



# Information Technology Quarterly

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Phil Bertolini, Director, Information Technology



## County To Debut New Employee Resource

by Peggy Daniels, Consultant, e-Government

A fresh new look is coming to your desktop in the very near future. It's called OakSource, and as the name implies, it is the central source of information for all Oakland County employees.

OakSource is the County's next-generation secured intranet, an employment resource that grows beyond the familiar intranet pages you're used to seeing. Inside OakSource, you will find a wealth of useful information such as County-wide announcements and programs, Division and Agency news and your personal employment profile. Employee content services have expanded, as OakSource is designed to interface with the County's existing web page content and email.

You will have a unique user name and password to login to your personalized information gateway, specifically created with you and your job in mind. Accessing OakSource is secure and private, and because OakSource is built on leading-edge security technology, you will only have to sign in once for all information or applications contained within OakSource. Once you're logged in, OakSource organizes and manages information to create a "webtop" source for common tools you use in a day's work.

OakSource can be customized to fit your needs even better. You'll have the ability to choose optional content to display on your start page, making a variety of ready references just a mouse click away. A new, enhanced employee directory makes it easier than ever to locate the right person at the moment you need to.

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The Human Resources Self Service area is another major component of OakSource. Here you'll be able to view your paychecks, benefits status and availability, training and compensation information online. You can use OakSource to easily update your personal employment information and view summaries of your elections for most benefit plans.

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## WebTrends - IT Training Center

The Training Center is a unit of Oakland County's Department of Information Technology. Its mission is to empower County and local government employees through effective technical training and mentoring. As you can see, the IT Training Center web site is visited frequently. The General Statistics table provides an overview of the activity for our web site during a specified time frame.

<b>General Statistics - Report Range: 08/01/2004 00:00:00 - 08/31/2004 23:59:59</b>		
<b>Hits</b>	Entire Site (Successful)	5,182
	Average per Day	167
	Home Page	N/A
<b>Page Views</b>	Page Views	1,613
	Average per Day	52
	Average per Unique Visitor	1
	Document Views	1,613
<b>Visits</b>	Visits	1,694
	Average per Day	54
	Average Visit Length	00:18:50
	Median Visit Length	00:16:53
	International Visits	9.85%
	Visits of Unknown Origin	27.56%
	Visits from United States	62.57%
	Visits Referred by Search Engines	783
	Visits from Spiders *	297
<b>Visitors</b>	Unique Visitors	1,171
	Visitors Who Visited Once	1,067
	Visitors Who Visited More Than Once	104

\* Spiders are programs used by search engines (e.g. Google) to index web pages.

For training information, visit the IT Training Center web site at <http://www.co.oakland.mi.us/ittrain>.

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## IT Parking Lot Improvement *by Paul Hunter, Manager - Facilities Engineering*

On June 28, 2004, construction crews working under Facilities Management staff direction began work on the Information Technology/Administrative Annex I Parking Lot Renovation Project. The project, consisting of two phases, will completely renovate and reconfigure the existing lot.

To improve site security, all parking areas and driveways will be relocated to at least 75 feet from the buildings and landscaped earth berms will be constructed between the curbs and buildings.

Circulation within the parking lot will be improved for both vehicles and pedestrian movement. Pedestrian access from the nearby Farmers Market lot will extend parking options.

Bill Jackson, Facilities Engineering Project Leader, expects the project to be completed and fully usable by mid-September. Thank you for your cooperation and patience during this construction which will result in improved parking services to the Information Technology and Administrative Annex I building staffs. "Excuse our dust."

## More On Chain Letters And Hoaxes

All Oakland County computer workstation users need to be aware of the danger in opening suspicious emails or email attachments from ANY email source. Recently, there has been an increase in chain letters and hoaxes. Some of these emails have been engineered to appear as official emails from software companies or even from County users. These messages often sound just plausible enough to be true, warning of computer viruses, propagating urban legends, offering cash rewards or soliciting sympathy for a fictional character. They often give themselves away by including 'please forward this to everyone you know'. On the Internet, always use a healthy dose of skepticism, and don't forward chain letters or hoaxes.

Internet hoaxes can cause many problems (strain on computer networks, embarrassment to the user who is a victim to a hoax, etc.). People who receive them are usually quick to forward them on to everyone they know, without verification. They spread like wildfire via email. Next time, before you forward the email, please review the checklist below:

- Does the email make sense?
- Has the person who sent it to you verified the information about the virus?
- Does the email 'name drop' to suggest importance?
- Does it provide a way for you to check for authenticity (verify with a contact name, phone number or other)?

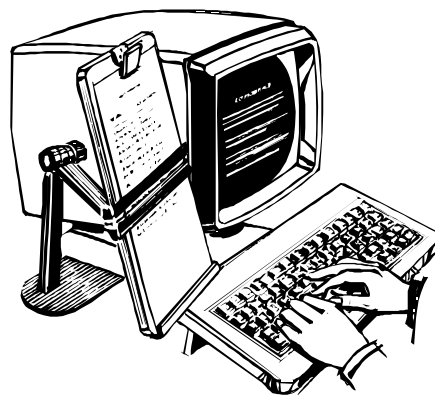
More information is available on the **Oakland County Intranet** under **Virus Information**, specifically <http://www.co.oakland.mi.us/intranet/virus>. Help prevent the spread of hoaxes — which may sometimes be as damaging as a virus. If you have further questions, please contact the IT Help Desk at (248) 858-8812.

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## A Universal Undo Trick

You might know that Control Z is a word processing undo command. But the command works almost anywhere in Windows, too. So say you move a file somewhere and realize that you made a mistake, just hold the **Ctrl + Z** keys simultaneously to return the file to where it was before you moved it. This trick works in Windows Explorer, too.

—adapted from [www.worldstart.com](http://www.worldstart.com)



# CYBER SECURITY

*“A Quarterly Column focusing on education and trends in computer security.”*

## **Disaster Recovery** *by Romel Rausa Llarena, Data Security Specialist - Technical Systems & Networking*

Name one of the few things consumers pay for but would hate to ever use. The answer to this riddle is “insurance”. What is a Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP) but a form of insurance? In a recent article dated March 17, 2004, Gartner, Inc., the leading provider of research and analysis for the global Information Technology industry, estimates that just 50 percent of large companies have comprehensive disaster recovery programs.

In the late 1990s, the Oakland County Department of Information Technology (IT) took the bold step of creating a Disaster Recovery (DR) Plan. Considering that the IT Department is an important component of how the County runs its everyday business, this makes the “insurance” of a Disaster Recovery Plan a necessity.

What is a Disaster Recovery Plan and just how difficult and complicated could it be? A successful plan of this complexity is never created by accident. There is a saying in the security field, “The bad guy only has to be lucky once, the good guy all the time.” Anticipation, through planning, and testing are key to a good plan. Being thorough during the planning process is not as easy as it may seem. It must cover many aspects such as:

- How often are backups being made and how will they be used to recover?
- The frequency of backup copies stored off-site.
- The backup mechanism that will be used and to what environment.
- The human resources that will be used to perform the restoration and the procedures and processes to do so.
- Travel logistics for the team of resources necessary to restore operations off-site.
- The list goes on and on.

These are all important and very legitimate factors. Furthermore, due to the very fluid nature of the department’s role and services within the County, these factors change from year-to-year, month-by-month, and week-to-week. The plan must be kept up-to-date and ready to be executed at a moment’s notice.

### **Technical Terms**

**Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP):** A subset of Business Continuity, suggested by its name, the DRP applies to major, usually catastrophic, events that deny access to the normal facility for an extended period. Frequently, DRP refers to an IT-focused plan designed to restore operability of the target system, application, or computer facility at an alternate site after an emergency. The DRP scope may overlap that of an IT contingency plan; however, the DRP is narrower in scope and does not address minor disruptions that do not require relocation.

**Recovery Time Objective (RTO):** Defines how quickly information systems, services, and processes must be operational following some kind of incident, including recovery of applications and data and end-user access to those applications.

**Recovery Point Objective (RPO):** The point in time that marks the end of the period during which data can be recovered using backups, journals, or transaction logs. It defines what is an acceptable loss of data.

### **DICTIONARY**

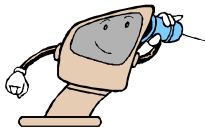


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Identifying and anticipating threats is of the utmost importance, but so is having the flexibility to handle unforeseen and unanticipated situations. At Oakland County, we do both. Risks are identified (i.e. the loss of power, tornadoes, and fire) and mitigated through the use of backup generators, emergency drills, and fire suppression equipment. The flexibility comes from our employees. Employee expertise, recovery drills and cross training go further than any piece of equipment, plan, or service could ever anticipate. Therefore, agreements with DR vendors gives us the added assurance that in the event the IT building were lost for a length of time, we could continue our operations at other designated locations.

A critical aspect of every Disaster Recovery Plan is periodic off-site testing of assumptions, documentation, and process to ensure systems can be recovered. Information Technology performs a Disaster Recovery test every six months. Our last off-site DR test was March 15 - 18, 2004 in Pennsylvania. Our current DR partner, SunGard, hosted the test. SunGard is one of the two largest DR companies in the world, the second being IBM.

Although the test only ran for 48 hours, many weeks of preparation took place prior to the actual test. Four to six months prior to the test, scheduling is finalized with SunGard. Within that four to six month window, applications are selected for recovery. Three months prior to the test, recovery teams are finalized and logistical issues such as equipment and travel are addressed. Four to eight weeks prior, meetings with SunGard staff are held to ensure a smooth recovery. At the four-week mark, meetings are held weekly and then daily as a group. Communication between IT teams is of absolute importance. For this last round of testing, the assumption was made that airline travel was impossible. Part of the recovery team actually drove a total of 1,200+ miles in a County van, backup tapes in hand to provide travel timings in the event that driving was the only option.



Once onsite, it was almost a continuous 24 hours of onsite recovery. Hardware was prepped, software installed, and network connections running from the IT building here at the County Service Center all the way to the SunGard facility in Pennsylvania. Once these three components were in place, recovery was turned over to the IT staff here at the IT building through the use of remote control software. Essentially, the recovery staff in Pennsylvania becomes the eyes, ears, and hands of the IT staff here in the event that the hardware fails or issues arise regarding network communications in Pennsylvania. Finally, applications were brought up and tested to ensure operability. Just bringing up an application is not enough, testing for functionality is the goal of every test. Lastly, cleanup. Equipment in Pennsylvania is returned to the state prior to testing, the off-site teams pack-up and head home, and post test meetings are held to provide feedback to all involved parties discussing successes and suggestions for improvement for the next test.



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The following applications were restored and ready for processing within the 48-hour-test period with a Recovery Point Objective (RPO) of less than 24 hours:

**Court and Law Enforcement Management Information System (CLEMIS) Division:**

1. CLEMIS Records System
2. Jail Access Management System
3. Tape Backup (Veritas) Server & Software Repository
4. CLEMIS InfoView
5. Fire Records Management System
6. Windows NT Primary Domain Controller
7. Mugshot Database Server

**Digital Information Service Center (DISC) Division:**

1. ArcSDE - A server software product used to access massively large multi-user geographic databases stored in database management systems (DBMSs).
2. ArcIMS - The solution for delivering dynamic maps and GIS data and services via the Web.
3. ArcGIS Desktop - GIS software products are a group of scalable products that are used to compile, author, analyze, map, and publish geographic information and knowledge. Products include ArcView, ArcEditor, ArcInfo and extensions that run with all three products.

**Systems Development and Support (SDS) Division:**

1. Circuit Court Case Management System and Document Imaging System
2. Clerk's Office Case Management System and Document Imaging System
3. Vital Statistics Office Birth, Death, and Marriage Records
4. District Court Management System and Document Imaging System
5. Prosecutors Office Case Management System and Document Imaging System
6. Probate Court Case Management System and Document Imaging System
7. Family Division (Juvenile) Case Management System and Document Imaging System
8. eHealth

Not only was the March 2004 test considered a major success meeting our Recovery Time Objective (RTO) of less than 48 hours, but it also clearly demonstrated that Oakland County Information Technology is truly prepared for the worst – insurance, however, we hope we will never need.

## Information Technology Training Opportunities

The Information Technology (IT) Training Center provides **instructor-led** and **on-line** training services for the County's standard software products. The October - December 2004 training schedule is now available for your review on the IT Training Center web site <http://www.co.oakland.mi.us/ittrain/assets/docs/schedule.pdf>. To register for a class, visit our web site or call the reception desk at (248) 858-0810. For more training information, contact Vickie Worrell at (248) 858-4082.



### New Classes Added To Training Schedule:

- ***Acrobat 6.0: Standard (Windows)*** You have probably created documents using word processing and other office productivity applications, and have shared those documents. You've most likely shared printed copies of your documents with others, and may have shared documents electronically by emailing them as well. Now you may need to share electronic versions of your documents with others in a format that will allow them to view, print, and even review the content even if they don't have the original software you used to create the file. In this course, you'll use Adobe Acrobat® 6.0 to convert documents to PDF files, and will customize those PDF files for your needs and the needs of your audience.
- ***Access 2002 (Office XP): Level 2***
- ***Access 2002 (Office XP): Level 3***
- ***Excel 2002 (Office XP): Level 2***
- ***Excel 2002 (Office XP): Level 3***
- ***Word 2002 (Office XP): Level 2***
- ***Word 2002 (Office XP): Level 3***

### Welcome Our New Instructor!



It's our pleasure to announce the addition of instructor, ***Katie Wiese***, who recently joined the Internal Services Division along with our longtime instructor, Kelly Dykstra. Katie has over 20 years professional work experience including teaching in the education sector. Katie is very knowledgeable and experienced in the Microsoft Office Suite and is looking forward to sharing her skills in the classroom.

## County To Debut...*Cont'd from page 1*

Over the next few months you will be invited to attend a brief session to introduce you more fully to all that OakSource has to offer. We encourage you to spend an hour learning how to maximize this powerful new workspace that's soon to transform your daily routine.

## New Internet Viruses/Worms



Information Technology has identified several new Internet viruses / worms attempting to enter the County network through email attachments.

The infected email may appear to come from someone you know, but the prominent characteristic is an attached, password protected, .ZIP file. If you did not request the file, DO NOT OPEN IT.

Please use caution when opening any attachments with an ".exe", ".scr", ".cmd", ".pif", or ".zip" extension. These files can contain malicious software. Any unsolicited email should always be considered suspect. This is the case for the County email system or any system you may be used outside the office including AOL Mail, Yahoo Mail, Instant Messenger, and MSN.

If you have questions, please contact the IT Help Desk at (248) 858-8812.

## Reader Feedback

We'd like to hear from you! Do you have a topic that you would like to read about in future IT Quarterly newsletters? Do you have an idea to share with others? If so, email your comments, views or suggested topics to Vickie Worrell.

## Don't Forget To Backup!



Whether you have a document saved on a floppy disk, a database saved on your "D" drive, or a spreadsheet saved on a network drive, or a document saved on your flash drive (memory stick) make sure you have a backup copy, preferably on different media. Equipment fails and accidents happen!

Backup instructions can be found under <http://www.co.oakland.mi.us/ittrain/assets/docs/Winntbu.pdf>. If you have any questions, please contact the IT Help Desk at (248) 858-8812.

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

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