



**State Auditor
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OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR

E-Update

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1. Deadline: Volunteer Fire Relief Association Reporting Forms
2. Open: Registration for TIF Training for Counties
3. Avoiding Pitfalls: Small Entities - Review of Checks

1. Deadline: Volunteer Fire Relief Association Reporting Forms

The 2016 reporting-year forms for volunteer fire relief associations with assets or liabilities of at least \$500,000 are due to the Office of the State Auditor (OSA) by June 30. Reporting forms for relief associations with assets and liabilities less than the \$500,000 threshold were due by March 31.

Relief associations with the June 30 reporting deadline are required to submit audited financial statements in addition to the reporting forms. Once a relief association has exceeded the \$500,000 threshold in either assets or liabilities, June 30 remains the reporting and audit requirement deadline even if assets and liabilities subsequently fall below the threshold.

The 2016 reporting-year forms can be accessed through the State Auditor's Form Entry System (SAFES) at:

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

A checklist of helpful hints for completing the reporting forms can be downloaded from the Pension Forms page of our website under the "Resources for Completing Forms" heading at:

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

2. Open: Registration for TIF Training for Counties

Registration is now open for tax increment financing (TIF) training sessions for county staff July. Training sessions will be held in Hastings, Marshall, Cambridge, and Moorhead.

The training is designed to help staff better understand county TIF roles and responsibilities as well as the basic principles and workings of TIF, recent legislative changes, and reporting requirements.

Sessions are free of charge. Details and registration information are available on the OSA website at:

[https://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=trainingopportunities#TaxIncrementFinancing\(TIF\)Division](https://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=trainingopportunities#TaxIncrementFinancing(TIF)Division).

3. Avoiding Pitfalls: Small Entities - Review of Checks

The OSA sometimes discovers evidence of theft that occurred in small entities with a limited number of office personnel because no oversight procedures were developed to counteract the lack of segregation of duties.

A timely review of bank statements and check images (or original checks, if returned by the bank) needs to be performed to detect problem checks. Specifically, the bank statements and check images should be compared to the claims list approved for payment at the prior board/council meeting(s). This brief review should be performed on a monthly basis by someone who is not involved in the writing of checks. For example, in small entities, it could be performed by a town supervisor or city council member.

The review could disclose bank encoding errors, but it could also detect the theft of public funds, such as the issuance of unauthorized checks or the alteration of the payee and/or amount of the check.

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