Charleston County News Release

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Charleston County Expands Use of Social Media to Communicate with Public
Citizens can instantly get information directly from the County on smartphones and computers

With an established Twitter account and a few departments already managing their own Facebook pages, Charleston County Government is now spreading the word about its new main County Facebook page, the Consolidated 9-1-1 Center's Public Education Program Facebook page, and its developing You Tube account.

"We are pleased about expanding the County's means of communicating with the public," said Charleston County Administrator W. Kurt Taylor. "Until recently, government entities had to rely on costly direct mail or the media to get information out to constituents. Today, social media is rapidly developing as a fast and free way to share news and information, and the County has embraced this ability to directly communicate with our citizens."

Anyone who likes the County's main Facebook page will see all news releases (also posted on the County's website and sent via Twitter) and will be able to see additional photos and video links to County programs and events. The new Consolidated 9-1-1 Center's Public Education Program Facebook page shares news and photos and includes video examples of 9-1-1 calls to help teach people the proper way to call for help during an emergency.

The Charleston County Emergency Management Department's Facebook page, which was previously announced, will play a key role in disseminating information to citizens in the event of a hurricane or other natural or manmade disaster situation. And so will Twitter, which will be an easy way for citizens to directly receive accurate information as soon as details are confirmed and sent out by the County.

"With the upcoming 2013 Hurricane Season, now is a good time for people to like or follow us, and to consider this part of their regular preparedness process," said Jason Patno, director of Charleston County's Emergency Management Department.

To stay in tune with Charleston County Government news and services, the public can:
- **Visit our website**
    - www.charlestoncounty.org
- **Follow us on Twitter**
    - https://twitter.com/ChasCountyGov
- **Like us on Facebook**
    - Main County page
        - http://www.facebook.com/pages/Charleston-County-Government/474878989220753
    - Specific departments
        - *Emergency Management Department*: http://www.facebook.com/EMDChasCo
        - *Consolidated 9-1-1 Center's Public Education Program*: http://www.facebook.com/pages/Charleston-County-Government/474878989220753#!/pages/Charleston-County-Consolidated-9-1-1-Center-Public-Education-Program/186965438015227
        - *Board of Elections and Voter Registration*: http://www.facebook.com/pages/Charleston-County-Board-of-Elections-and-Voter-Registration/103895809694986
- **See us on You Tube**
    - http://www.youtube.com/user/charlestoncountygov
- **Watch County Council meetings live** (meetings are also available on an archive link after they end)
    - http://www.ustream.tv/channel/charleston-county-government
- **Register a cell phone number with Alert Charleston County** (to receive notifications in case of an emergency)
    - http://alert.charlestoncounty.org

The County considers social media just one more tool in addition to the regular means of communication.

"We will always see the value in face-to-face communication and will still use direct mail to reach people when that is the appropriate means. But in today's fast-paced world, we want to take advantage of giving people multiple ways to find out about our news and services," Taylor said.