

## **Media Advisory – March 27, 2009**

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### **County's Inspection Improvement Project honored**

Snohomish County's Inspection Improvement Project has been recognized with this year's Best Use of Technology in the Government, Nonprofit or Educational Sector award by the Washington Technology Industry Association (WTIA) as part of its 14<sup>th</sup> annual Industry Achievement Awards (IAAs).

The award recognizes the county's Planning and Development Services (PDS) for its improvements to how building inspections are requested, documented and how results are communicated to customers. The result is that Snohomish County project inspectors are now dispatched using mobile wireless technology, allowing them to update findings and make the information accessible in real time to customers via the Web and an Integrated Voice Response system.

"Snohomish County's employees are dedicated to innovative design that saves staff time and benefits our constituents," Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon said. "This project is one example of that dedication. We are pleased to have been selected for this honor."

During the building and development process, PDS inspectors assure all conditions and requirements are met for land-use activities within unincorporated Snohomish County. Prior to the Inspection Improvement Project, that process had remained virtually unchanged for at least 30 years. Dispatching field inspectors required manual filing and re-filing of thousands of paper permits. PDS has averaged more than 7,500 permits annually during the past five years.

"With fewer resources available to us, it's even more important that we find new ways to accelerate and make our work more efficient," said Craig Ladiser, the county's planning director.

The Washington Technology Industry Association, founded in 1984, is the largest statewide association of technology companies, IT departments and individual technology professionals in North America. Its annual awards program honors local companies, individuals and students who best demonstrate innovation and excellence in creating new technologies, applications and services. Finalists were chosen by a panel of local industry experts, and the winners were chosen by the local technology community through an online voting system.

"For the first time ever, thousands of votes from the local technology community determined this year's IAA winners," said Ken Myer, president and CEO of the WTIA. "To be named by your peers as one of our region's best and brightest is a great honor."

According to the WTIA, the local technology community has grown exponentially during the organization's 25 years, adding to the achievement of each winner. With more than 1,000 member companies representing more than 100,000 employees in Washington state, the association is a catalyst for sharing expertise, fostering collaboration, delivering key business services and advancing the value and global impact of technology companies doing business in Washington.

To view the Snohomish County video, go to  
<http://www1.co.snohomish.wa.us/Departments/PDS/About/PDSNews.htm>.

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