



State Auditor  
Rebecca Otto

# OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR

## *E-Update*

*The official online news  
publication of the Office  
of the State Auditor*

June 25, 2010

1. Training: Pension Training Opportunities
2. Deadline: Pension Reporting Form
3. Website: Comparison Tools
4. Avoiding Pitfalls: Monitor Contract Prices of Supplies

---

### **1. Training: Pension Training Opportunities**

#### **New Recorded Training**

The Office of the State Auditor has recorded a new online training session which provides instructions on how to sign pension reporting forms electronically using the State Auditor's Form Entry System (SAFES). To view the training, go to:

<http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=trainingopportunities>.

#### **Live Training**

On Wednesday, June 30, the Pension Division will be offering a live online training on substantive law changes in the 2010 Omnibus Retirement Bill that pertain to volunteer fire relief associations. The training will be held from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. To register, go to:

<http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=trainingopportunities>.

---

### **2. Deadline: Pension Reporting Form**

The 2009 reporting year form for volunteer fire relief associations with assets or liabilities of at least \$200,000 is due by June 30. Reporting forms for relief associations with assets and liabilities less than \$200,000 were due by March 31.

Relief associations with the June 30 reporting deadline are required to submit audited financial statements together with the reporting forms. Please be advised that once a relief association's assets or liabilities exceed \$200,000, the relief association maintains the June 30 reporting deadline and audit requirement even if the association's assets and liabilities subsequently drop below that threshold.

The online Excel reporting form can be accessed through the State Auditor's Form Entry System at:

<https://www.auditor.state.mn.us/safes/login.aspx>.

Reporting form information and helpful hints for completing the form are available at:

<http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=20070105.001>.

---

### **3. Website: Comparison Tools**

The Office of the State Auditor's website contains a valuable tool called comparison tools. It provides detailed financial information for a particular city, county or town. It also allows one to compare the finances of two cities, two counties, or two towns for a particular year. Click on "Reports & Data" on the home page, and scroll down to "Comparison Tools". You can also access this feature by clicking on the following link:

<http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=ComparisonTools>.

---

### **4. Avoiding Pitfalls: Monitor Contract Prices of Supplies**

Public entities often enter into contracts to purchase supplies based upon the prices offered by the vendor on those supplies. When the supplies are actually purchased, the public entity should confirm that the prices charged by the vendor match the prices offered by the vendor when the original contract was signed.

Allegations have been made in other states that vendors switched government customers from one pricing plan to another plan without the customers' full understanding or knowledge. Settlements were recently announced by the Florida and Missouri Attorneys General resolving allegations of overcharging by Office Depot for office supplies sold to governmental entities. Comparing the contract prices with the actual prices charged will help prevent overpayments.

---

If you are interested in signing up to receive an e-mail version of the E-Update regularly, [click here](#).

The Office of the State Auditor is located at 525 Park Street, Suite 500, St. Paul, MN 55103. Phone: (651) 296-2551 or (800) 627-3529 (TTY) Fax: (651) 296-4755.

Web: [www.auditor.state.mn.us](http://www.auditor.state.mn.us).