



OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR

E-Update

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State Auditor
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1. Pension Update: Additional Training Session Added

Nearly 400 relief association trustees and consultants have registered for the pension training sessions being offered this spring by the Office of the State Auditor's Pension Division. Several of the sessions closed quickly as they were filled to capacity. To accommodate relief association trustees, an additional training session has been scheduled. The additional session will be provided at our Saint Paul office on Friday, April 11, from 1 to 4 p.m.

The training session will include interactive bylaw and investment policy components, a legislative update, and discussions of reporting requirements and reporting forms. If you have questions regarding the training sessions or if you would like to register for the April 11 class, please contact Gail Richie at (651) 282-6110 or Gail.Richie@state.mn.us.

2. CTAS Update: Check Printing and Envelope Advice

Updates to CTAS check printing made earlier this year require 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.

3. SAFES: Temporarily Unavailable Monday Morning, March 24

The State Auditor's Form Entry System (SAFES) will be unavailable the morning of Monday, March 24, due to maintenance work. It will be available again later that day. We apologize for any inconvenience.

4. Avoiding Pitfalls: Data Practices

People bring a variety of concerns to the Office of the State Auditor. One fairly common concern involves a person's ability to obtain financial information from a local unit of government.

Local governments must comply with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act. Towns, however, are generally exempt – only towns in the metropolitan area with urban powers must comply with the Data Practices Act. By following the requirements of the Data Practices Act, local units of government will be better able to help the public understand how public resources are being used.

The Minnesota Department of Administration's Information Policy Analysis Division's (IPAD) website has educational materials about the public's access to information specifically designed for governmental entities. The materials are found at: <http://www.ipad.state.mn.us/dpgoveducation.html>. IPAD can be contacted by telephone at (651) 296-6733; by mail at Information Policy Analysis Division, 201 Administration Building, 50 Sherburne Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55155; or via its website at www.ipad.state.mn.us.
