is excited to offer these additional services. If you would like to provide feedback or have concerns regarding these changes in process, please contact Norma Miller, Information Technology, at (248) 858-1595.

## eGovernment ...Cont'd from page 2

Oakland County to discover several eligible inmates that had not previously been identified resulting in an additional \$51,000 in revenue.

The Criminal Justice Data Warehouse is maintained by the Oakland County IT eGovernment team, online at [www.oakgov.com/egov](http://www.oakgov.com/egov).

Find out more about Oakland County online resources at [www.oakgov.com](http://www.oakgov.com).

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*This newsletter is designed to share useful technology news and information with Oakland County Employees!*

*For comments, views, and suggested topics please contact Vickie Worrell at [worrellv@co.oakland.mi.us](mailto:worrellv@co.oakland.mi.us)*