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## Clawson business taps new security demands; New homeland dollars open up an opportunity for their consulting work.

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CLAWSON -- **Patriot Services Corp.** has begun cashing in on homeland security dollars in southeast Michigan and 2005 could bring more for the Clawson-based startup.

Started last March by two Army Rangers and an ex-Oakland County undersheriff, the company consults local governments for their homeland security programs.

The company specializes in "CBRNE" (pronounced see-burn), which stands for chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive threats. Since September 11 and the subsequent creation of the Department of Homeland Security, the need for experts in identifying and working with CBRNE programs has grown.

"We recognized an opportunity. There is a huge need for people with experience in CBRNE," said Scott Hiipakka, vice president, co-owner of Patriot and an ex-Army Ranger.

The three owners, are all experienced in the military or in law enforcement and all work out of homes offices. The president of the company, Steve Potter, also is a former Army Ranger who currently serves in the Michigan National Guard. Prior to forming Patriot, he worked as a security consultant with the accounting company Plante & Moran. Thomas Quisenberry, vice president and the third owner of Patriot, is a former undersheriff for Oakland County.

Since September 11, federal CBRNE funding has increased at the local level, allowing many more private security consulting firms to exist than previously, said Michael Sturm, administrator for emergency response and preparedness for Oakland County.

"There are dozens and dozens just within the Metro area," he said. "There's been an increase in the number of security firms post September 11. There's for the first time in a long time funding from the federal level."

Following open bidding, Oakland County last fall chose two security firms, Patriot Services and Spalding DeDecker Associates Inc. in Detroit, to perform 71 assessments throughout the county. The assessments were to identify any security weaknesses, particularly CBRNE, among county and municipal properties.

While government bidding processes take many factors into account when making grants, part of the reason Oakland County went with Patriot is the county liked the experience of Patriot's owners. Potter went to Haiti in the 1994 peacekeeping mission that restored Jean-Bertrand Aristide to power; Quisenberry is intimately familiar with Oakland County; and Hiipakka spent time on military missions in the Baltic republics to help develop emergency plans.

### **Patriot Services Corp.**

What: Security emergency preparedness consulting.

Founded: March 2004 by co-owners Scott Hiipakka, Steve Potter and Thomas Quisenberry

Contracts: Along with Wayne County, Calhoun County, Oakland County, the company has contracts for consulting with 28 school districts in Wayne, Oakland, Washtenaw and Monroe counties, said company President Stephen Potter.

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