

NOVEMBER, 2005

Three Things You Can Do Right Now To Compete for a State Contract

We know you want to do everything you can to help your business find contracting opportunities with the State of California. Sometimes it's easy to forget the most basic things, so let us remind you of three steps you can take right now to start your business on the road to successful State contracting.

The Three Things:

1. Get your small business or DVBE (Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise) certified with the State of California and *keep your certification current*

Certified small businesses stay current by submitting annual federal tax returns and "Quarterly Wage and Withholding Reports" to the DGS Office of Small Business and DVBE Services (OSDS), and by alerting OSDS of any changes in their business organization (change in ownership, new address, etc.). Both certified small businesses and DVBEs must apply for renewal when their certification expires. For more information, visit the OSDS Web site at <http://www.pd.dgs.ca.gov/smbus>

2. Register for the Subscription Outreach Service (SOS)

Most State contracting opportunities are advertised online on the California State Contracts Register (CSCR). You *can* check the CSCR daily, but an even better solution is to register for the Subscription Outreach Service and have contracting opportunities sent directly to you as soon as they're published. The Subscription Outreach Service (SOS) is a free service offered in conjunction with the CSCR. SOS allows you to create a business profile and tell us the kinds of contracts your firm wants to bid on. When the CSCR publishes an advertisement matching your business profile, you'll automatically receive a notification by e-mail or fax. For more information, visit the SOS Web site at <https://www.cscr.dgs.ca.gov/cscr/sosdesc.asp>

3. Update Your Online Profile and Help Your Business Stand Out

When you get certified, the State creates an online profile for your business. This profile contains key words that describe what your business does. State departments (and others) searching for a certified firm use these key words to locate a firm that can meet their needs. If your key words aren't complete, you'll be harder to find.

You can manage your firm's profile online at <http://www.pd.dgs.ca.gov/smbus/profile.htm> Be sure to read the document "Guide to Selecting Keywords to Attract More Business" (you'll find it listed in the right-hand column). When you're ready to update your firm's profile, click on, "Go To Online Certified Firm Profile Login." For more information, or help updating your firm's profile, contact OSDS at by e-mail at osdchelp@dgs.ca.gov or by phone at (916) 375-4940.