



State Auditor
Rebecca Otto

OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR

E-Update

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November 18, 2011

1. Released: Town Finances Report
2. Update: Volunteer Fire Relief Association Working Group
3. Avoiding Pitfalls: Security for Portable Computing and Media Devices

1. Released: Town Finances Report

State Auditor Rebecca Otto has released the 2010 Town Finances Report, a comprehensive report on revenues, expenditures and debt for Minnesota towns. To view the complete report, which includes an Executive Summary, graphs and tables, go to:

<http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=20111115.004>.

2. Update: Volunteer Fire Relief Association Working Group

The 2011/2012 Volunteer Fire Relief Association Working Group held its first meeting on November 16. Working Group members discussed topic suggestions and reviewed draft language for several technical legislative changes.

The next Working Group meeting will be Tuesday, December 13, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at our office in Saint Paul. Meetings are open to the public, and those interested are encouraged to attend.

Meeting agendas and materials are available on our website at:

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

3. Avoiding Pitfalls: Security for Portable Computing and Media Devices

Notebook computers, USB flash drives, and other removable media devices are often used outside a secure network environment, which makes them particularly susceptible to loss. As

a result, extra care needs to be taken to protect the devices and any “not public” data contained on them.

All computers should be secured with a strong password. To protect both the data and the computer equipment, the following security measures should also be considered:

- Government data should not be stored on personal computers, personal USB flash drives, and other similar personal equipment.
- “Not public” data should be stored on a notebook computer or removable media device only when there is a business need.
- Data stored on a notebook computer or a removable media device should be strongly encrypted.
- When removable media are no longer in use, they should be securely destroyed.
- When disposing of computers, the hard drives should be securely erased.
- Cable locks should be used for all computers, except while in transit.
- Computers should never be left in an unattended vehicle.

The Minnesota Office of Enterprise Technology’s website has a number of resources for governmental entities who are drafting security policies for portable computing and media devices. To view this material, go to OET’s website at: www.mn.gov/oet/.

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