Wintax Manual

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I. Computer Specifications

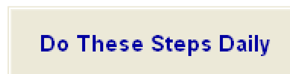
- 800 MHz or faster processor
- 512 Meg of RAM minimum
- Monitor with 1024 x 768 resolution
- 2GB hard disk
- Windows 2000, XP-Pro, or Vista Business
  - XP-Home is not supported, XP-Fast User Switching is not supported

- **pcAnywhere or CrossLoop, remote connection program is required for support**.

II. Start of Collection/ Maintenance Functions

This is a list of the procedures necessary to load data at the beginning of a collection. Some of these steps are useful during the collection season.

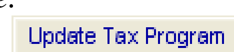
A. Back up data

1. On the main screen of the program click on 

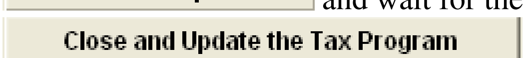
2. There are two backup options from within the program, Internet Backup and File Backup.
   a. The File Backup will backup your tax data in a place you specify on your computer. Make sure it is not in your data folder.
   b. The Internet Backup will backup your tax data to our web server.
      i. This is only available to customers with Internet Lookup.
      ii. Valuable in case of a computer failure.
      iii. Useful to our staff in diagnosing and fixing problems.

B. Update tax program

Note: Make sure that you are connected to the Internet for this step. This will need to be done for each computer, one at a time.

1. On the main screen of the program click 

2. Click 

and wait for the download to finish.
3. Click 

   a. The tax program will close and a new window will open.
   b. Click on 

   c. When the window disappears, re-open the tax program.

C. Special Updates and Reindexing

Note: This step should only be performed at the beginning of collection, or when one of our staff asks you to do so.

1. Make sure that all other computers are out of the tax program for this step.
2. If you collect for another district (village or town) you'll have to do these steps for each district you collect for.
3. At the top of the main screen, choose Administration, and then Reindex/Update Data Files.
4. Under Special Updates Options, make sure there are checkmarks in all of the boxes unless one of the following applies:
   a. You do not have data for previous years.

b. You do not have Internet Lookup.

5. Click on **Update Program**
6. When it finishes, click OK.
7. Under Reindex Options, make sure that there are checkmarks in all three boxes unless you don't have data for previous years.
8. Click on **Reindex Databases**
9. When it finishes, click OK.
10. We also like to clear the error log at the beginning of the collection. Click on **Clear Error Log at start of collection**.
11. Click **Quit**
12. At any other computers, you will have to Update This Workstation under Special Updates Options and Reindex Local Files under Reindex Options, and Clear the Error Log.

D. Close the year

1. At the top of the main screen, choose Setup/Year End.
2. On the Start Of Collection tab, click **Close The Year**
3. Make sure the year to close is last year (ie 2008 if you are now collecting for 2009 taxes), then click on **Close the Year**
4. Next click on **I'm Sure!!! Close the year!**
5. The program will close when the operation is complete.

E. Clear the County Folder

1. At the top of the main screen, click on Setup/Year End.
2. At the top right, click on the Year End tab.
3. Click **Clear The County Folder**
4. Click **Clear last years files out of County Directory**

F. Reset the batch number

1. At the top of the main screen, click on Setup/Year End.
2. Click **Reset the Batch Number**
3. Reset the batch back to your beginning number. (For example, if it says 5079, set the batch number back to 5000.)
    a. If you're using global batch numbering, just set the number back to 1. You will need to do this on only one computer.
4. This will need to be done for every computer using the tax collection program. Starting batch numbers should be spaced far enough apart that there will be no overlap.

G. Check Printing Information

1. At the top of the main screen, click on Setup/Year End.
2. Click **Common Bill Printing Data**
3. Check that all the information listed is correct. Pay special attention to the Bill Title and all of the dates to the right.

4. When you are finished, click Exit Screen

H. Move and Rename the RPS files

Call us at (607) 722-4933 if you need help with this step.

I. Load Data

1. The RPS files need to be renamed and in the county folder.
2. At the top of the main screen, click on Setup/Year End.
3. Click Load County data
4. If you have an Anti-virus real time scan, it must be off.
5. Click Load County Data - Anti Virus Real Time Scan must be OFF!!!
6. Check the dates, and the type of collection.
7. Click on Load Data
8. Click on Yes
9. There will be information written across the screen. This is normal.
10. When the data is finished loading, print a warrant report. Check this against the warrant the board approved.
11. Remember to turn the Anti-virus real time scan back on.

J. Make Escrow Disks

1. From the main screen, click on Adjustments, lockboxes, escrow
2. On the right hand side, click Load/Create an Escrow Disk
3. Then click on Create an Escrow Disk
4. At the bottom, enter a location for the escrow file by clicking Browse
5. Click Make a DATABASE File for the Escrow Companies
6. Follow the prompts from there.
7. After you are done creating the escrow file, you will have to transfer it to a disk or attach it to an email.

K. Prior Years Data on the Internet

If you would like to keep the data for prior years on the Internet, you must call us before loading the current year of data to the Internet.

L. Load Current Data to the Internet

1. On the main screen, click Do These Steps Daily
2. In Step 3, make sure both the History File and Taxpayer File are checked.
3. Click Create Files
4. You must be connected to the Internet and click Upload Files
5. Finally, click Log In and Load Files
6. Username and password are master and master.

7. Place checkmarks next to both load payment history file and load taxpayer file and then click -- load into Web database -->> .
8. For day to day use, you'll only need to check History File and load payment history file.

III. Less Commonly Used Features

A. Splits/Apportionments

1. Before splitting a parcel, do a backup of your data from Do These Steps Daily
2. You must have all of the information about the new parcels available before starting the process.
3. If the parcel is paid, please call us before splitting the parcel: there are additional steps that need to be taken.
4. To split a parcel, look up the parcel and print a bill for the original parcel.
5. Then click on Split This Parcel.
6. Step 1:
    a. If all of the new parcels have different Tax Map #'s from the original parcel, choose the first option, "DIVIDED INTEREST- ALL different map #'s".
    b. If one of the new parcels retains the original tax map ID, choose the second option, "DIVIDED INTEREST- ORIGINAL PARCEL + NEW PARCELS.
7. Enter in the white box the number of parcels that you want.
8. Click on "STEP 2 – CREATE THE NEW PARCELS"
    a. Make sure that the correct Tax Map IDs are in the table.
    b. If they are not correct, double click on one that is incorrect and replace it with the correct number.
    c. When the Tax Map IDs are correct, click "Continue with the split process".
9. Click on the owner name of the first parcel in the table, and then click on "STEP 3 – CHANGE BILL INFORMATION"
    a. Make sure that all the information on the screen is correct.
    b. Especially check to see that the owner's name and address and the Landassess and Assessment are correct.
    c. When everything is correct, click on "Next Screen".
    d. If the property has any exemptions, make sure they are correct in the table.
    e. You may also want to print a copy of the exemptions for your records.
    f. If exemptions appear and they shouldn't, simply click on the exemption in the table and then click on "Delete Line Highlited".
    g. When everything is correct, click on "Next Screen".
    h. Make sure that the tax amounts are all correct. You may want to print a copy of this page for your records.
    i. To change a tax amount, double-click in the Tax box (it will turn blue), and then type in the correct tax amount. Do not use commas when typing in any number.
    j. When all of the tax amounts are correct, click on "Next Screen".
    k. Now click on the next parcel in the table, and then click on "STEP 3 – CHANGE BILL INFORMATION".
    l. Change all the information for this parcel like you did for the first parcel.
    m. Continue until you have changed all the information for all of the new parcels.
    n. When all of the information for all of the parcels is changed (they will all be yellow in the table), you may proceed.

10. Click on “STEP 4 – VALIDATE THE DATA”.
    a. If the bills are off a penny or so, go back into Step 3, part 3 and change the tax amount so that they are correct.
    b. When you get the message that the new bills balance with the original, proceed.
11. Click on “STEP 5- PRINT REPORT to Check Parcel Data”.
    a. Print the report and make sure that all of your information is correct, especially name, address and taxes.
12. Click on “STEP 6- PRINT NEW TAX BILLS FOR ALL PARCELS”
    a. Print new tax bills for each of the new parcels. Make sure the information is correct.
    b. Don’t click on Step 7 until you are sure that all your information is correct.
13. Click on “STEP 7- PUT NEW PARCELS IN PERMANENT FILE”
    a. The new parcels will be posted to the permanent file, and given the next available bill numbers. The split process is now complete.
14. If you need help with any of the steps, there is a Power Point presentation available on our website for download, or call us to let us help you through it.

B. Changing Parcel Data or Assessment (Warrant Adjustments)

1. On the main screen, click **Parcel Lookup - Splits, Changes**
2. Choose the parcel you need to change, and reprint a copy of the bill for your records.
3. Then click **Change parcel**
4. Click **Change name, address, Tax Map #, assessment, etc** and change any information that needs to be changed, then **Save Changes and Exit.**
5. Click **Add/Change/Delete Exemptions**
    a. To change an exemption, change the amount in the table.
    b. To add or delete an exemption, click on the appropriate button.
    c. When you are finished, click Exit.
6. Click **Add/Change/Delete Tax lines**
7. If you have changed the assessment or exemptions, click **Update the Assessed and Taxable Values**
8. Check and double check all of the tax amounts, then click Save and Exit.
9. Click **Print Change Sheet** This is the only opportunity you have to print this sheet.
10. Click **Return to previous menu**
11. Reprint a new bill.

C. Bill Printing

1. Confirm your common bill printing information and penalty dates.
    a. From the main screen, go to Setup/Year End, click on **Common Bill Printing Data**
    b. Exit to the main screen.
2. At the top of the main screen click on Other Functions. You’ll need a password for this.
3. Click on the **Calculations, Bill Printing & Rate File** tab.
4. Click **Print Bills**

5. You must follow all of the steps in order.
6. The prize for having to reprint your bills is George's garbage, so double and triple check before you print all of the bills.
7. Fax us a signed copy of the bill to confirm that all of the information is correct to your knowledge.

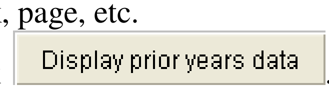
IV. Daily, Weekly and Monthly Use

A. Looking up Parcels

1. On the main screen, click on 

2. Remember to type in what you'd like to search on and then click on the appropriate button.
3. One new feature is the "Starts with" checkbox. If you have a check in the box, it will give you a list to pick from rather than providing the exact match.
    a. If you are searching by bill number, tax map id or account number, it will give you a list clustered around the number you typed in.
    b. If you are searching by owner name, it will give you a list of owners whose names start with what you typed in.
   c. If you are searching by number + street, we recommend only typing in 12 main instead of 12 main street. You will also get a list to pick from.
4. On the parcel lookup screen all of the information that is frequently used is on the Bill Info tab. Also, you will find buttons for the following:
    a. History Report: a multi-year report of billing and payment information.
    b. Bill: reprint a bill
    c. Receipt: print a receipt
    d. Split This Parcel: begin the process to do a divided assessment
    e. Change parcel: change the assessment, exemptions, name, address, etc.
5. You may change the name and address associated with the parcel directly on the lookup screen.
    a. Under the name and address area, put a checkmark in Edit Address.
    b. Click in the name and address area and make the necessary changes.
    c. The checkmark must remain for the change to stick! 

    d. Click 

    to make your changes permanent.
6. On the Misc/Prior Years tab you'll find the comments, book, page, etc.
7. You may also click on a prior year in the grid and then click 

. Then you can reprint a bill or receipt from a previous year. To get back to the current year, simply click on the Bill Info tab.

B. Entering Payments

1. On the main screen, click 

2. There are two types of payment entry:
    a. Standard Data Entry

        i. Click **New Payments - Standard Data Entry**
        ii. Change the posting date if necessary (for postmarks, etc)
            1. If you need to change the date, click on the date, a calendar will pop up. Click on the correct date on the calendar.
        iii. Select the correct place of payment
        iv. Search for and select the parcel
        v. Make sure the amount paid is entered in the appropriate box (cash or check) and the paid by info is correct.
        vi. Click **Collect** or **Collect & Immediately Print a Receipt**
    b. Fast Data Entry: for exact, full payments by owner only
        i. Click **Fast Data Entry**
        ii. Change the posting date if necessary (for postmarks, etc)
            1. If you need to change the date, click on the date, a calendar will pop up. Click on the correct date on the calendar.
        iii. Select the correct place of payment
        iv. Type in the bill number and hit enter, or scan the barcode.
        v. To exit, click **Quit**
3. We have a "shopping cart" to help you keep track of the payments you've made. If you'd like more detail on a particular payment, click on the bill number and a new screen pops up. If you need to delete a payment, you can do it right from the screen that pops up.

C. Adding Bank or Escrow Payments

Note: If you have a large number of bank or escrow payments, you want to begin this process with an empty batch.

1. On the main screen, click **Payments**
2. Click **Add a banks payments to Open Batch**
3. Change the posting date if necessary (for postmarks, etc)
4. Select the correct place of payment
5. Click **Continue to next screen**
6. Enter the paid by information (bank name, check number) in the top right hand corner.
7. To enter many payments from one bank, enter the bank code in the box at the lower left hand corner and hit enter.
8. To add just a few parcels, click on **Add a property by Bill #** or **Add a property by Tax ID #** and type the parcel's information in the box that appears and then hit enter.
9. When you are finished, click **QUIT TO PREVIOUS** and check the batch report.

D. Batch Report

1. On the main screen, click **Payments**
2. Click **Batch Report (unposted entries)**
3. Change the order the report will display in, or payments displayed if desired.

4. Click **Print Batch Report** and print the report.
5. Make sure that you verify that every payment is for the correct amount.
6. Also verify that the monies you have collected match the dollar amount collected on the report.
7. Checking each entry for accuracy now will save you time and aggravation later.

E. Deposit Slip

1. On the main screen, click **Payments**
2. Click **Deposit Slip** and print the report.
3. Take it to the bank with your deposit.

F. Posting Payments

Note: You should double-check that all the entries in your batch are correct by examining the batch report and/or shopping cart before you make your entries permanent. Mistakes are much easier to fix before they have become permanent.

1. On the main screen, click **Payments**
2. Click **Put your Entries into the Permanent File**
3. Check the deposit date to make sure it is correct.
4. Check at least the total amount and number of payments below the shopping cart. If you find an error, you can check on a payment by clicking on the bill number. You can even delete a payment from the screen that pops up.
5. Click **Post Taxes**
6. Print the reports that follow for your records.

G. Printing Receipts by Batch

1. When you collect a batch of mail or escrow payments, it is quicker and easier to print receipts for the entire batch at once.
2. The batch must be posted.
3. At the top of the main screen, click on Receipts.
4. To print receipts for just one batch, enter that batch number into both the Starting Batch # and the Ending Batch # and then click **Print the Receipts**
5. You may also print a receipt for an individual parcel from the parcel lookup screen.

H. Balancing and Other Reports

We have a wide variety of reports, only a few are mentioned below. To access the reports from the main screen, at the top click on Reports.

1. Balancing Report
    a. Click **Trial Balance**
    b. Click **Display/Print Report**
    c. This will give you totals and break payments down into certain categories. If there are overpayments, they must be refunded before the program can balance.
2. Paid in Full Report (does NOT include direct payments to county)
    a. Shows all parcels that have been paid in full.

3. Not Paid in Full
    a. Shows all parcels that have not fully paid their tax bill (includes partial payments).
4. Duplicate pymt (over payment) Report
    a. Shows information about parcels that have been overpaid, or paid multiple times.
5. Warrant Report
    a. This is what you should check after loading your data.
6. Top 10 Taxpayers
    a. The report will group parcels that have the same owner name, so you'll probably still have to do some of the work yourself (add up NYSEG and NYS Elec. & Gas, etc.). From the main screen, click on Reports, then the School tab, and then [Top 10 Taxpayers].

I. Refunds, Reversals & Bad Checks

1. Refunds
    a. From the main screen, go to Reports.
    b. Click on Duplicate pymt (over payment) Report. This will show you the parcels that need to be refunded.
    c. Exit to the main screen.
    d. At the top of the main screen, click on Reversals/Refunds.
    e. Click on Make a Refund for an Overpayment.
    f. Change the posting date if necessary and then click on Continue to next screen.
    g. Find and select the parcel you need to refund.
    h. Make sure that the amount to refund is correct, and enter a reason for refund.
    i. Click Accept this Refund.
    j. Finish processing this batch like you would any other.
2. Reversals/Bad Checks
    a. At the top of the main screen, click on Reversals/Refunds.
    b. Click on Reverse a single payment or entry.
    c. Find and select the parcel.
    d. Enter the bad check fee (if any) and a reason for the reversal.
    e. Select the payment that needs to be reversed by clicking on it in the grid.
    f. Click REVERSE BUTTON.
    g. Click the appropriate button for a bad check fee or no fee.
    h. Click Yes-Reverse it!
    i. This is an immediate action and will not require posting.

J. Credit Card Payments

1. Before you download credit card payments from the Internet, make sure that you have no payments in your batch.
2. From the main screen, click on [Payments]
3. Click on [Download Credit Card Payments from the Internet]
4. Click [Batch Report (unposted entries)]
5. Change the order the report will display in, or payments displayed if desired.

6. Click [Print Batch Report] and print the report.
7. Make sure that you verify that every payment is for the correct amount.
8. Checking each entry for accuracy now will save you time and aggravation later.
9. Once you are sure everything is correct, you may post the batch.

K. Loading an escrow disk

1. Before you load an escrow disk, make sure that you have no payments in your batch.
2. From the main screen, click on [Adjustments, lockboxes, escrow]
3. Click on [Load/Create an Escrow Disk]
4. Click on [Load an Escrow Disk]
5. Enter the location of the file by clicking on [Browse]
6. Make sure that the entries in the Full or Partial and Escrow Pmt # are correct. If the disk has only full payments on it, the Escrow Pmt # doesn't matter.
7. Click on [Load the escrow PAYMENT file]
8. Follow the prompts from there.
9. After the escrow disk loads, check your batch report and the report and the check the escrow company sent.
10. When everything matches and is correct, post the batch.

L. Daily Steps

1. Every day, or at least a couple of times a week, you should backup your data and upload your data to the Internet.
2. On the main screen of the program click on [Do These Steps Daily]
3. Perform either an Internet Backup and/or a File Backup.
4. If you have Internet lookup, go down to step 3.
5. If you haven't done any address changes, splits or small claims adjustments, you only need to make sure there is a check in front of History File.
6. Click [Create Files]
7. You must be connected to the Internet and click [Upload Files]
8. Finally, click [Log In and Load Files]
9. Username and password are master and master.
10. Place a checkmark next to load payment history file and then click [-- load into Web database -->>].

M. Some Tips and Tricks

- Splitting a paid parcel: The lien on the parcel has already been satisfied. There is no further legal action required on the part of the tax collector.
- Informing taxpayers/banks that haven't paid: There is no legal obligation to do so.
- Receipts: You are only required to send receipts in two cases.
  - A receipt has been requested.
  - If a tax bill is paid by a bank or escrow company, you must send a receipt to the

homeowner.

- Modified tax bills: You may have to give the taxpayer additional time to pay without penalty after the change to the tax bill has been approved. Check with your treasurer.
- Tolerance: By law, a collector cannot receive anything other than the exact amount due. However, it is accepted practice to collect over or under by a certain amount ($0.25, $1.00, $5.00 etc). There is no penalty in the law for collecting within a tolerance.
- If a parcel was paid with multiple checks and one of them bounces: The entire payment must be reversed. The money for any check that didn't bounce should be refunded to the payer. If you get a new payment in a penalty period, the penalty should be charged on the entire amount due.
- Making address changes: These are handy for receipt printing purposes. Any changes you make are for your system only; they don't get transferred back to the county. The assessor or county must also make the changes in their files.
- Printing receipts and bills: Make sure you check and double check before you send anything out. Make sure that the penalty dates, fiscal year and places to send or make payment to are all correct. Human error does occur! Especially with bill printing, make sure you (and a couple of other people) check the first few that come off of the actual printer before you let all of the bills print.