

CTAS News and Notes

Small City & Town Accounting System (CTAS)

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CTAS Manual Now Available

The Office of the State Auditor has published the complete User Manual for version 7.0 of CTAS. The CTAS User Manual can be used both by beginners and by those who have been using CTAS for years.

This comprehensive manual takes users through all functions of the program. Step-by-step instructions and screenshots demonstrate each task in the program, from setting up an account to changing or deleting information to printing reports. The screenshots illustrate what your screen will look like as you go through each step of a procedure. There are also screenshots of sample reports that you can print with the program.

The Manual is available as a bound paper copy, on CD, or by downloading it through the internet.

The paper copy is in a 3-ring binder with tabs for each chapter, a Table of Contents, Glossary and Index. The paper copy is available for a modest cost by filling out an order form (see below for information on the order form). The cost includes shipping.

The CD, which can also be ordered with the order form, includes both the User Manual and the current version of the CTAS program. The CD will be shipped to you at no cost.

The third option is to download the Manual to your computer as an Adobe Acrobat (pdf) file. You can choose either to download the full Manual or one chapter at a time. The electronic version of the Manual contains links which, when clicked on, will take you to other parts of the Manual. The Table of Contents and Index are fully linked to allow for easy navigation.

To download the Manual to your computer, or to download an order form for the paper copy or CD, go to the OSA website at www.auditor.state.mn.us. Once you're there, find the "For Local Officials" tab at the top of the page and click on the "CTAS" link; then, on the CTAS page, click on "CTAS User Manual" under the "Documentation" heading.

CTAS Checks

The vendors listed here offer checks that work with CTAS. The OSA does not recommend vendors, but offers this list as a resource for your CTAS check printing needs.

Tammy & Shaun Stottler

American Solutions for Business

19562 Halwood Rd

Glenwood, MN 56334

Phone: (320) 634-3344

Fax: (320) 634-0287

tstottle@americanbus.com

Rose Shorma

Proforma Rose Shorma

826 East Lake Geneva Rd.

Alexandria, MN 56308

Phone: (320) 763-5535

Fax: (320) 762-1555

Cell: (320) 760-8212

rose.shorma@proforma.com

Paul Schmidt

Victor Lundeen Corp.

126 West Lincoln Avenue

P.O. Box 486

Fergus Falls, MN 56538

Phone: (218) 736-5433

Phone: (800) 346-4870

pauls@victorlundeens.com

These vendors also offer window envelopes for mailing checks printed with CTAS.

Training Opportunities

The Office of the State Auditor (OSA) offers three kinds of training on the CTAS system.

For CTAS beginners, hands-on training is offered at our offices in St. Paul. Participants are provided with a classroom computer and a training manual. Please call or email the CTAS Helpline for more information or to register for an up-coming session. Class size is limited.

Live online training is also available for beginning and experienced CTAS users. The training is interactive and personalized: you can participate from any computer with a high-speed connection. If you need access to a high-speed connection, contact your local public library. Please call or email the CTAS Helpline for more information or to register for an up-coming session. Class size is limited.

Recorded training sessions on CTAS topics and using the State Auditor's Form Entry System (SAFES) are always available on the OSA website, www.auditor.state.mn.us. Find the "For Local Officials" tab at the top of the page and click on "Training Opportunities" to see available online recorded training opportunities.

For additional information or assistance on any of these training options, please call or e-mail the CTAS Helpline or visit the OSA's Website at www.auditor.state.mn.us.

Remember to Back Up Your Data!

Our staff has often been able to help CTAS users recover data when they have made a backup copy. Backup copies can be saved to CD, flash drive or another external storage device.

We recommend a rotation system for backing up your data. The first time you back up, use Backup 1. The second time, use Backup 2. The third time use Backup 3. The fourth time, you can use Backup 1 again. The possibility of all three backups being corrupt is very small: therefore, the chances of recovering most if not all of the data are very good.

We recommend backing up all of your data once a month. This includes CTAS, word processing documents, and spreadsheets.

Online Trainings Offered

Instructions for installing CTAS Version 7 on Windows Vista or Windows 7

Instructions for using the Payroll Module on CTAS Version 7

Instructions on how to use the State Auditor's Form Entry System (SAFES)

To access these recorded training sessions, go to the OSA website, www.auditor.state.mn.us. Find the "For Local Officials" tab at the top of the page and click on "Training Opportunities".

City and Town Reporting Information

The Office of the State Auditor (OSA) wants to clarify some questions about financial reporting to ensure prompt and trouble-free compliance.

Cities and towns reporting on the GAAP basis of accounting or who are being audited must download their reporting form through the State Auditor's Form Entry (SAFES) system, which can be accessed at www.auditor.state.mn.us. The OSA provides an Excel spreadsheet that entities must use to report their financial information. Once the form has been filled out, entities should submit the Excel form along with an Adobe Acrobat (pdf) copy of their audited financial statements through SAFES.

Entities reporting on a cash basis of accounting can download and complete Excel reporting form from SAFES or generate a reporting file from CTAS. We encourage reporting on a cash basis of accounting to upload their Excel reporting form or generated reporting file and their financial statements through SAFES.

Detailed instructions for reporting 2011 financial information have been mailed to all cities and towns. All deadlines have passed: please contact our office if your entity has not yet reported 2011 financial information.

Reminder: Report Change of Officers

When the person filling the role of a Clerk or Treasurer for an entity changes, the entity is responsible for contacting the OSA to update this information as soon as possible. Reminder notices or other important information may not reach the correct individuals if the change is not reported.

Contact us at Your Convenience

A number of users conduct town or city business in the evening or on weekends when the CTAS Helpline is not available. By using the CTAS e-mail (ctas@osa.state.mn.us), a response to your questions will generally be sent to you by noon the next business day.