



# Customer Focus

*A service update newsletter for valued DAS customers*

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 6

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2009

## DAS and the Customer Council Cut Utility Rates, Provide Rebates

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The Department of Administrative Services is unique in Iowa state government because, unlike other agencies, we were set up to run more like a business and most of our revenue (approximately 95 percent) comes from providing and selling our services to our customer agencies. In fact, in FY2009, only 6 percent of our budget was funded through a General Fund appropriation.

DAS is committed to serving government. So when Governor Culver announced the 10 percent across-the-board cuts to General Fund appropriations on October 8, we knew we'd have to do more.

For DAS, the General Fund cut amounted to \$1,264,172.00. Our total operating budget is about \$204,763,092. In order to more proportionally share the burden of these difficult times, additional rate cuts and rebates were proposed

to and approved by the DAS Customer Council at its October 20 meeting. These cuts and rebates, totaling \$3,220,107.95 for customers, include utility services (those which agencies must buy from us), as well as some marketplace services (those which agencies may choose to buy from us).

A copy of the memo and agency-impact spreadsheet sent to state agencies can be found here: [http://das.iowa.gov/services\\_rates/#fy10cuts](http://das.iowa.gov/services_rates/#fy10cuts).

As every other agency is experiencing, the pain of these cuts is deep. For some services it will not be possible to continue at the level they have been before, though we will do what we can to minimize the impact for our customers. As before, we are committed to serving you, and we will continue to provide updates on any changes in rates or service levels that may impact our customers.

## Enrollment and Change Period

The annual Enrollment & Change Period lasts until November 23, 2009. This is the only time you can make changes to your benefits enrollment for 2010 (unless you have a qualified life event during the year.)

Below are a few highlights. Go to [benefits.iowa.gov](http://benefits.iowa.gov) or contact your agency's personnel assistant for more information.

This is your chance to make changes to your health, dental and life insurance plans, Flexible Spending Accounts, and Premium Conversion Plan (Pretax).

Effective January 1, 2010, the amount

of supplemental life insurance available to AFSCME, Non-contract and Judicial Branch employees is increasing from \$50,000 to \$100,000. Maximum coverage available for UE/IUP remains at \$40,000; the maximum for SPOC is \$30,000.

Now is the time to enroll in the Flexible Spending Account (FSA) program. Employees wishing to participate must enroll each year.

The Retirement Investors' Club will have new providers and investment offerings beginning January 2010.

Open Dental Enrollment. If you previously declined coverage for yourself



Customer Focus is a bi-monthly update about the Department of Administrative Services for Iowa state government agencies. For more information about DAS, please visit our website at <http://das.iowa.gov>.

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Contact the editor at [DASnews@iowa.gov](mailto:DASnews@iowa.gov) or 515-281-7056. We encourage your feedback.

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## Enrollment and Change Period

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or your family members, have single coverage and wish to switch to family coverage or have family coverage and want to add other eligible members, you may enroll during this enrollment and change period.

The Dependent Eligibility Verification process will continue in 2010. Please use this enrollment and change period as an opportunity to review your benefits enrollment and ensure that all persons on your plans are eligible to be covered.

Benefit Education seminars are available to help you make the best decisions. Visit [benefits.iowa.gov/benefit\\_education](http://benefits.iowa.gov/benefit_education) to learn how you can receive benefit education online, on-demand or on-site.

Also, two new federal laws take effect January 1, 2010:

The Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act provides coverage for mental health and substance abuse treatment at the same level as regular medical benefits.

Michelle's Law affects eligibility for your full-time college student in the case of a medical leave of absence from school.

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## Mercy Capitol Becomes State Property December 15

The State takes possession of the Mercy Capitol building on December 15, 2009. This is the final step in an agreement the State and Mercy Hospital made in November 2007.

Future plans for this building are still being finalized.

## Meal Receipts FAQ

DAS – State Accounting Enterprise has created an FAQ for the new Meal Receipts procedure. It is available at: [http://das.sae.iowa.gov/travel\\_relocation/faq\\_meal\\_receipts.pdf](http://das.sae.iowa.gov/travel_relocation/faq_meal_receipts.pdf).

## Capitol Complex Calendar of Events

### November 2009

5th – **State Employee Blood Drive**  
(Parking Lot #15 north of Lucas)

11th – **Veterans Day holiday**  
(State offices closed)

14th – **State Fleet Vehicle Auction**  
(Fleet Building)

26th & 27th – **Thanksgiving Day holiday**  
(State offices closed)

### December 2009

3rd – **SEHARC Book Fair**  
(Grimes Building lobby)

4th – **SEHARC Book Fair**  
(Lucas Building lobby)

4th – **State Employee Blood Drive**  
(Parking Lot #26 east of Judicial)

25th – **Christmas Day holiday**  
(State offices closed)

## Cyber Security Awareness

Cyber Security Awareness Month is over but it is essential that everyone continue to work to protect their computers and our nation's critical cyber infrastructure. There are a variety of cyber security awareness videos available online. If your workplace setting allows, please take time to view one of these videos.

- **STARTS:** Highlights the importance of information security in state government.  
<http://secureonline.iowa.gov/PSAs/>
- **The Duhs of Security:** A humorous overview of information security.  
[http://www.vita.virginia.gov/security/video/TheDuhsOfSecurity\\_subtitled.wmv](http://www.vita.virginia.gov/security/video/TheDuhsOfSecurity_subtitled.wmv)
- **At Risk! Securing Government in a Digital World:** Emphasizes the importance of cyber security to government.  
<http://www.nascio.org/committees/security/AT-RISK-Video.cfm>

For more information on cyber security please visit the DAS-Information Security Office's website:  
<http://secureonline.iowa.gov/>

**Bits  
& Bytes**



## Shattering Silence Dedicated with Story's Descendents in Attendance

The newest sculpture on the Capitol Complex, Shattering Silence, was dedicated on October 22, 2009. The monument by Iowa artist James Ellwanger commemorates Iowa's role as a leader in civil rights. Sitting on the bluff west of the Judicial Building, overlooking the popularly known "sledding hill," Shattering Silence stands nearly 30 feet tall and is nearly 30 feet wide. It is made of limestone quarried in Dubuque, Iowa, stainless steel and acrylic. The project was funded entirely by private donations.

A stone sitting bench curved halfway around the sculpture includes an inscription that tells the story of Ralph, a slave from Missouri who came to Iowa to earn his freedom. His quest led to the first decision handed down by the Supreme Court of the Iowa Territory in 1839: a decision that ruled in Ralph's favor and stated that "no man in this territory can be reduced to slavery." (Read the full story below.)

Present at the dedication ceremony were five very special guests: descendents of Chief Justice Charles Mason, who

sat on the Iowa Territory Supreme Court and was one of the three judges who made that historical decision. His great-great-grandchildren, Mary, David and George Wadleigh, plus George's wife, Bonnie Sue (not pictured) and their son Robert (Charles Mason's great-great-great-grandson), made the trip from Washington, D.C., New Hampshire and Illinois, just for this occasion. For all of them, it was their first trip to Iowa. They had heard stories about their famous ancestor, but were unaware of the magnitude of his role in setting the stage for upholding civil rights in Iowa.

The Wadleighs and other descendents were found and notified about this special new addition to the Capitol Complex thanks to hours of research donated by the Iowa Genealogical Society. Volunteers

through that organization tracked down not only details of the story of Ralph, but figured out who the major players were and then started tracking their descendents. A summary of what they found was included in an article by the Des Moines Register, a copy of which can be found on the DAS website: [http://das.gse.iowa.gov/monuments/ss\\_article.pdf](http://das.gse.iowa.gov/monuments/ss_article.pdf)



### Setting the Stage for Civil Rights in Iowa

*Ralph was a slave from Missouri. In 1834, he bought his freedom from his owner, a man named J. Montgomery, so he could come to Iowa to work in the lead mines near Dubuque. The cost of his independence was to be \$550, plus interest.*

*But after five years, Ralph had not earned enough money to make the payments, and two bounty hunters from Virginia offered to seize and return him to Montgomery for \$100. Getting the proper paperwork, they seized him and were taking him to a steamship when an Iowa farmer, a man named Alexander Butterworth, learned of the action and went to the local judge, Thomas Wilson.*

*Judge Wilson stopped the men and suggested the matter should be heard by the Supreme Court of the Territory, on which he sat. Iowa's three high court justices heard the case and, on July 4, 1839, ruled in Ralph's favor. In their decision, the justices stated that Ralph should pay his debt but ruled that "no man in this territory can be reduced to slavery" and*

*that Montgomery had lost his right over Ralph in Iowa.*

*The justices wrote: "When, in seeking to accomplish his object, [the claimant] illegally restrains a human being of his liberty, it is proper that the laws, which should extend equal protection to men of all colors and conditions, should intervene."*

*The decision, In Re [gards to] the Matter of Ralph, was the very first ruling handed down by the Iowa Supreme Court. It was issued more than seven years before Iowa became a state. It confirmed Iowa's position as a free territory, and it was the first of many High Court rulings that preserved and advanced the causes of freedom, equality and diversity within our borders.*

*In 1847, the Iowa Legislature embraced those causes when it adopted Iowa's motto: "Our Liberties We Prize and Our Rights We Will Maintain."*



## Construction Underway on IUB/OCA Building

There is a lot of activity in the southeast corner of the Capitol Complex with construction of the new 'green' building for the Iowa Utilities Board and the Office of Consumer Advocate. The 44,000-square-foot building, which is funded by utility fees, will move the two agencies onto the Capitol Complex from leased space.

The rainy weather has put a damper on progress this last month, but the project is still on track and the building should be completed around the end of 2010. A majority of the underground utilities are in place, and the hole for the basement has been dug and footings and walls are being formed and poured. The east drive to parking lot #3 has been closed for the installation of a new water main to serve the building. The geo-thermal field – one of the features of this green building – is near completion as well.



## State Takes Possession of Final E. Locust Building

The Iowa Association of Community College Trustees (IACCT) has vacated their building at 707 E. Locust, one of the row houses at the base of the West Capitol Terrace, and moved into their new building on East Court, at the base of the sledding hill.

The State now has possession of 707 E. Locust, which means the State now owns all of the land and buildings on the West Capitol Terrace and, as funding permits, can move forward with removing the buildings to finish the park. The IACCT building will have asbestos removed over the winter months and is scheduled to be demolished in early spring. The other

building – the row house at 709 E. Locust – shares a wall with 707 E. Locust, but planners are not yet sure if one building can be demolished without affecting the other. A moving company has evaluated the historic row house and said it could be moved to a different location, provided it is still structurally sound after the demolition of 707, which doesn't have the same historical value because of all the renovations made to the building over the years.

If anyone knows of an individual or organization that may be interested in preserving the historic row house at 709 E. Locust by moving it off the Capitol Complex, please contact Robert Bailey at 515-281-7056.



711, 709 and 707 E. Locust (left to right). 711 has already been removed. 709 and 707 will be moved or demolished so the West Capitol Terrace can be completed.

## Master Plan Reaches Draft and Review Stages

Work continues on the 2010 Master Plan Update. Draft versions of the plan and its recommendations are being reviewed and considered by the Steering Committee, the Capitol Planning Commission, state officials and other involved parties. A final version will be done in January to present to the Legislature.

The tentative recommendations call for a focus on developing the four axis points of the Capitol building as green spaces (such as what was done with the West Capitol Terrace), lays out a plan for where future buildings and parking structures could be placed, and examines transportation and parking issues, among other things.

Those involved with the process are reminding people that the purpose of having a master plan in place is to have a vision and direction for the future – so that when the State needs to and is able to move forward with development, we are poised and ready to take advantage of that opportunity, having already thought through the various options. The ultimate vision in the master plan is called a "100-year plan." One hundred years may seem far into the future, but by looking that far ahead – by thinking about "the big picture" – the State will be in a better position to take smaller steps along the way that are thoughtful and well-planned.

## Effective Writing: Strategies for Planning & Persuasion

It's more important than ever to maximize the impact of your writing. Effective Writing: Strategies for Planning & Persuasion will help participants master key stages of the writing process:

- Getting ideas
- Organizing them for maximum impact
- Writing in an easy-to-read style

These strategies for audience analysis, organization and plain language can speed writing and be applied to all types of documents.

Effective Writing:  
Strategies for Planning & Persuasion (GI 221)

December 1, 2009  
8:30 - 4:30  
\$159  
Hoover Bldg, Level A

Contact PDS to enroll.



Presented by:  
Terri Deems

## Get Ready for the Upcoming Legislative Session

The start of the 2010 Legislative session is right around the corner. The time is now to get prepared to make the most of it. Our staff of experts will help you better understand the policies and procedures surrounding the legislative process.



If you are new to state government or just need a refresher, the courses described below will help you maximize your effectiveness. Enroll today!

### November Workshops

Statutory Construction & Legal Drafting  
November 10, \$39 (RM 002)

Open Meetings/Public Records  
November 19, \$39 (RM 011)

Citizen's Aid/Ombudsman  
November 24, \$39 (RM 010)

### December Workshops

Introduction to Administrative Law  
December 3, \$39 (RM 001)

Government Ethics & Lobbying Act  
December 9, \$39 (RM 009)

Judicial Rule Review - Webinar  
December 15, \$49 (RM 007)

## Upcoming Courses

Enroll now for Fall sessions! Check out our website for our updated course offerings.

[November Calendar](#)

[December Calendar](#)

## Certified Public Manager

The pressure to improve government is at an all-time high, and innovative, trained managers are the key to success. In order to be a great public leader, it is important to engage in a learning opportunity specifically designed for government – the Iowa Certified Public Manager (CPM) Program.

CPM is a Nationally Accredited program designed to help state, county, and city leaders:

- Improve efficiency, effectiveness, and cost-saving skills
- Innovatively approach and manage challenges
- Utilize best-practice management techniques
- Build high-performing workplaces



Additionally, graduation from CPM can qualify for 1 year of education or experience in the Public Service Executive and Executive Officer state job classifications and 9 hours graduate credit towards a Masters in Public Administration at Drake University.

Applications are currently being accepted for CPM 13, which begins January 2010. Seats are limited and applications should be submitted no later than December 15, 2009. To learn more about CPM, visit our [CPM website](#) or contact Judy Akre at [judy.akre@iowa.gov](mailto:judy.akre@iowa.gov) or (515) 281-6383.

**Learn More About CPM**  
**FREE** Informational Webinar  
November 5, 2:00 - 2:30  
[Enroll Now!](#)

For assistance with enrollment in upcoming classes, CPM, survey development, one-on-one or group coaching, special sessions or other training initiatives, please contact us via e-mail: [pds@iowa.gov](mailto:pds@iowa.gov) or call Judy Akre (515) 281-6383 - Mary Guillaume (515) 281-5456 - Brian Mayer (515) 281-6368 - Dawn Stohs (515) 725-2051