Second Quarter
April - June 2021

BS&A SOFTWARE®

Newsletter

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Assessing/Equalization

Assessing .NET

Looking Ahead

Freezing the Assessor's Values
It is that time of year to start getting ready to print Assessment Change Notices and present the roll to the March Board of Review. Make sure that the program is on the latest version of the software so the Assessment Change Notices are up to date with the latest STC changes. It is very important to FREEZE the ASSESSOR'S values prior to printing the Assessment Change Notices, and prior to turning the roll over to the MBOR. To freeze the Assessor's values, you MUST first run the Write Floating Values tool for ALL RECORDS. Once that is done, go to *Program Setup>Database Setup>Governmental Units.* Click the Options tab, then click the Calculation Options button. You can also set the FREEZE PERSONAL VALUES at this time, although most users wait to do this until most of the notices have come in.

Freezing the MBOR Values
After the March Board of Review has been completed and all changes have been entered, you MUST run the Write Floating Values tool for ALL RECORDS. Once this has been done, go to *Program Setup>Database Setup>Governmental Units*. Click the Options tab, then click the Calculation Options button. Set all three Freeze fields to "Freeze MBOR Values."

This will LOCK in those MBOR values so that any changes made affecting values will NOT change those values in the database. PRE changes can still be made in the program once the MBOR values have been frozen. These PRE changes can be made up until the June 1st deadline. Shortly after the June 1st deadline, the L-4025 report should be run, as well as a Misc/Stats report.

Rolling Over the Database
Once the totals have been verified, the database is ready to be rolled over to the new assessment year. Go to *Help>View Documentation>Manual*. Search for "rolling over," then click the link for Roll Over Checklist.

EMPP
A reminder that even if your municipality has no EMPP parcels, the EMPP Export to the State MUST be run and submitted for every municipality. This allows the Department of Treasury to track which municipalities still need to submit exports. Because of the tight timeframe imposed by the Department, we strongly suggest that you run the export at the close of the MBOR. The State will be contacting those municipalities that fail to submit the EMPP Export to the State.

Tax Suite

Tax .NET

Looking Ahead
2021 Summer tax billing is just around the corner. Keep in mind that taxpayers have until June 1st to request a Principal Residence Exemption. It is our recommendation that you not bring in data from your Assessor until they have entered all PRE changes in their Assessing database. This will help with the balancing process as you prepare the tax roll.

For our customers who prepare their own tax rolls, you can find our Summer Billing Checklist on our website here: https://www.bsasoftware.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/cklst_sum.pdf

This document has been created by BS&A as a suggested guide to set up your summer tax roll and prepare for printing summer tax bills. While not all of the items in the checklist may apply to your municipality, and perhaps there are things your municipality needs that are not listed, we do feel this is a comprehensive list to review.

A couple of the most critical points are:

- Make sure that the 2021 Original Assessed Value, Taxable Value, PRE, and Non-PRE Values all balance to the Assessor's data. If you start the year with balanced original values, you will have fewer issues balancing throughout the year and at settlement.

- Verify Millage Rates. New databases are created through the New Tax Year Database Wizard. This wizard brings forward the Tax Names and Millage Rates from the previous year. It is extremely important to review the rates and compare them to the L-4029 Reports you should receive from each taxing authority. Add any new rates and delete any expired rates. Once you have all the rates entered and reviewed, be sure to have others also review the rates. It never hurts to have a second set of eyes.

- Print or export sample tax bills from each millage table type to review items such as millage calculations, dates, typos, return address, field placement, etc. Note: the program no longer prompts for the PRE Savings message when printing the Standard Laser bills. The PRE Savings message is now a selection in Report Options.

Drain Assessment .NET

As you begin to prepare your drain assessment rolls, be sure to confirm that the 2020 year has been completed. One quick way to see if the year has been advanced is from the Project Master View. There should be a scrolling message across the top of the page indicating a previous year end was not completed.

Additionally, you can go to the Payment tab on a parcel record to determine if previous payments or year-end payments have been recorded. The payment description will indicate year-end payment, and the Year End column will display Yes if completed.

Delinquent County Tax .NET

The recent legislation change regarding the excess of proceeds remains a top priority for BS&A. We are watching the proceedings of the legislation closely, and are having ongoing discussions on how to implement this effectively within the program. As we receive more information, we will be making modifications accordingly. BS&A will do our best to communicate these changes to our customers once they are implemented. If you have any questions, please reach out to our Tax Support Team.

Community Development

Building Department .NET

Shared Fee Schedules are now available in Fee Groups
If you recall, shared fees were added in the 7/15 update. These shared fees can now also be included in Fee Groups, and be re-used across sub-permits. What this means is that when a permit is set up with a Parent permit type, a new Shared Fee Schedules option is available. This option allows you to select and re-use any fees configured on the given Parent permit type, saving you from extra work and avoiding duplicate fee setup.

Financial Management

General Ledger .NET and Purchase Order .NET

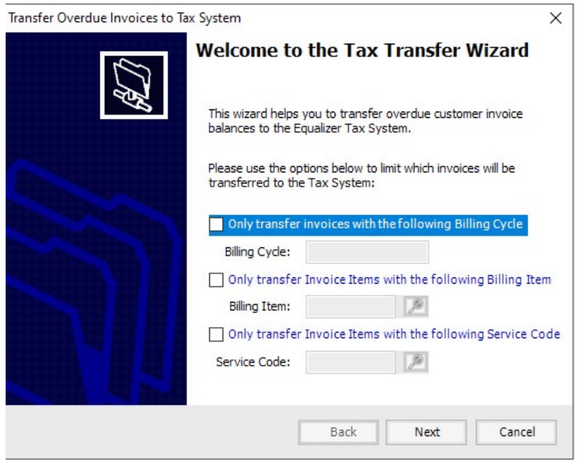
Year End Rollover
As a reminder for municipalities with a fiscal year end date of September 30th, the year-end rollover process will need to be completed before March 31st to prevent any posting date errors in BS&A. This needs to be done in both GL and PO. You can find helpful instructions on the Year End Rollover Process in the online help manuals, courseware, and videos, all accessed through the Help menu in the applications. Municipalities with a fiscal year end of December 31st will need to complete this process before June 30th.

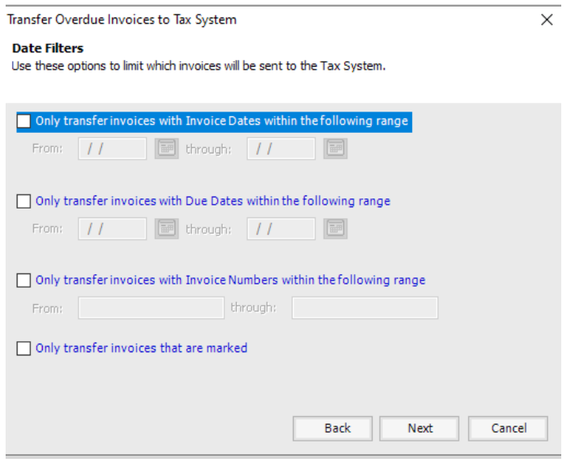
State of MI - Chart of Accounts Changes
As you may have heard, the State of Michigan has recently finalized the updated Uniform Chart of Accounts, and has published the latest version on the Treasury's website. With that announcement, BS&A may now proceed with assisting all Michigan municipalities who wish to comply. In order to assist all Michigan municipalities in a timely matter, we have established a plan to group municipalities together in different "waves." Working with different waves of customers will help us to get each municipality in compliance by the state's deadlines (which are dependent on each municipality's Fiscal Year End).

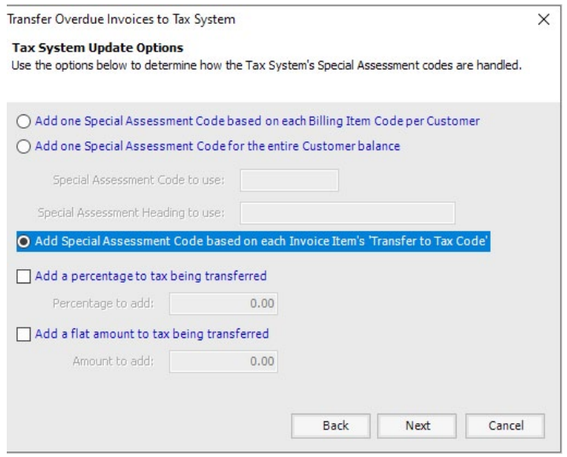
If the primary contact at your municipality has not yet received the informational email from BS&A, indicating the Default Wave that your municipality has been assigned to, please reach out to us as soon as possible. In order for your municipality to be placed on our project contact list and to be assigned to a Default Wave, please email us at FMSupport@bsasoftware.com.

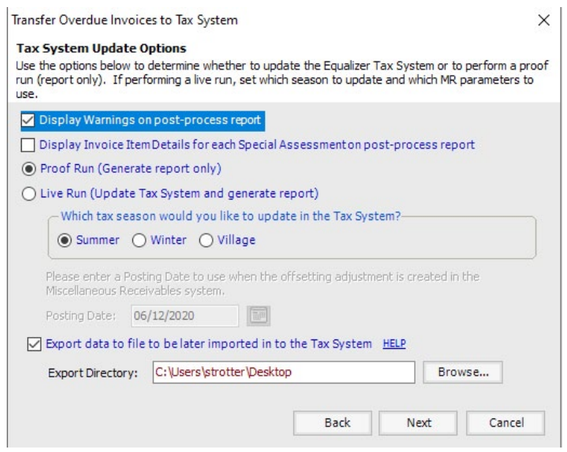
Miscellaneous Receivables .NET

Overdue MR Invoices to Tax Process
MR has a built-in process to handle delinquent invoices. The Tax Transfer Wizard, located in the Tasks menu, will create adjustments to remove the balances from the MR invoices and place them in a file that will in turn be imported into the BS&A Tax program for inclusion on the tax bills. Please note that the criteria for determining whether and which invoices get turned over to tax billing is determined by the municipality.









Support offers a user-friendly document that outlines the process, but we also welcome calls and/or emails so we can walk through the process together.

HRMS .NET

New Feature Highlight
MERS has changed their export requirements, effective 3/1/2021. Our 3/1 update will include those requirements, so please be sure to update your BS&A Payroll program to the 3/1 version to ensure that MERS exports you run from Payroll match the new MERS requirements.

Looking Ahead
The HRMS Support team noticed an increase in election worker tax errors this year, especially when it came to year-end balancing. If you would like to review your election worker setup or have any questions, please do not hesitate to submit a help request for more information or to review your settings.

Utility Billing .NET

Payment Plans
BS&A's Utility Billing program offers a Payment Plan setup that allows residents' previous amounts to be paid over time as long as they continue to keep their most current balance up to date.

Payment Plans must be enabled first in *Program Setup>Database Setup>Payment Plan Settings* by checking the Enable Payment Plan Processing box. You will then need to log off, then log back in to continue with setup. Payment Plans require some discussion with Support, so please feel free to contact us when you are ready to begin!

Team Spotlight

Meet the Utility Billing Support Team

Our Utility Billing Support Team's main goal is to provide the unparalleled support that we live and breathe here at BS&A. Our team supports not only Utility Billing, but Work Order, Inventory Management, and Cemetery Management as well. While we primarily assist our customers by phone or email, you may have met some of us onsite as well! Outside of providing customer support, our team works hard on other projects that benefit both our customers and our other teams:

- User Group and annual conference coordination and communication across our wide customer base
- Leading User Groups
- Mentoring new and current team members
- Onsite and remote trainings in support of our Implementation & Training Team
- Onboarding/implementing integration third party vendors
- Quality assurance testing on application changes and enhancements prior to release
- Creating external and internal learning materials, such as Courseware videos and general documentation
- Additional consultation and research on issues, questions, and new feature requests

As our customer base grows and our call volume increases, we strive to maintain the superior service our customers have come to expect. We thrive on brainstorming new ways our applications can benefit our wide variety of customers, and we enjoy the opportunity to learn with each call and email.

Technical Support

We encourage you to utilize our Help Menu feature in all .NET applications to either send a call-back request or an email request to the support team. All requests will continue to be answered or returned within the normal turn-around time that our customers are accustomed to.

Alternatively, regular email requests are also encouraged. Both options are especially useful for those customers who do not work in their offices each day during regular business hours.

Please keep in mind not all situations can be handled through email. Occasionally we may need to speak with you.

Assessing	ASGSupport@bsasoftware.com
Tax	TaxSupport@bsasoftware.com
Delinquent Tax	TaxSupport@bsasoftware.com
Delq Personal Property	TaxSupport@bsasoftware.com
Special Assessment	TaxSupport@bsasoftware.com
Community Development	CDSupport@bsasoftware.com
Utility Billing	UBSupport@bsasoftware.com
Financial Management	FMSupport@bsasoftware.com
Payroll/Human Resources	HRMSSupport@bsasoftware.com
BS&A Online	BSAOnlineSupport@bsasoftware.com
I.T. Team	ITSupport@bsasoftware.com

Sending Data to Support

The easiest, most efficient way to send BS&A data is to use our FTP process. This works for both Pervasive and .NET:

1. Back up your database.
2. Go to ***Help>FTP>FTP File to BS&A Software***.
3. For .NET, **File to Upload** defaults to the backup file you just created; click **Ok**. For Pervasive, you will need to browse to the backup file; do so and click Send.
4. For .NET, go to ***Help>Contact Customer Support>Email Support***. For Pervasive, go to ***Help>Email [deptname] Support***.
5. For .NET, verify the information in the Subject line (your license file and version date information). For Pervasive, enter a Subject.
6. In the body of the message, notify us of the FTP upload, and be sure to add your name and a contact number.

Should you need to send data via regular mail, please remember to note on your envelope or enclosure the team or person that has requested the data. It is also important to label the media. Our goal is to serve you as quickly as possible and unlabeled items could cause a delay in that process.

Annual Service Fees

Your Support Agreement, which covers program updates and technical support, guarantees that support fees will not change for the first two years that your municipality uses our software. After that time we reserve the right to increase the Annual Service Fee by no more than the yearly Consumers Price Index for All Urban Consumers U.S. city average (CPI-U). Therefore, if you purchased software in 2019 or before, your 2021 Support Fee will increase 1.4%.

The following class outlines are listed for informational purposes only. We look forward to seeing you when we can return to in-person classes at our Training Center.

Assessing .NET Training Classes

I - Program Introduction & Setup
Recommended for the Assessor or designated new user of Assessing/Equalization. This class covers all master list setup in Program Setup and its importance in data entry and reporting. Roll balancing and frequently-used reports are also covered.

II - Assessment Roll & Data Entry
This class demonstrates how to perform the assessment roll including name/address changes, sales, uncapping, P.R.E.s, building permits, and processing splits/combinations. Entering all types of appraisal information is also covered.

III - Land Tables, ECFs & Sales Studies
Designed for the user that will be responsible for creating/maintaining land rates, analyzing/setting ECFs, and performing sales studies. This class also reviews related reports for each of these features.

IV - Assessing Cycle & Special Acts Parcels
This class reviews the entire assessment cycle, beginning with creating a new assessment year database, rolling over the database, and processing all types of adjustments through end of assessment roll review (necessary prior to sending Change Notices). As a part of this class, Special Acts parcels are reviewed with ideas and reports that are useful for managing special rolls.

Using Apex with Assessing/Equalization
This class covers the use of Apex (latest version available) with Assessing/Equalization .NET. Setup within Assessing/Equalization is covered, along with frequently-used commands. Practical examples of drawing buildings and land are also given.

Personal Property
This class is designed for Assessors, Appraisers, and other office staff who perform duties pertaining to the processing, data entry, and reporting of Personal Property. Topics discussed in detail are printing of the personal property statements, processing statements, assessing buildings on leased land, estimating assessments for non-filers, and Board of Review changes.

Land Value Modeling
This one-day class begins at square one: how to create land tables and how to attach parcels to those land tables, both one-at-a-time or en masse using tabular and GIS methods. This class also illustrates how to populate essential fields in order to analyze the market value of land using a number of different units of measurement: per acre; per actual front feet; per effective front feet; per square foot. Buildable units and site value are also taught. Finally, you will learn how to utilize land-to-building ratio and land residual techniques using BS&A's Assessing program.

Using GIS
This class covers the GIS tools available in our .NET applications. Among other things, you will learn how to: create land value maps; identify parcels within x feet of subject parcels; display a wide range of fields on a map; use maps to set data fields en masse; include blocked and marked data on a map; put sales data on maps; use GIS map routes for field inspections done in conjunction with sales and permits, or on parcels in general.

Tax .NET Training Classes

I - Introduction & Creating a Tax Roll

Recommended for the Treasurer or person creating their first tax roll using Tax .NET. This class includes a thorough program overview, as well as general setup and tax setup items relevant to creating a tax roll. Importing from Assessing .NET, developing a tax roll checklist, and establishing millage rates for all billing types is also covered, as well as working with mortgage information and reviewing options for adding special assessments to the tax bill. A review of the reports available for balancing purposes and tax bill printing through out the roll setup is presented.

II - Working with the Tax Roll

Designed for any Tax .NET user working with an existing tax roll throughout the course of the collection cycle. Roll maintenance such as name/address updates, mortgage codes, deferments, and handling taxpayer inquiries is covered. This class also includes payment processing, adjustments, and roll balancing with reports related to each item.

Special Assessments

Program setup and creating a multi-year, principal/interest type of Special Assessment District with various benefit calculation methods is covered. Creating a separate billing for special assessments and/or billing the annual installment on a current tax bill is also reviewed.

Delinquent Personal Property

Designed to acquaint new users with Delinquent Personal Property .NET. Topics discussed in detail are initial setup, importing parcels from shared tax database, data entry, generating reports, entering general ledger account numbers, and receipting. Also discussed is the built-in Report Designer.

Report Designer

This class introduces users of Tax .NET to the features and functions of the new Report Designer. Sample custom reports will be created, along with instruction on creating and using filters and queries.

The following class outlines are listed for informational purposes only.

Community Development .NET Training Classes

Basic Program Usage

This lecture style class covers the basic features of Building Department .NET. Participants will be introduced to the layout of the program, along with the fundamentals of program management and data entry.

Advanced Program Usage

This lecture style class covers the advanced features of Building Department .NET. Participants will be introduced to record type setup (including PZE processes), workflows, program security, and table filtering. Other administrative areas will be covered as well, including report design and how to optimize report filters.

Report Designer

This interactive class takes the user through the theory, design, and functionality of your powerful new reporting tool. Each user gets interactive, hands-on experience with a knowledgeable instructor, walking them step-by-step through the process of creating basic reports and data filters. This class is designed for the experienced .NET user who wants to get the most out of their new software. You will have the opportunity to work with data and text fields, learn about data relationships, and create a report of your own.

Financial Management .NET Training Classes

Intro to Governmental Accounting 1.0 Using BS&A Software

This hands-on, classroom style class is designed for anyone wishing to grasp the basic concepts of fund accounting and how those concepts are applied within the BS&A General Ledger application. Main topics include:

- Fund Accounting
- Fund/Department/Account Definitions
- The Accounting Equation
- Uniform Chart of Accounts
- Project and Grant accounting
- Report Profiles
- Budgeting

Intro to Governmental Accounting 2.0 Using BS&A Software

This hands-on, classroom style class is designed for anyone wishing to grasp the intermediate concepts of fund accounting and how those concepts are applied within the BS&A General Ledger application. It is recommended that those attending the 2.0 class have a basic understanding of introductory fund accounting concepts and some experience in the BS&A financial management applications. Main topics include:

- Banking Setup and Reconciliations
- Pooled Cash
- Deposit Creation/Interest Allocation
- Financial Statements
- Interfund Activity
- F-65 Reporting

Update on Training Classes: As you know, COVID-19 has restricted our ability to hold classes at our Training Center and elsewhere. We will continue to suspend in-person training until further notice. Remote group trainings may become available. Check our website for registration information.