



CTAS News & Notes

Small City & Town Accounting System (CTAS)

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Check Printing and Envelope Advice

Updates to CTAS check printing were made earlier this year to conform with banking best practices.

Checks should have the amount stated in two ways: one using numbers and one using words. Stating the amount of the check in two different ways makes it more difficult for someone to alter the amount. It also helps to avoid confusion and error caused by difficult-to-read handwriting.

The updates required users to make some changes. Following are some helpful tips to deal with the updates:

The address block has been moved on the re-designed checks and will not line up with the envelope window. As a result, users will need to either use address labels when addressing envelopes for vendor payments or purchase new envelopes.

The address block was designed for use with the QuickBooks window envelope format. However, if you use QuickBooks

envelopes with the re-designed check, the signature of the treasurer may now appear in the window.

A signature appearing in the envelope window causes problems for at least two reasons: 1) Postal regulations require at least 1/8th inch of clear space between the address block and the edges of the address window; and 2) a check signature appearing in the envelope window may increase the risk of a theft of the check. If the signature appears in the window, the Office of the State Auditor recommends the use of a windowless envelope.

CTAS has an option to print labels from the Vendor section. The label format should be compatible with the Avery label number 5962. This will print 14 labels to a sheet. Please contact your check vendor, as they may have additional options regarding the addressing of the envelopes.

In addition, when new checks are printed, all three signatures should be in a column on the right-hand side of the check. You can then use the QuickBooks window envelope format.

Training

The Office of the State Auditor offers training sessions on the CTAS system. This is a basic beginners' course designed for those users that have limited or no experience using CTAS.

These sessions are held at the Office of the State Auditor's Office in St. Paul. **A training session is scheduled for May 1, 2008.** The training session begins at 9:00 a.m. and ends at approximately 1:00 p.m. A training workbook is provided.

Please call the CTAS Helpline to register for the training session. The resources available for training require that we have a maximum of eight people for a session

Directions to the Office of the State Auditor may be obtained from the Office of the State Auditor's website. Parking is available in the parking lot behind the building. Please ask the receptionist for a temporary parking permit.

CTAS Tips

Beginning Balances

During the Year-end Processing, CTAS does not always calculate the beginning balances correctly. The next upgrade we do will correct the problem with the beginning balance calculation. In the interim, to update your beginning balance, you can do the following:

1. Click on the Cash icon in CTAS.
2. Highlight the fund with the incorrect balance.
3. Click the Edit button.
4. Enter the correct balance.
5. Click the Save button.

This will update the beginning balance.

Note: The Current Balance and the Fund Amount should be the same amount for the current fiscal year.

Backing up to a CD

1. In CTAS, Click on File, then select Backup
2. Click the Browse Button and select the Desktop.
3. Then click the Run Backup button. This should put the file CTAS_MDB.Zip on your Computer Desktop.
4. Insert a blank CD in the CD drive.
5. If the option appears, select Open a writeable CD folder using Windows Explorer. Otherwise, open My Computer and select the CD drive.

6. Drag the CTAS_MDB.Zip file from your Desktop onto CD drive in My Computer.
7. Then click on Write these Files to CD.
8. Follow the on-screen directions to complete the copying of the file to the CD.
9. When the copying is complete, click the Finish button.

This completes the process of backing up the CTAS data to a CD.

Enterprise Funds

In CTAS, all Enterprise Funds must use a 600 number. These are funds such as water and sewer utilities. Do not use the 600 fund series for funds other than Enterprise Funds.

Using the 600 fund numbers for Enterprise Funds will create the correct electronic file for submission to the Office of the State Auditor.

To change the fund number, click on the Acct_no icon. Highlight the Enterprise Fund and click the Edit button. Change the number and then click the Save button. All transactions with this fund number will be updated to the new number.

How do I delete an employee in a posted payroll?

1. Edit the Payroll Period
2. Click on the Create/Update Payroll Roster.
3. Highlight the employee to be deleted.
4. Click the Remove Button
5. Click the Save Button.

This should delete the employee from the payroll. Remember to void the associated check. Checks should be voided and not deleted so that all check numbers are accounted for.

Error Number 3464

If you received error number 3464 when trying to search by check number, this indicates at least one disbursement transaction does not have a check number. In order to find the transaction(s) without a check number, you will need to search all of your disbursements and find those without a check number.

In the Disbursements section, enter the dates 01/01/2000 to 12/31/2007 in the Search by Date fields. Then click the Search button. Scroll through the list box until you find a transaction without a check number. Edit the transaction and add a check number. When all transactions have a check number, you will be able to use the Search by Check Number option.

Bottom of the Ninth

By David Kazeck

This column is designed to give you my perspective on CTAS and related accounting issues.

REMEMBER TO BACKUP YOUR DATA!

CTAS and a Computer Network

CTAS Version 6 is a stand-alone system. A network version of the system is not available. The Helpline does not have the expertise to troubleshoot CTAS running on a network.

Check and Envelope Vendors

Two vendors who can provide the checks and window envelopes for the CTAS system are:

Rose Shorma
Vice President of Marketing
American Solutions For Business
826 East Lake Geneva Rd. NE
Alexandria, MN 56308
Phone: 320-763-5535
Fax: 320-762-1555
rshorma@americanbus.com

Paul Schmidt
Victor Lundeen Corp
(218) 736-5433
(800) 346-4870
pauls@victorlundeens.com

2007 Cash City Financial Reporting

The instructions for reporting your 2007 financial information have been mailed to all cities. Your OSA code can be found on the letter you received with the instructions. The deadline for cities reporting on a cash basis was **March 31**.

Cities that are being audited should not submit the information using CTAS. The Office of the State Auditor has an Excel spreadsheet that cities should use to report their financial information. Also, the audit report must be submitted electronically using the Adobe Acrobat format (PDF).

For additional information or assistance, please call the Helpline or visit the Office of the State Auditor's website at www.auditor.state.mn.us

2007 Cash Township Financial Reporting

The instructions, for reporting your 2007 financial information, have been mailed to all towns. Your OSA code can be found on the letter you received with the instructions. This information was due in our office **March 1**.

Users should not send a copy of the backup file. Please send the CTAS generated stateauditor.csv file. The default location for this file is the State Auditor folder on your local drive (C).

For additional information or assistance, please call the Helpline or visit the Office of the State Auditor's website at www.auditor.state.mn.us.

Additional Training Opportunities

A CTAS training session will again be offered as one of the workshops in the Summer Short Courses presented by the Minnesota Association of Townships (M.A.T.).

The dates and locations for the training sessions are:

July 15 – Morton
July 16 – Mankato
July 17 – Rochester
July 18 – St. Cloud
July 29 – Fergus Falls
July 30 – Thief River Falls
July 31 – Walker
August 1 – Grand Rapids

For more information, contact M.A.T. at (763) 497-2330 or (800) 228-0296 or visit their website at www.mntownships.org and click on training.

Tax Rates for 2008

The Tax Tables must be updated for 2008. This is done in the payroll section. Click on the Tax Table icon and then click the Add button on the bottom of the screen. The tax table information for completing the Tax Tables is shown on the next page.

2008 Tax Tables

Annual Federal Tax				
	Single	Married	Rate	
Range	2,650.00	8,000.00	0.100	
	10,300.00	23,550.00	0.150	
	33,960.00	72,150.00	0.250	
	79,725.00	137,850.00		
Withholding	765.00	1,555.00		
Allowance	3,500.00			
Annual State Tax				
	Single	Married	Rate	
Range	1,950.00	7,400.00	0.054	
	23,750.00	39,260.00	0.071	
	73,540.00	133,980.00		
Withholding	1,166.30	1,704.51		
	FICA	Medicare		
Employer	0.0620	0.0145		
Employee	0.0620	0.0145		
P.E.R.A. Rates				
Plan	Employee Rate	Employer Rate	Employer Additional	Employer Total
Coordinated (effective 01/01/08)	6.00%	6.00%	0.50%	6.50%
Basic (effective 01/01/08)	9.10%	9.10%	2.68%	11.78%
Police & Fire (effective 01/01/08)	8.60%	12.90%	n/a	12.90%
Defined Contribution Plan - elected officials	5.00%	5.00%	n/a	5.00%
Defined Contribution Plan - City Managers/Administrators (effective 01/01/08)	6.00%	6.00%	n/a	6.00%