

Season's Greetings

What's new?

Utility Valuation for 2025

Vermont municipalities and utility providers should be aware of two changes to the valuation of property used by public utilities for the transmission and distribution of electricity.

- 1. The Vermont Department of Taxes has contracted with a utilities appraisal consultant to develop a new valuation methodology for taxable property owned by public utilities.
- 2. As required by Act 144 (2024), beginning with the 2025 Grand List the valuations provided by the Department for property used for the transmission and distribution of electricity shall be used by listers for purposes of property taxation.

See <u>Utility Valuation | Department of Taxes</u> for more details.

Telecommunications Property Valuation for 2025

The Legislature passed Act 145 of 2024, requiring certain communications network infrastructure to be set in the State and local grand list as real property and taxed at its fair market value beginning with the 2025 grand list and property tax year. Communications property will not be considered business personal property, and accordingly will be exempt from the local option to tax business personal property pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § § 3618 and 3849.

The Department requested and expects to receive a one-year extension from the Legislature for implementation in order to contract with a telecommunications valuation professional and to allow for an inventory to be established. In light of this extension request, the effective date of implementation is anticipated to be with the April 1, 2026 Grand List.

IAAO Classes this January and February

VALA, working with a grant from the State of Vermont (PVR), offers courses at a reduced rate to all Vermont listers and assessors. Current Vermont VALA members also receive a further discounted rate. VALA is offering two Vermont Property Assessor (VPA) required courses earlier in 2025 – this January and February. Perhaps you need one, the other, or both for VPA Certification, now is a great time to take advantage!

IAAO 101	Fundamentals of Real Property Appraisal	VPA II req.	Jan 27 – 31, 2025	Online
IAAO 102	Income Approach to Valuation	VPA II req.	Feb 24 – Mar 1, 2025	Online

For more information about these offerings, visit https://valavt.org/education/training/ For more information about Vermont Property Assessor Certification, click here

District Advisor Happenings

PVR is pleased to announce that <u>Beth Miller</u> has accepted the District Advisor Position! Beth is coming to us from the Department of Children and Families where she was a Fair Hearing Officer. Beth previously was a lister in her town, Middletown Springs, and is thrilled to be getting back into local government and supporting the work that local officials do. We're so excited to welcome Beth to the team—please join us in extending her a warm hello!

We'd also like to let folks know that district advisor <u>Benton Mitchell</u> is currently on leave for the next couple of months. For towns in Benton's district needing assistance, please call our main line and ask to speak to the district advisor on duty that day. (802)828-5860 x 2.

Education Tax Rate FY2026

Commissioner of Taxes Craig Bolio has released the <u>December 1 education tax rate letter</u> which forecasts the education tax yields for resident homeowners and the non-homestead tax rate for the upcoming fiscal year (FY) 2026. Using specific calculations required in State law, the Agency of Education, Department of Taxes, Department of Finance and Management, and Joint Fiscal Office collaborate to project the yields and rates based on these statutory assumptions.

To read Commissioner Bolio's official press release, please visit https://tax.vermont.gov/press-release/commissioner-taxes-releases-fy2026-education-tax-rate-letter

What's on the Calendar?

Now <u>Detailed Compliance Plans due</u> to PVR from towns that received

Orders to Reappraise July 2024 (150 days from June mailing)

December 13 Final date Homestead Declaration files will be provided to towns

December 31 Final Day for Errors & Omissions 32 VSA 4261

2025 Reappraisal Towns **deadline** for RA-308 & contracts to PVR

Late December/ early January PVR certifies Equalization Study

Results available to Towns 32 VSA 5406, 5407, 5408

(Please pay attention to appeal deadline)

Compliance Plans Due (Response to Statutory Reappraisal Orders)

Reappraisal Orders were sent to municipalities this past July whose COD was greater than 20%, based on the results of their 2023 Equalization Study. When a town receives a statutory order to reappraise, the municipality must respond by either a) acknowledging receipt of the order with the intention to develop

a detailed compliance plan or by b) contesting the order with a written response. Both responses must be received by PVR with 30 days of the municipality's receipt of the order. With option a), the municipality must also provide a **detailed compliance plan (PVR Form RA-308** or **RA-308P) within 150 days of the order**. For more information on reappraisals, please visit the Tax Department website by clicking here.

Rule on Required Reappraisals

Homestead Declarations to Towns

Homestead declaration files from the Tax Department to towns will conclude for this year on December 13. If the resident property owner did not file their declaration by the October 15 filing deadline, the property will remain classified as nonhomestead.

Errors & Omissions

32 V.SA. § 4261 Correcting omission from grand list

When real or personal estate is omitted from the grand list by mistake, or an obvious error is found, the listers, with the approval of the Selectboard, before December 31, may supply such omissions or correct such errors and make a certificate thereon of the fact; provided, however, the listers may make a correction resulting from the filing or rescission of a homestead declaration without approval of the Selectboard.

Along with <u>real value changes</u>, allocation changes in the homestead or housesite value, as well as in Current Use, are to be considered Errors & Omissions and brought before the municipality's Select Board as well for their approval.

Changes based <u>solely</u> on the filing or recission of a homestead declaration after listers and/or assessors lodge their grand list with the Town Clerk post grievance, are not considered cause for SelectBoard Errors and Omissions <u>32 VSA 4111(g)</u>. However, these adjustments do need to be certified and attached to your official vault, lodged-grand list. Links to both courtesy forms are provided below.

PVR-4261 - Homestead / Housesite Classification Change PVR-4261-E - Errors & Omissions Certificate

Reminder: both E&O certificates should be attached to the official vault copy of the grand list.

Reminder for 2025 Reappraisal Towns

If your town plans to complete a reappraisal for the 2025 Grand List, make sure your RA-308 Detailed Reappraisal Compliance Plan and other required documents have been submitted to tax.pvr@vermont.gov as well as to the town's district advisor. PVR needs to be officially informed by January 1, 2025. This is crucial as adjustments need to be made in a reappraisal year for Current Use CLA, Utilities CLA, tax rate calculations, and equalization. If we are not in receipt of these documents by the town in official format, we cannot make these adjustments, and it will impact your town financially.

Certified Equalization Study Results

We anticipate Equalization Study results will be posted to the Vermont Department of Taxes website the last week of December/ first week of January at <u>Equalization Study | Department of Taxes</u>. Towns will also receive a letter notifying of calculated CLA and COD.

Petitions for Redetermination can be filed under <u>32 VSA 5408</u>. Such petitions must be timely and be filed by your legislative body (Selectboard in most towns).

A COD of more than 20% will mean your town will be required to conduct a reappraisal 32 VSA 4041a(b). Additional information will be available in the January 2025 newsletter.

News You Can Use

Equalization Study Guide

Introduction to Vermont's Equalization Study

Abatement

About Abatement (Secretary of State's Guide)
VLCT MAC Info Sheet

Best Practices Guide

https://tax.vermont.gov/sites/tax/files/documents/GB-1279.pdf

Calendar & Task List 2024

https://tax.vermont.gov/sites/tax/files/documents/Lister-Calendar-2024.pdf

Fact Sheets and Guides

https://tax.vermont.gov/forms-and-publications/publications

Municipal Official Resources

https://tax.vermont.gov/municipal-officials/resources

Statewide CLA Adjustment

Using the New Statewide Adjustment

By January 1, the Department of Taxes will have completed its 'Equalization Study' that determines the CLAs for each Vermont town. But unlike prior years, beginning in 2025 these CLAs will not be applied to each town's education property tax rates. Instead, every town's CLA will be divided by a single 'statewide adjustment' and the result will be applied to each town's education property tax rates. The statewide adjustment can be thought of as the average level of appraisal of the entire state. For example, if a town has a CLA of 60%, but the statewide adjustment is 75%, then the adjustment factor applied to education property tax rates in that town will be 0.60 / 0.75 = 0.80 or 80%. All Vermont property will still be taxed at 100% of fair market value, but the factor applied to education property tax rates will be calculated differently.

Application of the New Statewide Adjustment

In 2024 the Vermont Legislature passed Act 183, which updates the education funding formula starting with the 2025-2026 property tax year, **beginning on July 1, 2025**. It's important to note that the law:

- does not affect how much Vermont property owners pay in property taxes;
- does not affect how much property tax Vermont towns send to the State's Education Fund; and,
- does not affect how much money school districts receive from the Education Fund.

For more information, please see https://tax.vermont.gov/statewide-adjustment

Continued VTPIE Updates / Process / Procedures

What you can do to stay on top of this evolving transition:

- Monitor for upcoming changes, GL & CAMA updates
- We recommend listers and assessors upload their CAMA data file if changes have been made before any work is done in VTPIE to ensure you are using the most up-to-date information.
- Stay in contact with your CAMA vendor
- Follow Comp60 (listserv) for news & updates

Call your district advisor if you have questions

VTPIE Support	https://support.axiomnh.com/support/solutions/25000019717		
NEMRC Support	https://www.nemrc.com/support/grandList/		
PVR Support	https://tax.vermont.gov/municipal-officials/listers-and-assessors/district-advisors		

Recommended sequence for processing Homesteads and Current Use

- 1. Upload your CAMA data to VTPIE you want to import <u>all</u> the changes, including ownership, from the as-billed grand list in NEMRC at this time. This is a two-step process, once the file is uploaded from NEMRC, you must also download it into VTPIE.
- 2. Process your *Homesteads* in VTPIE (first) and then also download in NEMRC using #7 when complete
- 3. Re-upload (NEMRC) and download (VTPIE) your CAMA data to VTPIE to ensure your CU gl values are reflective of any homestead filings and/or business/rental use allocation changes
- 4. Review *Current Use*, re-allocate values as necessary when a homestead has been filed and reverify. Notify the taxpayer if appropriate.
- 5. Download CU back to NEMRC using the 'download to billing' command in VTPIE followed by importing the file into NEMRC (#9 & then step 1) and loading to Grand List (Step 3)

Repeat this process each week or each time you are entering new data in CAMA or NEMRC

More in-depth guidance on the upload/download process can be found here.

Current Use

Finalizing review and verification for 2024 Grand List

Please continue with your VTPIE current use review until all parcels are marked *Enrolled* and there are none in your *Verification Incomplete* work queue. Also, verify you have *Downloaded to Billing* from VTPIE, received the file in NEMRC (#10) and loaded the values into your NEMRC 2024 Billed grand list (NEMRC steps #1 & #3). It is important with each exchange to load your values, send a notice to any parcels with value or allocation changes and issue a revised tax bill if need be.

How to Review & Manage CU Allocations in VTPIE GB-1322

Please follow these steps for review/verification. Ideally, you should complete these steps when a file is returned to your work queue. It is also important to check your work queue on a regular basis, preferably weekly when you check for homesteads. This process is intended to be an ongoing exchange and completed multiple times until all parcels are considered "enrolled".

- Make sure to update your homesteads, run all homesteads reports and make necessary changes in your CAMA system for homestead/housesite business and rental use etc.
- Create an Upload to VTPIE file (in NEMRC)
- From VTPIE, retrieve the file you created in NEMRC and upload into VTPIE in the *Grand List Management* section (select Upload Assessment information new file) to make sure you are comparing the most recent information.
- Review and verify all current use records in your work queue. Files marked with Unenrolled (red) do not require verification. Files marked as Under Review (green) should be verified.
- Download to billing when all are complete in order to apply the exemptions in NEMRC for billing.

(make sure to do a final check in late December for late changes).

Town Clerks

- Please check your eCuse account on a regular basis for applications that have been approved and are awaiting recording. <u>Municipal Service User Guide for Town Clerks & Listers</u>
- Land Use Change Lien Release https://tax.vermont.gov/sites/tax/files/documents/GB-1179.pdf

Need sign in assistance with eCuse? Please reach out to (802) 828-5860.

Withdrawals/ Discontinuances/ LUCT – Please remember to check your myVTax account periodically! Current Use withdrawals are ongoing and are processed in the myVTax application. You will be alerted via email when you have LUCT (Land Use Change Tax/Penalty - Form LV-314) value requests. We also recommend listers make it a practice to log into their myVTax accounts monthly to check for new requests. You will be asked to determine the value as a stand-alone parcel for the land being removed as well as the most recent current use application recording information. Once Fair Market Values are submitted (if the withdrawal affects this year's allocation), PVR will modify the current use enrollment, and the file will be made available to you for updates. Please be mindful that by statute, listers/assessors have thirty (30) days to submit the completed form to the Director 32 V.S.A. §3757(b).

VTPIE process How to Review & Manage CU Allocations in VTPIE

Change of Appraisal/Allocation Notices for CU

myVTax process myVTax Guide: LV-314 Return Navigation for Listers

Land Use Change Lien Release

Valuation How to Value Land Excluded or Withdrawn From CU

Land Developed or Withdrawn from Current Use

Education

PVR continues to offer training at no charge to listers and assessors. A complete list of PVR, VALA (IAAO) and VLCT offerings can be found here. PVR's new 2025 trainings should begin in February 2025.

Property Assessor Certification

The mission of the Vermont Property Assessor Certification Program is to encourage, promote, and provide educational opportunity and advancement for listers and assessors throughout the state.

VPACP creates four levels of achievement (VPA I, VPA II, VPA III and VPMA). Each level has prerequisites and requirements, including levels of work experience and training.

This is a voluntary program designed to encourage and recognize professionalism and competency in being a municipal assessing official. Education is a high priority for the Division of Property Valuation and Review (PVR). Listers, assessors, and other municipal officials who take advantage of these educational opportunities will have a better understanding of their responsibilities and will better perform the duties of the office. For more info, visit <u>Vermont Property Assessor Certification Program</u>, the program's guidebook can be found here.

Grant Funding/Reimbursement for Travel and Assessment Training

Application available <u>here</u>

Assistance (802) 828-6887 or via email tax.listered@vermont.gov

Fact Sheet Grant Education Funding for Listers and Assessors (Municipal Reimbursement)

On-Demand PVR Webinars & Training materials

Recordings of our webinars, as well as course materials from our classes, are available at https://tax.vermont.gov/municipal-officials/certification-education-programs/materials. Please keep in mind that these recordings are meant for reference only ** actual event attendance is required for VPA certification.

District Advisor & CU Specialist Contact Information

District Advisors & their territories interactive map

District Advisors / PVR

Barb Schlesinger	(802)	Deanna Robitaille	(802)
barbara.schlesinger@vermont.gov	369-9081	deanna.robitaille@vermont.gov	323-3411
Benton Mitchell	(802)	Jen Myers	(802)
benton.mitchell@vermont.gov	233-4255	Jennifer.myers@vermont.gov	522-0199
Beth Miller	(802)	Teri Gildersleeve	(802)
Beth.Miller@vermont.gov	522-5320	teri.gildersleeve@vermont.gov	855-3917
Christie Wright	(802)	Theresa Gile	(802)
christie.wright@vermont.gov	855-3897	theresa.gile@vermont.gov	522-7425
Nancy Anderson / Edu Coord (PT)	(802)	Nahoami Shannon / PVR Assist	(802)
nancy.anderson@vermont.gov	828-5860	nahoami.shannon@vermont.gov	828-5860
	ext. 6680		ext. 6867
Cy Bailey / CALAP Administrator	(802)		
cy.bailey@vermont.gov	233-3841		

Current Use Specialists

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General Inquiries		802-828-5860	tax.currentuse@vermont.gov
Town	Staff	Extension	Email
Addison - Derby	Carrie Potter	802-828-5860 ext. 6633	carrie.potter@vermont.gov
Dorset - Middlebury	Katie Emerson	802-828-5860 ext. 6637	katelin.emerson@vermont.gov
Middlesex - Shoreham	Ken Brown	802-828-5860 ext. 6636	kenneth.brown@vermont.gov
Shrewsbury - Worcester	Nick Zimny-Shea	802-828-5860 ext. 6608	nicholas.zimny-shea@vermont.gov
Current Use Specialist	Kiree Lapointe	802-828-5860 ext. 6635	kiree.lapointe@vermont.gov
Current Use Section Chief	Michael Ramsey	802-828-5860 ext. 6634	michael.ramsey@vermont.gov

Help Desks

PVR (802) 828-5860

Tax Forms press 1 Monday thru Friday

Current Use, Municipal Officials & all PVR related questions press 2

Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri (Daily for Municipal Officials)

Please leave a message for your District Advisor at their number. However, if you need immediate assistance and are unable to wait for a return call please call (802) 828-5860, option 2 and ask to speak to the on-call district advisor.

VTPIE Catalis (Axiomatic) Support

1-888-508-8179 select option 1, then option 3

TaxCAMASupport@catalisgov.com

Or click <u>Catalis Customer Support Portal</u> (VTPIE> <u>Help</u>> Creating support Tickets)

Online Resources

The following resources and many more aids & forms are available on our website. Please follow these breadcrumbs to see what is available for Municipal Officials:

VT Dept of Taxes > Municipal Officials > Forms & Publications

- > Property Assessment
- > Listers and Assessors
- > Training & Certification
- > Municipalities
- > VTPIE Project

Municipal Basics

Municipal Resources (SoS)	Municipal Laws & Regulations	Forms & publications
Municipal Resources (PVR)	Open Meeting Law – VLCT	Interactive DA map
Public Records - VLCT	Tax Bill tools	myVTax Username & PW Reset
Public Records - Sec of State	Prop Tax Credit Confidentiality	

Lister Aids & Forms

<u>Listers and Assessors</u>	Interactive DA map	E&O - Value Change
Lister Responsibilities checklist	Lister/ Assessor handbook	E&O- Homestead Status Change
VT Property Assessor Cert	<u>Lister Calendar (2023)</u>	Lister Certificate – HSD-315
State Sponsored Training	Reappraisals	Lister Cert (subdivision) - HSD-316
PVR Courses & Registration	Approved Appraisers	Homestead Declarations
<u>Lister Education Grant</u>	RA-308	Record Retention
Lister and/or Assessor Options	RA-308P	About Abatement

Property Assessment - Grand Lists

Assessment Toolbox	Solar plants - valuing w/ PV Value	Conservation Easements
<u>eCuse</u>	Assessing CU Property	CU Withdrawal - FMV
Property Ownership & Deeds	<u>Cell Decision Tree</u>	

Exemptions

<u>Exemptions</u>	Public, Pious & Charitable PVR-317	32 VSA 3802 – Statutory Exemptions
Valuation of Tax-Exempt	Insurance Value Reporting form	32 VSA 3832 – Restricted
<u>Properties</u>	CR-001 for Exempt Properties	<u>Exemptions</u>
<u>Veterans Exemption</u>	Subsidized Housing for 2023	Covenant Restricted (NEMRC)

Appeals

Grievance Letter Template	Sec of State Tax Appeal Handbook	VLCT Property Tax Appeals
Appeals to Director Guide	Guide to Best Practices	<u>List Value Adjustment Request</u>

VCGI Mapping

<u>Vermont Parcel Program Overview</u>	Parcel Program Frequently Asked Questions
Vermont Parcel Viewer	Parcel Program Town Data Status
Vermont Parcel Program GIS Data	Example Uses of Parcel Program GIS Data
Vermont Land Survey Library	<u>Digital Parcel Mapping Guidelines and Contract Guidance</u>
For Map Vendors: Guidance in working with VCGI	For Mappers: How to submit municipal parcel data updates

Town Clerk Resources

Paper PTTRS	<u>Transfer of Mobile Homes</u>	Municipal Officials Resources
myVTax – Recording PTTRs	MH Uniform Bill of Sale	BCA Decision Template
myVTax – Recording LUCT Lien	MH Quit Claim Deed	Official Notice Decision of Board of
Release		<u>Civil Authority</u>

VTPIE Resources

Process overview	Creating your Account	Forgot Password
NEMRC CAMA VTPIE export	General VTPIE CAMA Upload	
Patriot (Classic or AP5)	ProVal 9.1	<u>Vision</u>
CU - Reviewing Records	CU – Download to Billing	<u>CU – COA Notice</u>
Homesteads – Reviewing	Homesteads – Detailed instructions	
<u>Equalization – Sales Validation</u>	Equalization – Download to Excel	
Municipal Information	Organization Management	Question Management
	Submitting Municipal Information	
Recorded Trainings		
Homestead & CAMA Upload	NEMRC's VTPIE CAMA Upload	Sales validation & Muni Info
Current Use & CAMA Upload	Grand List & CU	