



## ***Federal Depository Libraries Your Source For Yesterday's, Today's, & Tomorrow's Government Information***

*"A popular government without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy; or, perhaps both. Knowledge will forever govern ignorance; and a people who mean to be their own governors, must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives."*

*James Madison, 1822*

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President Madison's statement is as true today as it was in 1822. It expresses the underlying principle and continuing need for the Federal Depository Library Program.

Distribution of government information to libraries is one of the nation's oldest traditions, first established by statute in 1813. Beginning in 1858, Members of Congress were authorized to designate individual libraries to receive government publications, and the Federal Depository Library Program was created. Since 1895, the FDLP has been administered by the **Government Printing Office**.

Today approximately 1,400 Depository Libraries serve the American public by providing local, no-fee access to Federal government information. Depository Libraries are located in all 50 states, virtually every Congressional District, six territories, and the District of Columbia. Each day people with diverse informational needs utilize depository collections housed in all types of libraries: public, academic, state, law, and federal agency.

### **DEPOSITORY LIBRARIES IMPACT THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITIES DAILY!**



#### **Depository Libraries provide government information that supports public policy development and decision-making.**

*"In my position, information is vital to job performance. The research requirements and drafting of state legislation require information that is accessible and accurate. Depository Libraries meet both requirements and serve as a single point of physical access."*

*Kenny Pittman, Research analyst  
State House of Representatives, Olympia, WA*

*"We undertook hundreds of audits of government operations and generated millions of dollars of savings for New Jersey taxpayers. A critical element of this success was the exceptional research assistance and guidance from the Federal Documents Depository Librarian who produced key documents for use in shaping our studies."*

*John R. Long, Sr., Management Improvement Specialist  
State Department of Personnel, Trenton, NJ*

*"The staff and the Depository itself serve as a link to the maze of Federal regulations, laws and statistical data that local governmental agencies use in studies, recommendations and in everyday discussions. The Depository plays a very important role in the day to day operations of local government."*

*Paul W. Rainwater, Director, Emergency Management Office  
Calcasieu Parish Police Jury, Lake Charles, LA*

*"Census data, postal records, USGS maps, streamflow data from the Department of Commerce, and Bureau of Indian Affairs information were all sources used as evidence by the State in presenting its case for State ownership of Fisheating Creek. Our litigation would not have gone forward were it not for the availability of this information. These sources were only available at the Depository Library. Without their assistance, many jobs would be much worse, ineffective and inefficiently performed."*

*Dr. Joe Knetsch, Historian  
Division of State Lands, Tallahassee, FL*



**Depository Libraries provide government information that supports citizens in fulfilling their civic responsibilities.**

*"Our users cover a wide spectrum, local businessmen, university community, and interested citizens that often require current information on proposed regulations and legislation. The importance of timely information is crucial in a world of hourly change. GPO Access allows us to keep our patrons in the mainstream."*

*Donna K. Smith, Reference Department  
University of Idaho, Moscow, ID*

*"The U.S. does have a history of valuing information and has developed an information culture through its support of education, libraries, and the distribution of government information. Government participation by citizens is difficult at best in countries that do not have a culture of information. Government information, in any format, must be made available if we expect citizens to be responsive and responsible. I rely heavily on government information."*

*Patricia Sloan, Library Manager  
Journal-Star Printing Co., Lincoln, NE*

*"Our Depository Library offers physical access to information, including a place for people without their own computer equipment to access electronic resources, and a neutral environment for information services."*

*R.L. "Buddy" Fletcher, Mayor  
Lakeland, FL*



**Depository Libraries provide government information that supports business and economic development.**

*"I have been actively engaged in providing counselling to small export businesses in this area through the local Service Corps of Retired Executives. The Federal Depository Library Program has been of inestimable value to me in this endeavor. Without this information it would be difficult to provide the level of service that allows them to access the world beyond our borders."*

*Walter N. Dennison, SCORE  
Rapid City, SD*

*"Access to the Depository Library this fall enabled my business to analyze new publications immediately, respond quickly to an RFP, and secure a contract that provided four new jobs in my company. Without the Depository Library my small business and others in rural areas would not have access to many government publications needed to get their business going and keep them competitive."*

*Christopher Sachs, President, Map Applications, Inc.  
Norwich, VT*



**Depository Libraries provide government information that supports local community concerns such as health, safety, security, and the environment.**

*"The partnership we have with our Depository Library has enabled and benefited rural Nevada health professionals with timely and valuable information, including prevention materials, regulations, and grant opportunities."*

*Gerald J. Ackerman, Director  
Northeastern Area Health Education Center, Elko, NV*

*"I am an environmental professional and was in need of an out-of-print EPA document, Lead in School's Drinking Water. The GPO referred me to my Regional Depository Library. Being overseas, I contacted my home state's Regional Depository. Information was exchanged via the Internet, and I soon had the document in hand."*

*Major Eric J. Scott, Environmental Engineering Consultant  
U.S. Air Force, Europe*



**Depository Libraries provide government information that supports education and historical research.**

*"Electronic access to the Federal Register via GPO Access and the Columbia Online Information Network has substantial advantages. I get access on the day of the publication, which is important to our ability to respond competitively to grant announcements."*

*Mary M. Licklider, Grants Coordinator  
Columbia Public Schools, MO*

*"One of the most important components of a university education in today's information age is the ability to access, manipulate, interpret, and present information. The Federal Depository Library Program is a critical cog in the wheel of information access for students."*

*Patricia Gober, Professor, Department of Geography  
Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ*

*"I have been a regular user of government documents since high school, when I completed my first major research paper for a U.S. history class. Having easy access to information produced by the government has given me a better sense of what government does and what my own role as a citizen is."*

*Sandy Deyoe, Graduate Student  
University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI*



**Local Depository Libraries work in partnership with the Federal government to carry out the mission of the Federal Depository Library Program.**

Access to government information is the foundation of the public's 'Right to Know.' Depository Libraries are uniquely situated in each Congressional District and dedicated to providing open access to public information.

Depository Libraries obtain government information in a variety of formats: paper, microfiche, diskette, CD-ROM, and online.

Depository Librarians select the publications and services that best meet the Federal government information needs of their local communities.

Professional staff at Depository Libraries organize and provide access to depository collections, assist the public in navigating the Federal information infrastructure, and serve as the local link to public information.

Depository Libraries play an integral role in preserving Federal government publications for future generations and maintaining archival collections that reflect the history of the United States.

The Federal Depository Library Program guarantees that the people of the U.S. have access to their government's information.



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This page is based on the Depository Library Council's brochure of the same name. The brochure was the first public relations product resulting from the hundreds of letters collected by Council describing how people use Federal Depository Libraries.