

STERLING FINANCIAL CORP /WA/

Form 8-K

April 26, 2006

**UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20549**

**FORM 8-K
CURRENT REPORT
PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934
Date of Report (Date of earliest event reported): April 25, 2006**

STERLING FINANCIAL CORPORATION
(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

Washington
(State or other jurisdiction of
incorporation or organization)

0-20800
(Commission File Number)

91-1572822
(I.R.S. Employer
Identification No.)

111 North Wall Street, Spokane, Washington 99201
(Address of principal executive offices) (Zip Code)

(509) 458-3711
(Registrant's telephone number, including area code)

Not Applicable

(Former Name or Former Address, if Changed Since Last Report)

Check the appropriate box below if the Form 8-K filing is intended to simultaneously satisfy the filing obligation of the registrant under any of the following provisions:

- Written communications pursuant to Rule 425 under the Securities Act (17 CFR 230.425)
 - Soliciting material pursuant to Rule 14a-12 under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14a-12)
 - Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 14d-2(b) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14d-2(b))
 - Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 13e-4(c) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.13e-4(c))
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INFORMATION TO BE INCLUDED IN THE REPORT

Item 8.01. Other Events.

On April 25, 2006, Sterling Financial Corporation (Sterling) issued a press release announcing a quarterly cash dividend of \$0.065 per share of common stock payable to shareholders of record on June 30, 2006. The dividend is expected to be paid on July 14, 2006. The text of the press release is attached as Exhibit 99.1 to this report and incorporated by reference herein.

Item 9.01. Financial Statements and Exhibits.

(c) The following exhibit is being filed herewith:

| Exhibit No. | Exhibit Description |
|-------------|--|
| 99.1 | Press release text of Sterling Financial Corporation dated April 25, 2006. |

SIGNATURE

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned thereunto duly authorized.

STERLING FINANCIAL CORPORATION

(Registrant)

April 25, 2006

By: /s/ Daniel G. Byrne

Date

Daniel G. Byrne

Executive Vice President, Assistant Secretary, and
Principal Financial Officer

EXHIBIT INDEX

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