

CTAS News & Notes

Small City & Town Accounting System

Helpline: Phone: (651) 297-3682 Fax: (651) 282-2391 E-mail: ctas@osa.state.mn.us

Backing up Data in CTAS Version 5

In discussing the types of calls received on the CTAS Helpline, a concern has been expressed regarding the backing up of the CTAS data. It appears that the backup feature of CTAS is not being fully utilized. Not backing up your data is like a high wire act not using a net. If something happens, there is nothing to prevent a disaster.

CTAS Backup Procedures

1. Click on the Administration button (Admin).
2. Click on the Utilities Tab (F5).
3. Insert a diskette in Drive A.
4. Click on the Backup button.
5. Click on the Run Backup button.
6. Click the OK button.
The CTAS system will

backup your data onto the diskette. If a second disk is required, the system will ask you to insert diskette number two. Using this backup procedure will allow the use of the restore database button on the Welcome screen.

Recommended Backup Method

1. Use a minimum of three sets of backup disks.
2. Rotate the backup sets. For example, use set 1 for week 1; set 2 for week 2, set 3 for week 3 and set 4 for week 4. Then on the first week of the next month use set 1 again. Then continue the rotation.
3. Make two backup copies at the end of the month. These will not be rotated. Store one set of the backup disks off-site.
4. After three months, replace the weekly disks with a new set. Diskettes will wear out if they continue to be rewritten.

Explanations

Why use three backup sets? When backing up the data, you could inadvertently backup corrupted data. If you only have one set of backup disks, there is no longer a backup set of the data. The chances of three or more sets of backup disks being corrupt are extremely small. Therefore, all you need to re-enter is the data added since the backup.

Tape Backup: Tapes backups are excellent for backing up all of the information on the computer. However, you may find that retrieving a small portion of the data from the tape backup difficult. In addition, you cannot use the restore database command on the CTAS Welcome screen to recover the data from the tape backup.

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Training

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

These sessions are held at the State Auditor's Office in St. Paul. Training sessions are scheduled for June 29, July 13, and August 17, 2000. The training sessions begin at 9:00 a.m. and will end at approximately 1:00 p.m.

Please call Ms. Billi Sanders at (651) 297-3684 to register for a training session. The resources available for training require that we have a maximum of six people for a session. Due to the time and resource commitment, the Office of the State Auditor reserves the right to cancel a training session if registrations do not exceed three.

Participants should bring their

Reference Manual to the training session. A training workbook is provided.

The training session will be held at the State Auditor's Office, Suite 400, 525 Park Street, St. Paul, MN. Parking is available across the street in the Bethesda Ramp.

In addition to these training sessions, the Minnesota Association of Townships (MAT) is offering a series of training sessions titled Summer Short Courses. These training sessions include two CTAS sections. One is a general overview of the system and the other is the CTAS system from a user's point of view.

The general overview is for persons currently not using CTAS. A user's point of view will discuss a real life situation using CTAS software. An OSA representative will be available to answer specific questions. Please call the MAT Office at 1-800-228-0296 for information on the Summer Short Courses.

Accounting

Transfers

Transfers are used to move resources from one fund to another. The CTAS system requires the use of specific numbers for transfers. The receipt number is 39200 and the disbursement number is 49360.

The entries for transferring money from the General Fund (100) to the Road and Bridge Fund (201) is as follows:

Road and Bridge Fund:
Receipt Number: TRF01
Account No.: 201-39200

General Fund:
Check Number: TRF01
Account No.: 100-49360-720

The TRF01 is the number I assigned to this transaction.

Using the assigned number will ensure that the transfers are shown on Schedule 1 of the financial statements.

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The transfer of money to or from a savings account should be shown as a purchase or sale of an investment.

Recording of Interest on Investments.

We have received a statement from the bank stating that \$150 in interest has been added to our General Fund CD. To record this interest and allocate it to the CD the following transactions are made.

To record the interest earned the accounting number is 100-36210. Where 100 is the General Fund number and 36210 is the account number for interest earnings.

To record the interest as part of the CD the account number is 100-49350-800. Again 100 is the General Fund, 49350 is the account number for investments purchased and 800 is the object code for purchase of an investment.

Frequently Asked Questions

I tried to enter check numbers and received the message: Error Number 30009. Why can't I enter check numbers?

This error message indicates that one of two conditions exists within your claims section.

1. All the checks in the claims sections have currently been assigned check numbers
2. The claims that have not been paid have not been selected as approved.

Review the claims section to discover which of the conditions exists. Then correct the problem and continue. If a check number needs to be changed, then the claim must be edited.

I tried to start my CTAS system and received the error message: CTAS-16 and I cannot get CTAS to run. What can I do to get CTAS to run?

This message indicates there is a conflict between CTAS and the operating system. To correct this problem, close all programs and re-start your computer.

Windows 3.1 users should completely turn off their computer.

Windows 95, 98 and NT users can follow these steps.

1. Click the Start button.
2. Click on Shutdown
3. Select Restart the Computer
4. Then click the Yes button.

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The Clipboard

The Helpline now has two additional numbers available. Users with accounting issues can call 651-297-3684. Those with computer issues can call 651-297-7104.

Caution is the key when installing new software. The new software may overwrite Windows system files needed by CTAS.

The sample checks in the payroll system are for the dot-matrix printers. This is used to help align the checks.

The Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) are now listed on the CTAS website.

CTAS Version 5 for Windows is a stand-alone system. A network version of the system is not available. The Helpline does not have the expertise to troubleshoot getting CTAS to run on a network.

Posting of Claims: When a claim has been posted it cannot be changed. All changes must be made in disbursements. Changes made in disbursements should also be recorded on the printed claim form.

The CTAS Bulletin Board is now available to users. The OSA staff generally reviews the postings on the Bulletin Board on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Users needing assistance in accessing the Bulletin Board can call 651-

297-7104.

The check format for a Laser or Inkjet printer is Deluxe LaserJet Check form; Product Number 81064: Laser Multi-purpose Check 81/2 X 11. More information on obtaining these checks is available on the OSA website at www.osa.state.mn.us or you can call the Helpline.

Motivational Quotes

Persistence

Persistence is what makes the impossible possible, the possible likely, and the likely definite.

- Robert Hall, personal executive

If I miss one day's practice, I notice it. If I miss two days, the critics notice it. If I miss three days, the audience notices it.

- Ignace Paderewski, Polish concert pianist