



# Information Technology Quarterly

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Phil Bertolini, Director, Information Technology

## Spartans Help County With eForms Feasibility

*By Peggy Daniels, eGovernment Team*

This fall, when MSU Information Technology Management students went back to school, some of them got right down to business – government business. A small group of students are helping Oakland County take yet another step toward creating a virtual government office that never closes. Working with the County’s eGovernment team, they are researching the feasibility of an enterprise eForms solution, a project that transforms cumbersome paperwork with a few clicks of a mouse.

eForms was one of six projects selected by MSU students from a pool of 14 proposals submitted by businesses, schools and non-profit organizations. On the leading edge of government technology, eForms will allow Oakland County residents to fill out and submit forms with a digital postmark and digital signature via the Internet. The County already makes about 750 forms available via its web site, but many of these still need to be printed and returned in person, or mailed or faxed back for processing. eForms takes the next step, creating a truly paperless system where people can fill out forms, sign and postmark them digitally, if required, while still meeting legal requirements.

The use of these “born digital” forms – which will never exist in hard copy unless printed on demand – is expected to save Oakland County an estimated \$900,000 each year. The County estimates that citizens will use the eForms system to submit up to 600,000 forms annually. This represents enormous time savings for those doing business with Oakland County, and is expected to shorten the waiting time for those in need of government certification, permits or registration information.

“Filing forms and applications with digital signatures is going to save everyone time and money. This is really going to speed up the process for our citizens as well as County workers,” said L. Brooks Patterson, County Executive. “This program also presents a unique opportunity for government to be a partner in education.”

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The five-member team from MSU is part of an innovative course that provides a technology specialization to students with a variety of majors. The idea sprang from MSU’s perception that employers need workers with technology

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## CLEMIS Making Neighborhoods Safer *By Peggy Daniels, eGovernment Team*



For years, CLEMIS has used state-of-the-art technology to provide police officers with crime data both at the station and in the field. That data helps to arm police with critical knowledge, and when it comes to preventing crime, that knowledge is power. In early October, CLEMIS reinforced its crime-fighting power with the launch of a new web-based program called Community CrimeWatch.

CLEMIS Community CrimeWatch taps into one of today's hottest topics for law enforcement strategists: community-oriented policing. Based on building partnerships between police officers and citizens, community-oriented policing delivers measurable results. With everyone working together, communities can proactively reduce

crime instead of reacting to crime after it occurs. Locally, the Pontiac Police Department has used community-oriented policing techniques, including plenty of CLEMIS data, to dramatically reduce the occurrence of crime in local neighborhoods. Because of this success and Pontiac's commitment to increased community outreach, the Pontiac Police Department was chosen for the Community CrimeWatch pilot project.

The first phase of the pilot involved the creation and launch of a new Community CrimeWatch web site for the Pontiac Police. The new site ([www.pontiacpolice.com](http://www.pontiacpolice.com)) is focused on community-oriented policing and includes information aimed at helping local residents participate in crime prevention activities. Now for the first time, Pontiac residents can use the Web to get crime statistics and maps of local crime occurrences broken down by City Council district. The Pontiac Police hope this information will empower citizens and neighborhood groups to be more effectively involved in community safety.

"Here in Pontiac, there is a renewed focus on strategies that help prevent crime, reduce the fear of crime, and improve the quality of life in our neighborhoods," said Pontiac Police Chief Rollie Gackstetter. "This new web site will help us broaden the involvement of residents in community policing, and will further allow the Pontiac Police to deliver services the citizens want."

County Executive L. Brooks Patterson said, "Oakland County's Department of Information Technology and CLEMIS are proud to deliver the technology and support necessary to enable the Pontiac Police Department to launch this web site in order to deliver these services. We believe that putting information into the hands of local residents will help to make a difference in neighborhood safety."

In addition to maps and local crime information drawn from the CLEMIS database, Community CrimeWatch sites also allow police agencies to put general information such as frequently asked questions on the Web. By providing more information online via their new web site, the Pontiac Police Department hopes to reduce the number of officers assigned to answer routine telephone inquiries, making more officers available for street patrols.

The new Pontiac Police web site was developed by CLEMIS staff and members of the GIS and eGovernment teams. Ongoing maintenance will be handled by the Pontiac Police, using the County's

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standard web content management system and design templates created by eGovernment staff. Continuing in this model, participation in the Community CrimeWatch program will be offered to all CLEMIS member agencies after the pilot phase is complete. CLEMIS administration hopes to ultimately bring every member agency into Community CrimeWatch.

Future phases of the program will give participating police agencies a range of customizable communication tools. Under the Community CrimeWatch interface, individual police agencies may choose to maintain a public web site and/or a departmental Intranet. Police departments may also elect to participate in a CLEMIS-wide multi-agency Intranet, designed to expand on the crime information already shared through CLEMIS. A police department can choose one or more of these options in any combination, as well as one of several levels of departmental participation. Each participating agency will determine the type and amount of information they want to publish on the Web or share with other agencies.

CLEMIS has long been at the forefront of law enforcement technology, and the new Community CrimeWatch web program significantly expands the depth and breadth of the system's reach. CLEMIS Community CrimeWatch is tangible evidence of Oakland County's commitment to partnering with local government and law enforcement agencies, to increase public safety and enhance quality of life. "The benefits of Pontiac's community policing efforts will extend beyond local boundaries, to improve the quality of life for everyone in Oakland County," said L. Brooks Patterson. Praising the County's support of community-oriented policing efforts, Pontiac Mayor Willie W. Payne said, "These are the types of outstanding partnerships that revive, renew and prosper communities beyond anyone's imagination. We're moving to cover all bases of involvement and on every level to bring peace and safety to our residents."



Community CrimeWatch puts County resources to work for citizens, directly supporting programs at the local level and using the power of technology to help make communities safer. For CLEMIS, that's just another day at the office. Check out Pontiac's new site at [www.pontiacpolice.com](http://www.pontiacpolice.com). Visit [www.clemis.org](http://www.clemis.org) for more information on the Community CrimeWatch program.

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## Upgrading To Office XP?

Users upgrading to Office XP may experience problems with documents created in earlier applications. For instance, due to the new standard XP build, documents that originated in WordPerfect may have quotation marks, apostrophes and/or bullets that convert as Wingding symbols. Office XP does not have access to the WordPerfect fonts that carry forward from the original documents. This problem can be corrected in most circumstances by careful editing. Please see the conversion documentation on the IT Training web site at [www.co.oakland.mi.us/ittrain/assets/docs/wpconver.pdf](http://www.co.oakland.mi.us/ittrain/assets/docs/wpconver.pdf).

For questions regarding document conversion, please call the IT Help Desk at (248) 858-8812.

## Spartans Help...Cont'd from page 1

skills but not necessarily an IT degree. "This project gives students a chance to test their skills in a real world project for a real client. And it's a great opportunity for MSU to serve the community, as well," said Brian Pentland, Professor of Accounting and Information Systems at the Broad College of Business, Michigan State University.

"This partnership with MSU will benefit everyone," said Phil Bertolini, Oakland County Director of Information Technology. "The students will get hands-on experience in the planning phase of an enterprise Web application and our eGovernment team will determine the feasibility of eForms. But the real winners will be the citizens of Oakland County, who'll get a faster, easier way to do business with the County."

## Quick Login To Reconnect

On those occasions when PC users lose connectivity to the network drives, there is a quick and easy way to re-establish your network connection:

For Windows NT users:

Click **Start...Programs...NetWare...NetWare Login**.

At the **Novell Login** dialog box, type your **Username** and **Password**.

Click the **OK** button.

For Windows XP users:

Click **Start...Programs...Novell...Novell Login**.

At the **Novell Login** dialog box, type your **Username** and **Password**.

Click the **OK** button.

This will enable users to access any available network drives. For additional assistance, please call the IT Help Desk at (248) 858-8812.

## 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 [www.co.oakland.mi.us/ittrain/assets/docs/winntbu.pdf](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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