

Eckhardt Ezra
Form 3
January 16, 2009

FORM 3 UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, D.C. 20549

OMB APPROVAL

OMB
Number: 3235-0104
Expires: January 31,
2005
Estimated average
burden hours per
response... 0.5

INITIAL STATEMENT OF BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934,
Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section
30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

(Print or Type Responses)

1. Name and Address of Reporting
Person *

^ Eckhardt Ezra

(Last) (First) (Middle)

111 N. WALL STREET

(Street)

SPOKANE, ^ WA ^ 99201

(City) (State) (Zip)

2. Date of Event Requiring
Statement

(Month/Day/Year)

01/08/2009

3. Issuer Name **and** Ticker or Trading Symbol

STERLING FINANCIAL CORP /WA/ [STSA]

4. Relationship of Reporting
Person(s) to Issuer

(Check all applicable)

___ Director ___ 10% Owner

☒ Officer ___ Other

(give title below) (specify below)

COO of Sterling Savings

5. If Amendment, Date Original
Filed(Month/Day/Year)

6. Individual or Joint/Group

Filing(Check Applicable Line)

☒ Form filed by One Reporting
Person

___ Form filed by More than One
Reporting Person

Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned

1. Title of Security
(Instr. 4)

2. Amount of Securities
Beneficially Owned
(Instr. 4)

3. Ownership
Form:
Direct (D)
or Indirect
(I)
(Instr. 5)

4. Nature of Indirect Beneficial
Ownership
(Instr. 5)

Common Stock

12,300

D

^

Common Stock

3,494

I

401k

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially
owned directly or indirectly.

SEC 1473 (7-02)

**Persons who respond to the collection of
information contained in this form are not
required to respond unless the form displays a
currently valid OMB control number.**

Table II - Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

1. Title of Derivative Security
(Instr. 4)

2. Date Exercisable and
Expiration Date
(Month/Day/Year)

3. Title and Amount of
Securities Underlying
Derivative Security
(Instr. 4)

4. Conversion
or Exercise
Price of
Derivative

5. Ownership
Form of
Derivative
Security:

6. Nature of Indirect
Beneficial
Ownership
(Instr. 5)

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	Date Exercisable	Expiration Date	Title	Amount or Number of Shares	Security	Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 5)	
Incentive Stock Option	09/27/2004	02/28/2009	Common Stock	3,000	\$ 22.6933	D	Â
Incentive Stock Option	12/21/2004	02/28/2009	Common Stock	15,000	\$ 26.7133	D	Â
Incentive Stock Option	12/19/2005	02/28/2012	Common Stock	10,000	\$ 25.71	D	Â
Incentive Stock Option	01/31/2008	03/15/2013	Common Stock	15,000	\$ 33.17	D	Â

Reporting Owners

Reporting Owner Name / Address	Relationships			
	Director	10% Owner	Officer	Other
Eckhardt Ezra 111 N. WALL STREET SPOKANE, WA 99201	Â	Â	Â COO of Sterling Savings	Â

Signatures

/s/ Robert G. Butterfield,
Controller

01/16/2009

____Signature of Reporting Person Date

Explanation of Responses:

* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, *see* Instruction 5(b)(v).

** Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. *See* 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, *See* Instruction 6 for procedure.

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