

# New system offers benefits to customers

Kansas hunting and fishing licenses are now available by calling a toll-free telephone number (1-800-918-2877). The service is the first stage in the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks' conversion to the new Kansas Outdoor Automated License System (KOALS). When the conversion is complete, all KDWP offices and license vendors in the state will be connected to a central database via the Internet. Full implementation of the system will be complete by Aug. 2005.

The new system will provide more convenient access to licenses and permits for anyone who hunts, fishes, boats, or visits state parks in Kansas. Customers will be able to purchase most licenses, permits, and registrations from their homes either through online purchase via computer or by calling the toll-free telephone number. As in the past, they also will be able to purchase any of the same issues from any department office or license vendor in the state.

Currently, the department and its vendor partners (county clerks, sporting goods stores, discount stores, and other outlets) must hand write each license and permit they sell, although a limited number of department issues have been available for home purchase through the department's website. Since 1999, through a partnership with the Information Network of Kansas, the department has offered online home purchase of some licenses and permits. The new system will feature a centralized database that will serve home purchasers, department offices, and license vendors alike.

The system will be paid for by fees, ranging from 50 cents to \$1.15, attached to each license, permit, or registration sold. In addition to more convenient access for customers, the department's operations will be significantly enhanced. Among advantages are the following:

- Eliminates the need to print licenses, ship to license agents, and warehouse past years' license books for audit purposes.
- Eliminates waste of unsold preprinted licenses.
- Provides a true accounting system for all

vendors.

- Allows law enforcement officers to verify license and permit information in the field any time of the day or night.
- Allows for cross-checking of licenses and permits to prevent issuance of duplicate permits.
- Allows customer to replace a lost or stolen license or permit by allowing them to go to any vendor for replacement, not just the vendor where the original purchase was made.
- Allows vendors to sell all licenses and permits, and eliminates the problem of running out of preprinted license books.

- Enables more efficient surveys of users due to real time collection and availability of names and addresses.

- Allows real time monitoring of license and permits sales so that facilities and resources can be more efficiently managed. For example, if trout permit sales are up or down in a specific area, trout stocking rates can be adjusted accordingly.

The department began researching development of an automated licensing system in October 2003. Other states with automated systems were consulted, as well as several companies in the electronic licensing and per-

mitting business.

Several months ago, the department solicited competitive bids from companies which specialize in online recreational licensing.

After reviewing bids, the department awarded a contract to Central Bank of Jefferson City, Missouri to develop the system for Kansas. Central Bank, through its subsidiary Automated License Systems (ALS) developed the first online recreational licensing system in the U. S. in 1995. Since then, the company has developed similar systems for nine other states, including Missouri and Colorado.



A couple of kids took the opportunity a beautiful day at the lake presented and went fishing on the dam.

— Telegram photo by Rich Meyers

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