

Snohomish County Executive  
**AARON REARDON**



Priorities in Action



Latest News & Upcoming Events

Friday, February 29, 2008

[www.snoco.org](http://www.snoco.org)

 **County approves inclusion manager position**

Snohomish County will hire an inclusion manager this spring, following more than a year's debate at the council level on the merits of the position.

County Executive Aaron Reardon applauded Wednesday's council decision to approve the position, which will be used to increase diversity of the county workforce and improve fair access to all county services.

"We asked for the position in 2006, and the majority of council then didn't believe it was necessary," Reardon said Wednesday following the vote affirming the position. "This council, however, shares our belief that government should reflect the people we serve."

Today, people of color make up more than 20 percent of Snohomish County's population, yet that percentage within Snohomish County government is less than 10 percent.

"We are a nation of immigrants and what we do as a nation is bring people together," said Councilman Dave Gossett, sponsor of the new proposal. "Adding an inclusion manager is a major step in doing here what this country is all about."

The role of the inclusion manager will be to strategically focus the county's actions to ensure that everyone who lives in Snohomish County has fair access to services and that they have an equal opportunity to contribute to the county's services as employees or volunteers.

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**How are we doing?**

Did you know that you can track how well the County is meeting its performance goals?

The SnoStat system tracks how well the County is delivering services, the costs of those services, and the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.

Simply visit our [SnoStat website](http://www.snoco.org/SnoStat).

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“For our county to continue to prosper, we need to attract talented people. To do so, we must embrace our diversity to succeed,” said Council Chairman Dave Somers. “The inclusion manager’s role is simply to let people know that all doors are open to everyone.”

More than 95 percent of Fortune 500 companies have diversity and inclusion initiatives or have developed custom programs to improve productivity and competitiveness.

Research has shown that diversified candidates will eliminate companies from consideration if they lack ethnic or gender diversity.

“As our county continues to grow, so too will the diversity of our residents,” Reardon said. “We must foster an inclusive environment that ensures all residents of our county – regardless of their race, ethnicity, culture, religion or economic standing – have equal access to our government.”

[More](#)



## **DATE CHANGE: DUI Task Force awards ceremony**

The Snohomish County DUI Task Force annual awards ceremony date has been moved to April 25, 2008. The ceremony honors individuals, businesses, elected officials and media who have positively impacted traffic safety.

Award categories include: Good Samaritan, business, community or government program and legislative leadership as well as youth initiative, educational outreach, public health, media awareness, and law enforcement.

The event will be held from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the Snohomish County PUD, located at 2320 California St., Everett.

Nominations for the award are still being accepted. For nomination applications [click here](#)

For more information, contact Tracy McMillan at 425-388-7229.

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Or, [send me an email](#).

And please be sure to [visit me on the web!](#)

Sincerely,

Aaron Reardon

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 **Energy assistance program secures funding**

Snohomish County has secured and will distribute an additional \$404,000 to assist families in need of energy assistance, ending a funding crunch that began in December.

Nearly \$404,000, acquired with help from Washington's Congressional delegation, will allow the county to serve another 900 families this winter season. With the extra funds, the county's energy assistance program is expected to help as many as 5,000 families pay their heating bills this winter.

In December, county officials announced a static budget would fall short of helping families needing larger grants this season. Rising fuel costs and higher cost-of-living expenses have increasingly burdened area families.

Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon petitioned federal legislators to release emergency funding set aside for such energy programs. Together, Sens. Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell and Congressmen Rick Larsen and Jay Inslee acquired the extra money.

"We know we can always count on our federal representatives to serve us, and this time has been no different," Reardon said. "We said we needed help serving a growing populace with energy needs, and our delegates supplied us with additional funding."

State funding sources also were released to make up growing shortfalls, virtually assuring the county enough money to help its needy families this winter.

The additional money, some of which will be used for program administrative costs, brings Snohomish County's energy assistance total to more than \$2.2 million. The county will be able to serve families through April.

"It's our department's goal to serve all Snohomish County residents in need, and while that looked doubtful at one point this winter, it will happen with this extra money," said  
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Cindy Hart, the county's acting Humans Services director. "We are very appreciative of these funds because they will assure we have adequate resources to cover the most urgent energy needs the remainder of this heating season."

Qualifying households usually have income at or below 125 percent of the federal poverty level. Currently, a four-person household making less than \$2,151 a month qualifies for assistance.

While there are other smaller energy assistance programs available within the area, Snohomish County's program is the largest.

For program information, call 425-388-3880.

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