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Article for *Minnesota Township News*

State Auditor Winter Update

By *Rebecca Otto, State Auditor*

I wanted to wish you all a belated happy New Year! There is much to share this issue with you about the goings on in the Office of the State Auditor that effect townships.

CTAS Version 8 Support/Known Issues

We're happy to report that township officials across Minnesota have begun using the new and improved Small City and Town Accounting System (CTAS). If you have not had a chance to order CTAS Version 8 and you wish to, you can download the order form from the CTAS page on our website. Go to www.auditor.state.mn.us, hover over the "For Local Officials" menu item and click on the CTAS tab. Once there, click on "Getting Started", and you'll be brought to a page with links to the training materials. This page will be continually updated with new material.

We have prepared a series of online training videos and documents to assist you with getting started with CTAS Version 8, including how to download and install the program. These documents and videos can be found by going to the CTAS page on our website.

Our office continues to offer support to Version 8 users in a variety of ways. When we learn about new issues with the program we update our "Known Issues" web page. On that page you will find a list of issues we have learned about from users. Clicking on an issue will bring you to information about the issue, including a temporary solution so you can work around the issue until a new patch is released with the issue corrected. The Known Issues page includes an archive of issues that have been addressed in previous patches. To access the Known Issues page, go to the CTAS page of our website and look under the Version 8 heading.

We are grateful to CTAS users for informing us of all issues they have encountered while using the program. We want to encourage you to contact us with any issues you find or

questions you may have. Please e-mail us at ctas@osa.state.mn.us or call us at (651) 296-6262.

Program Updates/Patch

As we implement CTAS Version 8, operational issues may be discovered in the program that weren't been found during the extensive testing done by our User Testing Group. This is common with any new software program, and is why we have our vendor for the first year of Version 8's release to correct these issues.

The Office is working to release the first "patch", a downloadable modification to the program that repairs the issues that have been found. Users who have are currently using CTAS Version 8 should download and install the patch as soon as it is available. After the patch is installed, you will be able to continue using Version 8 with your current data.

If you have already downloaded the program and have not yet used it, or if you have been waiting to download it, we recommend downloading the full updated version of Version 8 after the first "patch" is released. Information on downloading and using the patch and the updated version will be available on the CTAS page of our website: under the heading "Version 8", click on "Updates and Patches".

Township Year-End Reporting

Reporting forms for township financial information are now available on SAFES. Our office is in the process of completing instructions for year-end reporting. CTAS users will be able to use CTAS to report to our office. The instructions for year-end reporting will include information on how to report using CTAS Version 7 or Version 8. News of when the instructions are available and when our system will be ready to receive 2014 year-end data will be announced in the State Auditor's E-Update. If you have not already done so, you can go to <http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/eupdate.aspx> to sign up for the E-Update.

This year, the due date for towns reporting on a cash basis is March 31. We encourage you to file your reports electronically via the State Auditor's Form Entry System (SAFES) if you are not already doing so. To set up a SAFES account for your entity, or if you have any questions about your township's reporting, contact our Government Information Division at 651-297-3682 or GID@osa.state.mn.us.