



# MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Knox County earns national transparency award**

*KNOXVILLE (March 13, 2012)* – Today, Sunshine Review, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to government transparency, released the winners of the fourth annual Sunny Awards and Knox County was among them. The award, which honors the most transparent government websites in the nation, went to 250 government entities with Florida receiving the most Sunny Awards.

Knox County's website, [KnoxCounty.org](http://KnoxCounty.org), earned an A- grade from Sunshine Review. To view the Sunshine Review report visit <http://bit.ly/YsbAzQ>.

“Since taking office, transparency has been one of my top priorities, and the county's website is just one of the ways we work to ensure that transparency,” said Knox County Mayor Tim Burchett. “The Knox County Information Technology staff does a great job maintaining a website that is very user-friendly, and it's good that Sunshine Review has acknowledged their efforts.”

For the 2013 awards, editors at Sunshine Review analyzed more than 1,000 qualifying government websites and graded each on a 10-point transparency checklist. Editors looked at content available on government websites against what should be provided. They sought information on items such as budgets, meetings, lobbying, financial audits, contracts, academic performance, public records and taxes. The winners of the Sunny Award all received an “A” grade during the extensive grading process.

“The Sunny Awards recognize governments that make transparency a priority. The winners of the Sunny Awards are cities, counties and school districts that proactively share the public information that empowers citizens and keeps government accountable to the people,” said Michael Barnhart, President of Sunshine Review. “We would like to congratulate Knox County for being a champion for transparency and serving as a leader to every state and local government around the nation.”

The Sunny Awards announcement falls during the annual of “Sunshine Week,” March 10-16, a period nationally recognized by hundreds of media and civic organizations, that celebrates the efforts of activists and the strides taken towards open government.

## **About Sunshine Review**

Sunshine Review is a nonprofit organization dedicated to state and local government transparency. Sunshine Review collaborates with individuals and organizations throughout America in the cause of an informed citizenry and a transparent government. Since its inception in 2008, Sunshine Review has analyzed the websites of all 50 states and more than 7,000 state and local entities.

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