



Charleston County News Release

Release Number: 2889

Date: June 16, 2008

Photo of Sheriff's Office plane: <http://www.charlestoncounty.org/newsimages/plane.htm>

Charleston County Earns \$3 Million in Three Years by Selling Used Equipment on GovDeals.com

Used county equipment and items seized by the Sheriff's Office bring in more money when auctioned online than through the previous annual live auction.

Charleston County's first GovDeals.com auction closed on March 24, 2005. Since then, thousands of used equipment items and vehicles have been sold online to people all over the world.

In three years, Charleston County Government has sold over \$3 million in used equipment and seized property items.

In comparison, Charleston County made \$318,599 at its final annual auction in 2004. Previously, one live auction was held each year in June, where 250-300 citizens showed up to view and possibly bid on equipment.

By using GovDeals.com, the county has gained access to a large number of people who buy online on a global basis.

"The variety of items changes weekly. Harley Davidson police motorcycles, police cars, tractors and fire trucks have been some of the larger money-making items so far this year," said Scott Bartley in the Charleston County Controller's Office.

A 1972 Piper airplane is the newest high profile item that people can bid on, and the plane is currently available for public bids on the site. The plane was used by the Charleston County Sheriff's Office since the 1980s to search for marijuana crops and extradite criminals, but is being sold because it is no longer cost effective for those purposes. The Sheriff's Office now uses a helicopter for search missions.

"We are constantly adding equipment to the online auction site, which is an extremely efficient way to get rid of surplus government equipment. This system is not only much more efficient than trying to coordinate a one-time, annual auction, but we are producing revenues far beyond what was accomplished in the past," Scott Bartley said. "If you go to the Web site, you will typically see up to 25 items that you can bid on from Charleston County."

The Charleston County Sheriff's Office is also using the online system to sell items seized by the Sheriff's Metro Narcotics Unit. The Sheriff's Office has sold \$243,595 in items such as seized televisions, cars, jewelry and furniture since they began using the online system in July of 2005. The funding from the auctions goes back into this drug fighting unit to help purchase equipment.

According to statistics from GovDeals.com, the site has registered and active buyers in all 50 states and 67 foreign countries.

Anyone who has access to the Internet is now able to view, bid on and purchase items that Charleston County Government is phasing out or replacing.

There are 105 government agencies and organizations in South Carolina using GovDeals, and almost 1,800 governments and agencies nationwide. GovDeals is associated with the South Carolina Association of Counties as a strategic partner offering the GovDeals service to its members.

The advantages to Charleston County Government for using GovDeals.com are:

- More people looking at items and being able to do so over a longer period of time has brought in more revenue than what was made at yearly auctions.
- Instead of taking up space for up to a year in a warehouse, equipment and items are continually moved out of county areas and no longer accumulated and stored.
- Charleston County has the right to reject any final bid if it is thought to be insufficient.
- Charleston County will not have to mail any sold items because buyers are responsible for picking up or shipping their purchases.
- The online auction eliminates the threat of weather or other uncontrollable conditions or situations that could deter people from attending an annual auction.

View Charleston County's auction items through the County's Web site, www.charlestoncounty.org, under the "What's New" section on the front page (the direct link is: <http://www.charlestoncounty.org/auctions.htm>).