

STERLING FINANCIAL CORP /WA/  
Form 8-K  
September 23, 2010  
**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: September 21, 2010**  
(Date of earliest event reported)

---

**Sterling Financial Corporation**  
(Exact name of Registrant as Specified in its Charter)

<b>Washington</b> (State or other jurisdiction of incorporation or organization)	<b>001-34696</b> (Commission File Number)	<b>91-1572822</b> (I.R.S. Employer Identification Number)
--	--	---

**111 North Wall Street, Spokane, Washington 99201**  
(Address of Principal Executive Offices and 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))

---

**Item 5.02 Departure of Directors or Principal Officers; Election of Directors; Appointment of Principal Officers.**

(d) Sterling Financial Corporation ("Sterling") hereby discloses that all necessary regulatory approvals have been received for the appointment of Robert H. Hartheimer to the Sterling Board of Directors. The appointment had been subject to approval by Sterling's primary regulator, the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, which has advised Sterling that it has no objection to the appointment. Mr. Hartheimer will serve on the Credit and Risk Committee and the Governance/Nominating Committee and will act as chairman of the Credit and Risk Committee. The appointment became effective on September 21, 2010.

**Item 9.01. Financial Statements and Exhibits.**

(d) The following exhibit is being furnished herewith:

Exhibit No. Exhibit Description

99.1 Press release text of Sterling Financial Corporation dated September 23, 2010.

---

**SIGNATURES**

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 hereunto duly authorized.

**STERLING FINANCIAL  
CORPORATION**

(Registrant)

September  
23, 2010

By: /s/ Robert G. Butterfield

Date

**Robert G. Butterfield**  
Senior Vice President,  
Controller and Principal  
Accounting Officer