



State of Illinois  
Pat Quinn, Governor



Illinois Department of Transportation  
Ann L. Schneider, Secretary

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## **IDOT Opens New DBE South Suburban Resource Center**

*Second in Chicago Area Provides One-Stop Shop for Interest in State Projects*

**CHICAGO** - Illinois Transportation Secretary Ann L. Schneider joined state and local officials today for the grand opening of the new Illinois Department of Transportation South Suburban Resource Center in Park Forest. The center, located in the Ludeman Development Center, 114 N. Orchard Drive, will provide guidance and assist minority- and women-owned businesses interested in IDOT's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program.

"Our DBE Resource Centers serve as a one-stop shop for minority- and female-owned businesses to learn more about the opportunities to work on IDOT projects," Secretary Schneider said. "We want to retain these growing small businesses and give them every chance to succeed as good business partners, creating good jobs in their communities and helping to drive the Illinois economy forward."

The South Suburban Resource Center provides help to contractors wanting to become certified in the DBE program. Contractors already in the program can learn more about contracting opportunities and bidding information. Staff is on hand to provide technical and management support. A computer lab also is available.

Under Governor Pat Quinn, IDOT is increasing minority participation in state contracts and on jobs sites. Since 2009, IDOT has paid out more than \$1.8 billion to DBE firms, the largest amount ever in Illinois over five years. This year, IDOT is increasing the reimbursement rate to contractors hiring graduates of the Highway Construction Careers Training Program and Transportation Construction Apprenticeship Readiness Training Program to \$15 an hour. Both programs were created by IDOT to encourage women and minorities to pursue careers in the transportation construction industry. The previous rate was \$10 an hour.

The DBE resource centers are located in each of IDOT's nine statewide districts. The South Suburban Resource Center is the second one to open in the IDOT's District 1, which includes Cook and the collar counties. The other is located at 900 South Des Plaines St., in Chicago. To contact the South Suburban Resource Center and to schedule an appointment, call (708) 283-3618. For additional information on DBE opportunities, visit [www.dot.il.gov/sbe/ssassistance.html](http://www.dot.il.gov/sbe/ssassistance.html) and [www.dot.il.gov/dbecenters.html](http://www.dot.il.gov/dbecenters.html).