



## Charleston County News Release

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**See photo of previous workshop:** <http://www.charlestoncounty.org/NewsImages/sbe.htm>

## **Charleston County Holds Small Business Workshop on July 22**

*Workshop topic: "Small Business and the Power of Partnerships"*

Charleston County's Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Program and the Charleston County Park and Recreation Commission (PRC) will host a free workshop for small businesses.

The workshop will be held on Tuesday, July 22, from 2-4 p.m. at James Island County Park's Edisto Hall. Participants will be admitted to the park free-of-charge and can ask the staff member at the park gate for directions to Edisto Hall.

The topic of the workshop is "Small Business and the Power of Partnerships," and its aim is to provide an opportunity for small business owners to expose their business to potential new clients and gain knowledge that will help increase their readiness to compete in the procurement process.

The PRC will give a special presentation on its new SBE program involvement and contract opportunities. A "meet and greet" session will allow business owners to meet the department heads and other officials responsible for procurement within Charleston County Government, Charleston County Park and Recreation Commission and Charleston Water Service.

Charleston County Government already has a successful SBE program in place and is assisting the PRC in setting up and administering its own program. Both the PRC and Charleston Water System recognize Charleston County Government's SBE certification and use the County's SBE Program database of certified businesses to access prime contractors and sub-contractors for their vendor requirements.

"The partnership between the PRC and Charleston County's SBE program is an excellent example of the synergistic possibilities available for small businesses in the certified database," said Barrett Tolbert, Charleston County's SBE Program Manager. "The partnership aspect of the SBE program is perhaps one of its strongest assets, and we look forward to this special seminar with the PRC."

Those interested in attending the free workshop can register online at [www.charlestoncounty.org](http://www.charlestoncounty.org) (go to the "what's new" tab on the home page). To learn more, contact Barrett Tolbert or Susan Hogan with the Charleston County Procurement Office at (843) 958-4750 or e-mail [btolbert@charlestoncounty.org](mailto:btolbert@charlestoncounty.org) or [shogan@charlestoncounty.org](mailto:shogan@charlestoncounty.org).

### **SIDEBAR – Background Information on Charleston County's SBE Program**

- The Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Program is a small business development component of the Charleston County Contracts and Procurement Department.
- The SBE program is race and gender neutral, with an emphasis on growing and enhancing small companies in the county. The program's concept was developed through a disparity study commissioned by County Council in 2006.

- Charleston County's SBE program has many features to aid small businesses, and is the first of its kind in South Carolina.
- As of June 2008, more than 230 local businesses have become certified.
- The following are requirements for certification under the SBE program:
  - Gross revenues of \$7.5 million or less (as averaged over the previous three years)
  - Actively in for-profit business for the preceding 12 months
  - Eligible owner is involved in the daily operations of the business
- Additional features of the program aim to:
  - Enhance contract competition
  - Establish aspiration goals for SBE firms' participation on County contracts
  - Conduct an outreach program that will aid small businesses in development and ready them for contract competition