

STERLING BANCORP  
Form 8-K  
December 10, 2008

**UNITED STATES  
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION  
Washington, DC 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) December 9, 2008  
Commission File Number: 1-5273-1  
Sterling Bancorp**

**(Exact name of Registrant as specified in its charter)**

**New York**

**13-2565216**

**(State of other jurisdiction  
of incorporation)**

**(IRS Employer  
Identification No.)**

**650 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York**

**10019-6108**

**(Address of principal executive offices)**

**(Zip Code)**

**(212) 757- 3300**

**(Registrant's telephone number, including area code)**

**N/A**

**(Former name, former address and former fiscal year, 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 (17CFR 240.13e-4(c))**
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**ITEM 8.01**

**OTHER EVENTS**

On December 9, 2008, the Company issued a press release announcing that it has received preliminary approval to participate in the U.S. Treasury Department's Capital Purchase Program. The press release is included as Exhibit 99.1.

**ITEM 9.01**

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND EXHIBITS**

(d) Exhibits

99.1 Press release dated December 9, 2008.

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**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 hereunto duly authorized.

DATE: December 10, 2008

BY: /s/ John W. Tietjen

JOHN W. TIETJEN  
Executive Vice President  
and Chief Financial Officer