



State Auditor  
Rebecca Otto

## OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR

# *E-Update*

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

**February 21, 2014**

1. Available: Financial Reporting Forms
2. Reminder: Revenue's Fire Equipment Certification Form
3. Update: Volunteer Fire Relief Association Working Group
4. Tip: Accessing the State Auditor's Form Entry System (SAFES)
5. Avoiding Pitfalls: Report Evidence of Wrongdoing

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### **1. Available: Financial Reporting Forms**

The 2013 Local Government Financial Reporting Forms for cities, counties, towns and special districts are now available. The forms can be downloaded from our website at:

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

The deadline for Financial Reporting Forms for towns reporting on a cash basis has been extended. The forms are due to our office on Monday, March 31.

Financial Reporting Forms for cities reporting on a cash basis are due on Monday, March 31.

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### **2. Reminder: Revenue's Fire Equipment Certification Form**

The 2013 Fire Equipment Certification (FA-1) Form is due to the Minnesota Department of Revenue by March 15, 2014. Submission of the form is required for communities to be eligible for 2014 fire state aid. The form must be signed by the fire chief and by the municipal clerk or secretary of the independent nonprofit firefighting corporation, as applicable.

Five percent of a community's fire state aid is forfeited for each week or fraction of a week that the form is submitted past the March 15 due date. A copy of the FA-1 Form and instructions for completing the form are provided on the Minnesota Department of Revenue's website at:

[http://www.revenue.state.mn.us/local\\_gov/prop\\_tax\\_admin/Pages/fsa.aspx](http://www.revenue.state.mn.us/local_gov/prop_tax_admin/Pages/fsa.aspx).

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### **3. Update: Volunteer Fire Relief Association Working Group**

The 2013-2014 Volunteer Fire Relief Association Working Group held its final meeting on February 19. The Group was provided with an update on the status of its legislative proposals. The Group spent the majority of the meeting discussing relief association training needs and opportunities. The Office of the State Auditor, with support from the Working Group members, plans to offer some relief association training sessions later this year and next year. Information will be provided in the E-Update when it becomes available.

Working Group meeting materials are available at:

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

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### **4. Tip: Accessing the State Auditor's Form Entry System (SAFES)**

Our office often receives calls from local government officials with questions about the State Auditor's Form Entry System (SAFES). If you have registered for SAFES in the past, your username is generally in the following format: firstname.lastname. If you need a new password, go to the SAFES login page and click on the "Forgot your password" link. A new password will be sent to the e-mail address we have on file for your entity.

If you have not used SAFES in the past and need a username and password, e-mail [SAFES@osa.state.mn.us](mailto:SAFES@osa.state.mn.us) with your contact information, including entity name, your name, title, entity mailing address, and phone number. A new username and password will be e-mailed to you.

Online training on how to use SAFES is available on the SAFES login page, which can be found at:

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

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### **5. Avoiding Pitfalls: Report Evidence of Wrongdoing**

Local government officials and employees must notify the Office of the State Auditor (OSA) whenever evidence of theft, embezzlement, or the unlawful use of public funds or property is discovered. Effective August 1, 2013, the reporting requirement also applies to officers and employees of local public pension plans, including volunteer firefighter relief associations and teachers' retirement fund associations governed by chapter 354A.

Under [Minn. Stat. § 609.456](#), a detailed description of the alleged incident(s) must be made to the OSA "promptly" and in writing. The description may include information that is classified as not public data. "Prompt" reporting means that the OSA should be contacted

when the evidence is first discovered. Information that could reasonably be used to determine the identity of an individual providing the required notice is classified as private.

To make a report, please use the following form:

[http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/other/reportconcern\\_govtofficial\\_form.pdf](http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/other/reportconcern_govtofficial_form.pdf).

If you have questions about whether a report should be made, please contact Nancy Bode at 651-297-5853 or [Nancy.Bode@osa.state.mn.us](mailto:Nancy.Bode@osa.state.mn.us).

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

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