

Mascio, John

From: Mascio, John
Sent: Thursday, October 06, 2005 4:39 PM
To: Brenda Frazier; Charles Martoni; CL Jabbour; David Fawcett; Douglas Price; Edward Kress; Eileen Watt; Francis, Ronald L., Jr.; Jan Rea; Joan Cleary; John DeFazio; John Defazio; Nerone, Rich; Rich Fitzgerald; Ronald Francis; Vince Gastgeb; Vince Gastgeb; Watt, Eileen; William Robinson
Cc: Barker, Jared; Catanese, Joe; Liptak, Jennifer M
Subject: Library Association Report

Dear Members of Council,

Attached is a copy of the Library Association Report as mandated by Resolution Number 17-05-RE, entitled, "Resolution of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, requiring annual verification that all libraries under the umbrella of the Allegheny County Library Association (ACLA) have implemented a policy on Internet and computer use that is in compliance with all Federal, State and Local laws; requiring an annual review of filtering software utilized by the Electronic Information Network (eiNetwork) to comply with Federal, State and Local laws; requiring annual reports by each library of incidents in which the federal and state laws concerning the use of the computers and network are violated and how such violations were handled; establishing a public education component in cooperation with County agencies; and, further, providing that non-compliance with these provisions will result in the suspension of County funding of the eiNetwork.

I will place a hard copy of this report in your mail slots.

John Mascio

10/6/2005



Advancing the standard of excellence!

September 22, 2005

Mr. John Mascio
Chief Clerk
Office of the County Council
119 County Court
436 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

**RE: ANNUAL COUNTY REPORT
COUNTY BILL #1899-50**

Dear Mr. Mascio:

Please find attached the above-referenced County Bill. As defined under the ordinance, note that Section 2 indicates a report of incidents that have occurred in the prior year and how the incidents were handled and a notarized Verification statement as well.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Marilyn A. Jenkins
Executive Director

MAJ:caw

Attachment

Allegheny County Library Association

Annual County Report: County Bill Number 1899-50

October 2005

Background

In May 2005, County Council passed County Bill Number 1899-50 that included annual reporting by the Allegheny County Library Association (ACLA) verifying that it is in compliance with the said ordinance. The intent of this document is to provide the information as required in the ordinance.

Section 1 of the bill requires a notarized statement that verifies the following:

1. eiNetwork libraries have computer and Internet policies in place;
2. eiNetwork's filtering software is updated to ensure the most current functionality of the filtering software;
3. and available filtering software has been reviewed to determine if a superior product is available.

Section 2 of the bill requires a report of incidents that have occurred in the prior year and how the incidents were handled. ("Incidents" are defined as "any event related to the use of public computers that is a violation of federal and state laws requiring the employment of technological protections that block or filter certain visual depictions deemed obscene, pornographic, or harmful to minors; including any action that results in a library contacting or being contacted by law enforcement officials, except where law would prohibit such disclosure.")

Section 1 Reporting

The notarized statement of verification is provided as an attachment to this report.

Verification of Library Computer and Internet Policies

The Allegheny County Library Association verifies that all eiNetwork libraries have a policy on Internet and computer use in place.

Verification of Ongoing Updates to Filtering Software

The Allegheny County Library Association also verifies that ongoing updates to the eiNetwork filtering software are occurring to ensure the most current functionality of the filtering software provided to libraries in Allegheny County. The eiNetwork has worked with Netsweeper, the filtering vendor, to perform updates to the software on an ongoing basis. The most recent software upgrade occurred in August, 2005.

In addition to ongoing software upgrades, the filter lists are updated using multiple methods. On a real-time basis as users surf the World Wide Web, every webpage accessed is logged. If a new page address (URL) is discovered, the filter examines it and categorizes it "on the fly" through an artificial intelligence engine. These categorizations are then appropriately added to the "block" databases. Additionally, the vendor provides daily electronic updates to the "block" databases based upon manual reviews of user-reported web pages.

Verification of Filtering Software Review

Finally, regarding the Section 1 reporting, the Allegheny County Library Association verifies that a recent review of the filtering software has been conducted to determine if a superior product is available.

This review was conducted during the spring and summer of 2005. The eiNetwork used the criteria specified by a taskforce in the initial software selection in July of 2004 to review available products in 2005, while also looking for technological advances not available in 2004. In summary, the criteria included:

- Effective filtering technology
- Meets Federal CIPA requirements
- Capabilities to disable or unblock a specific site in compliance with the Supreme Court's ruling about CIPA compliance.
- Capabilities to manage and update effectively and efficiently in a multi-library environment.

Various technology and library journals were reviewed to identify potential product candidates. Documentation and reviews provided by the web site libraryfiltering.org, American Library Association, and vendor web sites were used to research product capabilities. A number of products were reviewed, including those from Websense, Surfcontrol, N2H2, 8e6, and St. Bernard Software. While many of the products reviewed have made various improvements to their filtering capabilities, none have shown that their technologies are obviously superior to those of Netsweeper.

Most of the products reviewed relied heavily on URL filtering, where the software has a database of URLs categorized based on their content. Users can choose to block sites based on these categories. Most products are updated daily to respond to the ever increasing number of web sites appearing on the World Wide Web. In addition to URL filtering, forms of dynamic filtering provide a way to address sites that have not yet been categorized by the filtering vendor. This method uses algorithms to attempt to appropriately determine if a new site should be block or allowed in real-time. Filtering products also include allow and deny lists that users can populate with their own web sites if the filter has incorrectly blocked an appropriate site or missed an inappropriate site.

Netsweeper uses all the above methods of filtering. Based on a URL filtering database, Netsweeper provides real-time updates from their central database to keep categories up-to-date. Dynamic filtering algorithms allow the filter to check sites not found in the database and determine if the site should be allowed or blocked and then adds that site to the database. Netsweeper provides both global and local allow and deny lists. This provides flexible management to address problems with sites throughout the consortium or at the local library level.

In addition to the methods mentioned above, Netsweeper also provides "alert" function. Web sites can be submitted through the alert function to Netsweeper for human review. This allows library staff to submit sites that they believe have been incorrectly categorized. Netsweeper reviews these sites within 24 hours and updates the database when required.

Related to the criteria about management in a multi-library environment, the additional features listed below also contribute to Netsweeper's effectiveness evaluation:

- Easy to use patron and staff interface.
- Ability to disable the filter for a specific period of time or can be manually re-enabled.
- Ability to unblock a specific site for a specific PC.
- Customizable filtering levels per library.
- Ability to customize groups of blocked or unblocked sites per library.
- Ability to alert the vendor to re-categorize or block/unblock a site.
- Each site may use a customized block page.
- Web based administration so staff can remotely disable/re-enable the filter.
- Easily accessible reporting.

Netsweeper's filtering technology along with the flexible set of features continues to be the most effective filter for libraries in Allegheny County. The eiNetwork is keeping close watch on reports of newer technologies that could provide superior graphic-based filtering; however these have been slow to market.

Section 2 Reporting

Libraries are using an online form to report incidents that come to their attention. These forms are sent to the eiNetwork Director. In total, libraries report xx incidents that have occurred since the enactment of this legislation. The table below provides the date of each incident and how it was handled by the library.

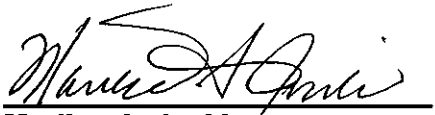
Library Name	Date of Incident	Incident Description	Action Taken
Avalon Public Library	9/19/2005	Staff observed inappropriate website access.	Banned from Library for 6 months.
Carnegie Library of McKeesport	4/26/2005	Patron sitting at PC. Police made arrest and took PC. Nature of arrest was unknown to library.	Police took PC.
Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh	8/3/2005	Staff members at CLP's Mt. Washington suspected that a computer user was viewing inappropriate images and contacted the eiNetwork.	The computer user left when he realized staff members were observing him. CLP's Security Manager was contacted and staff members were advised on how to handle future incidents. The URL for the initial site that was identified is no longer valid and the site cannot be accessed at that address.
Penn Hills Library	7/23/2005	Indecent Exposure	Called Police. Under Investigation.
Whitehall Public Library	5/24/2005	Suspicious activity, viewing obscene/sexual materials	Police investigation. Charges filed.

Verification Attachment

Allegheny County Library Association Annual County Report: County Bill Number 1899-50 October 2005

The Allegheny County Library Association verifies for 2005 the following statements as regarding Allegheny County Bill 1899-50:

1. All eiNetwork libraries have a policy on Internet and computer use in place.
2. Ongoing updates to the eiNetwork filtering software are occurring to ensure the most current functionality of the filtering software provided to libraries in Allegheny County.
3. A recent review of the filtering software has been conducted to determine if a superior product is available.

By: 
Marilyn A. Jenkins
Executive Director
Allegheny County Library Assn.

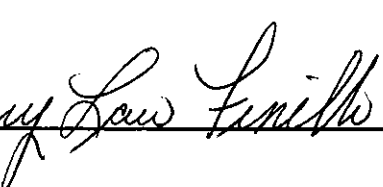
Dated this 22 day of September, 2005.

Acknowledged before me this 22nd day of September, 2005.

(Seal)

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
Notarial Seal (Notary)
Mary Lou Finello, Notary Public
City Of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County
My Commission Expires May 31, 2009
Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries

Allegheny County Library Association
Annual County Report Regarding County Bill 1899-50
October 2005


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