



News Release

409 3rd Street, SW, Suite 210 ★ Washington, DC 20024 ★ 202-205-3850 (p) ★ 202-205-6825 (f) ★ www.nwbc.gov

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Contact: Stephanie Peacock,
(202) 205-6827
stephanie.peacock@sba.gov

“Women’s Business Connection” Addresses Homeland Security Preparedness and Procurement Opportunities for Women-Owned Businesses *Recent Conference Calls Available for Playback*

Washington, DC – Women business owners from across the country dialed in last Tuesday to learn more about how to design an emergency preparedness plan for their business and about procurement opportunities currently available for women-owned businesses from the new Department of Homeland Security. The call was the most recent in the ongoing National Women’s Business Council’s monthly “Women’s Business Connection” issues conference calls.

The June 24th call featured two guest speakers from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security: Alfonso Martinez-Fonts, Jr., Special Assistant to the Secretary for Private Sector Liaison, and Kevin Boshears, Director, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization.

Alfonso Martinez-Fonts, Jr. provided information on how to prepare a business for a potential natural or man-made disaster. He described the elements of creating a solid emergency preparedness plan, which included: pre-disaster actions to protect people, facilities and contents; emergency evacuation procedures and assignments; and protection of critical information and communications.

“When disasters occur, the faster you can return your business to normal operations, the quicker you can restore income, jobs and the services your community depends on from your business,” said Martinez-Fonts. “This is why my office is dedicated to helping businesses prepare in advance for potential natural or man-made disasters. By taking the time to engage in discussions with businesses across America and providing them with information, they

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will be better equipped to create solutions and preparedness plans that will result in big dividends for everyone.”

Martinez-Fonts also suggested several Web sites for citizens and business owners looking for more information on homeland security preparedness. In particular, he recommended www.ready.gov, which provides some basic “how to prepare” information for all citizens, and www.fema.gov, which includes a section specifically for businesses.

Kevin Boshears addressed Federal Government contract procurement opportunities that are now available for women-owned businesses.

“We are highly enthusiastic about our program and we are making sure that women-owned businesses are included in all of our efforts,” said Boshears. “Our comprehensive plan includes several types of incentives that benefit small businesses and will provide many exciting opportunities in the months ahead.”

Boshears added that procurement opportunities in homeland security are very diverse and will include such areas as information technology, security products, construction, logistical support, training services and law enforcement equipment and supplies. For further information, Boshears recommended listeners visit the business section of www.dhs.gov.

This conference call, as well as past “Women’s Business Connection” conference calls, is available to those who were not able to join the call live. The National Women’s Business Council is providing toll-free access to the three most recent calls (each lasts about one hour), which may be accessed by dialing 1-866-803-1430 and entering the conference ID number 3687613#. Listeners will then be prompted to enter one of the following playback ID numbers:

- Homeland security preparedness and procurement opportunities, enter playback ID 7686738#.
- Government assistance for businesses interested in international trade opportunities, enter playback ID 6691705#.
- Government support available to businesses affected by the activation of National Guard or military reservist employees, enter playback ID 3465975#.
- To access playback control features as you are listening, press **. Here are a few of the most useful controls:
 - Press 1 - Skip backward 2 minutes
 - Press 3 - Skip forward 2 minutes

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- Press 4 - Go to the beginning of the recording
- Press 7 - Increase the volume by 25%
- Press 8 - Decrease the volume by 25%
- Press # - Stop playing the recording and return to main menu

“Women’s Business Connection” is held on the **fourth Tuesday of every month at 3:00 PM Eastern Time** and lasts approximately one hour. Participants may join the call by dialing **1-877-326-2337** (toll-free) and entering code **#3687613**. The next call, scheduled for Tuesday, July 22, will focus on the issue of mentoring. A soon-to-be released NWBC study on mentoring will be discussed and will provide information regarding current opportunities for women to find or be mentors. Future calls will address a variety of relevant topics including access to affordable health care coverage, access to training and technical assistance, and access to capital. For more information about “Women’s Business Connection,” please contact Lindi Harvey, NWBC Director of Program Outreach at (202) 205-6829 or by email at Lindi.Harvey@sba.gov.

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The National Women’s Business Council is a bi-partisan Federal government council created to serve as an independent source of advice and counsel to the President, Congress, and the U.S. Small Business Administration on economic issues of importance to women business owners. Members of the Council are prominent women business owners and leaders of women’s business organizations. The National Women’s Business Council is committed to conducting research on issues of importance to women business owners and their organizations; to communicating these findings widely; to connecting the women’s business community to public policy makers; and to providing programs and platforms for change in order to expand and improve opportunities for women business owners and their enterprises. For more information about the Council, its mission and activities, contact: National Women’s Business Council, 409 3rd Street, SW, Suite 210, Washington, DC 20024; phone: 202-205-3850; fax: 202-205-6825, e-mail: nwbc@sba.gov; Web site: www.nwbc.gov.