



# DOA Local Government Report

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## State Government Eliminating 1,000 Vehicles

Governor Jim Doyle recently achieved his goal of eliminating more than 1,000 state vehicles in order to return the state fleet to 1994 levels. In June, 569 underutilized vehicles were eliminated during the first phase of the Governor's Fleet Reduction Initiative. The Phase II reduction of 504 vehicles used an approximate seven percent cut for each agency.

In April, Governor Doyle directed the Department of Administration (DOA) to conduct a comprehensive review of the state vehicle fleet to reduce the number of vehicles and improve accountability and oversight. The Department found that from 1994 to 2003, vehicles owned by the state increased from 6,187 vehicles to 7,360, or almost 19 percent. In contrast, last year, Governor Doyle reduced the state fleet by 132 vehicles.

DOA is working with agencies to identify which vehicles could best be eliminated and facilitate cooperation among agencies to become more efficient by sharing certain vehicles. Last year's reductions combined with the reductions this year will achieve the Governor's goal of reducing the fleet back to the levels of a decade ago.

The first of the Phase I vehicles were sold at public auction on July 31. Additional auctions will be held approximately once a month and details will be announced as they become available. The public can sign up to receive e-mail updates about future auctions on the Governor's website, <http://www.wisgov.state.wi.us>.

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## DOA Provides \$1.6 Million for Energy Assistance

Governor Jim Doyle recently announced \$1.6 million for the Energy Assistance system for crisis assistance. The funding, available through DOA's Division of Energy, will help low-income families maintain heating and electric utilities during the upcoming heating season. The Governor also directed DOA and the Public Service Commission to work together with local government, legislative and business leaders on long-term solutions to ensure power for all Wisconsin citizens.

The Governor said that his Administration will make an early request to the Joint Finance Committee so that counties can have adequate funds for emergency energy needs in the coming heating season and plan appropriately for the year. Governor Doyle is following this request with a recommendation to change the statute in the next legislative session to allow a more reasonable cap on emergency funding for the future and allow flexibility in moving funds to deal with emergencies.

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## Length of Service Award Program Administrators Renewed

The Length of Service Award (LOSA) Board recently renewed the contracts of two LOSA Program administrators. Penflex, Inc. and Volunteer Firemen's Insurance Services (VFIS), Inc. were approved by the Board to continue offering the LOSA Program through August 2005. A recent customer satisfaction survey conducted by DOA showed that these program administrators offered the highest levels of service to participating local governments over the past three years.

LOSA assists local governments in retaining and recruiting volunteer fire fighters and emergency medical technicians (EMTs) through a tax-deferred benefit program. Any city, town or village with a volunteer fire department, contracted volunteer fire company or authorized volunteer EMTs is eligible to participate. Beginning in program year 2004, the State will match up to \$267.12 per volunteer, per year of service to the municipality. At retirement, each volunteer with over twenty years of service may collect the amount in his or her account. Those with over ten years of experience may collect a portion of their account.

The program began in 2001 and today assists 172 volunteer departments covering over 4,800 individuals. The program is expected to match \$1,153,500 of local contributions in program year 2003. Funding remains available to assist additional departments.

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## Wisconsin Coastal Management Grants Available

Wisconsin enjoys 820 miles of shoreline adjacent to Lakes Superior and Michigan. Continuing the state's efforts to enhance resources along Wisconsin's coasts, the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program (WCMP) at DOA has published a Request for Proposals for its 2005-06 grant program. Up to \$1.5 million will be available for coastal land acquisition, coastal wetland protection and habitat restoration, nonpoint source pollution control, coastal resource and community planning, Great Lakes education, public access, and historic preservation.

Projects must be located in one or more Wisconsin counties adjacent to Lake Superior or Lake Michigan. Eligible applicants are local units of governments, state agencies, colleges and universities, regional planning commissions serving coastal areas, tribal units of government and private, nonprofit organizations. The application deadline is November 8, 2004 and projects may begin no earlier than July 1, 2005.

Application materials and the Request for Proposals are available on the WCMP website at <http://coastal.wisconsin.gov>. Applicants are encouraged to contact WCMP staff early to discuss ideas for project proposals and application requirements.

A comprehensive listing of last year's successful grant proposals can be found in the WCMP's *2004 Wisconsin Great Lakes Chronicle*. This publication promotes public understanding of Great Lakes issues, provides expert information to public policy leaders and creates an historical record of Great Lakes events. The *2004 Chronicle* includes articles about coastal restoration, water quality, shoreline erosion, tourism and recreation. The *2004 Wisconsin Great Lakes Chronicle* is available at <http://coastal.wisconsin.gov> or by contacting the WCMP for a printed copy.

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