

Justification for sole source (3M) vendor of RFID:

1. Wauwatosa Public Library will be using 3M as its vendor and only if the two cities go in together on this project will there be a substantial savings realized in the 10% reduction of costs in the purchasing of the RFID tags. The tags represent the single most expensive piece of the project.
2. Having West Allis Public Library and Wauwatosa Public Library both use the same vendor will result in a much larger portion of the items that are returned and checked out here readable with the RFID system as there exists a significant relationship in terms of patron usage between the two libraries.
3. 3M is a reliable and service-oriented vendor for public libraries and is also the vendor chosen by the Franklin Public Library, and anticipated in 2008 the Greenfield Public Library - other projected RFID libraries in the Milwaukee County Federated Library System. Uniformity will be important in the smooth functioning of sharing materials library to library in this important initiative.
4. The vast majority of items owned by the West Allis Public Library already contain 3M security strips that may be the second line of defense from theft – even in the new system.
5. Our history with 3M vs. current security system (ID Systems):

In the mid-1980's, the library purchased a materials security system from 3M. The entire collection was secured with 3M products and devices. 3M provided excellent service and technical support, and this system was maintained in good working order until 2002 (almost 20 years), when it was decided that an upgrade was necessary.

At that time, a decision was made to purchase a new security system from a different vendor, ID Systems. This product has proved very unreliable and has been out of service over 50% of the time. The technical support and service have been less than adequate. Service calls are placed and sometimes not answered for days or even weeks. In a public library with thousands of patron visits each week, a non-functioning materials security system is not an option.

6. Finally, the proposed RFID project is critically important to the library and library users. RFID technology will empower patrons and completely change how we provide service to the public over the next decade and beyond. 3M is well-known within the library industry for its high quality technical support and ability to work with specialized library automation systems. Given our past experience, along with our current need for a reliable, working system to protect our collection, as well as technical support and expertise during our RFID conversion project, we are requesting a sole source purchase from 3M as supported above.

All of the above represents financial, efficient and practical advantages to the City of West Allis that justifies choosing 3M as the sole source vendor for the RFID project at the West Allis Public Library.