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## **Tooele County Gets A+ for Public Transparency**

The Sunshine Review recently gave Tooele County an A+ grade for its efforts to disclose government information on its website.

The Sunshine Review is a non-profit organization that works with individuals and organizations to promote state and local government transparency. The organization used a 10-point transparency checklist to evaluate Tooele County's website.

Commissioner Jerry Hurst is very excited about Tooele County's A+ grade. "It shows that we're totally transparent. Everything is on the website and can be accessed by the public on their PCs," he said.

The information the Sunshine Review looked for on the Tooele County website includes budget, meetings, elected officials, administrative officials, permits and zoning, audits, contracts, lobbying, public records, and local taxes. Information in each of the checkpoints is now present on the county website.

The Tooele County Information Technology Department (IT) took the lead to post the required information by going to each of the departments and requesting what was needed, then posting that information to the county website.

Diane Burgener, IT Director, says her staff did a lot to meet the Sunshine Review requirements. "It has taken some work to get the contracts and RFP (Request for Proposal) information ready for the website. (County IT Employee) Tami Baker was instrumental in not only researching the information but making it easy to understand as well. The other elected officials were very cooperative in providing requested documents and files," she said.

(more)

Tooele County first learned about the Sunshine Review after receiving a low grade for transparency from the organization. Commissioner Hurst says, “The first time it came out we wondered who they were. I went to Diane (Burgener) and said ‘We need to do something about this because it’s not going away.’ We discussed this in Department Head Meeting and asked everyone to do their part to improve our grade.”

Each county department has its own page on the Tooele County website. The web address for Tooele County is [co.tooele.ut.us](http://co.tooele.ut.us). The website also has links to state information repositories and to the county’s electronic document repository called SIRE. The SIRE interface was developed by the county IT department as well as the Auditor, Assessor, Recorder and Treasurer Offices.

“It was a big effort by everybody that had a part. Diane (Burgener) spearheaded it and Tami (Baker) put it together on the website. They deserve a lot of credit,” Hurst said.

The IT department, with cooperation of each of the elected officials, will maintain the required information on the website on a continual basis. “Even though times are tough there are still good things happening here,” Burgener says. “It will remain a team effort.”

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