

# NEWSLETTER

From Your District Advisor  
Property Valuation & Review



## What's New for March 2020

### New Listers

Welcome new and returning listers! Your first duty as a new, or newly elected, lister is to take the Lister's oath and be sworn in by the Town Clerk\* [32 VSA 3431](#). March is also the time when lister boards hold their reorganization meetings to elect their officers, set their hours and plan for the upcoming Lister season. We strongly recommend you attend one of the **New and Seasoned Lister Training** sessions being offered in Montpelier on March 25<sup>th</sup>/ 26<sup>th</sup>, Lyndon on March 30<sup>th</sup> /31<sup>st</sup> or Ludlow on June 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup>. For more information and to register for one of these three sessions please follow [Education program online registration](#).

*\*Town Clerks please note:* As of the 2017 Legislative session, you are no longer required to provide the Department of Taxes with a hard copy of your Town Report, therefore, **please do not send them to us**. Newly elected or appointed officials, however, should be transmitted to PVR by sending an email to [Nancy.Anderson@Vermont.gov](mailto:Nancy.Anderson@Vermont.gov).

### Listers Handbook

The newly revised Listers Handbook is now available at <https://tax.vermont.gov/sites/tax/files/documents/GB-1143.pdf>

We anticipate further changes, with the next revision projected to be available in December 2020. If you have suggestions, please reach out to District Advisor [Nancy.Merrill@vermont.gov](mailto:Nancy.Merrill@vermont.gov).

### District Advisor Territories

We are happy to announce that we now have eight district advisors in the field and one in-house district advisor (Nahoami Shannon) who will be working with several towns as well as in our office.

A list of all towns and the assigned district advisor is available by clicking [District Advisors](#). As always, if there are any questions or concerns please feel free to either call your district advisor directly or our office at (802)828-5860 x3.

### Current Use File Exchange

The first Current Use file exchange will be available Monday, March 16. Additional information, instructions and links can be found in the Current Use section of this newsletter.

## Statewide Education Grand List and Per Parcel Payments

In mid-March towns and cities will receive the \$8.50 and \$1.00 per parcel payments on all real estate parcels that have been assessed, both taxable and exempt [32 V.S.A. § 4041a](#) and § [5405](#). These payments to municipalities are made for the listers/ assessors work on and in providing the complete, accurate, and consistent property information which is critical to maintaining our statewide education system in Vermont. The Grand List is the basis for the collection of all property taxes in the State—over \$1.3 Billion annually. The information contained therein is also used for a myriad of other purposes, from determining the average value of a home in a given area, to determining the amount of money each town will receive in reappraisal funds.

Reappraisal and Equalization payments are calculated and prepared in February (after all municipalities have submitted their final 411's) then submitted to finance during the first week of March for dispersal.

Reappraisal funds should be set aside in a reserve account and used for reappraisal purposes according to statute. Check with your treasurer each year to make sure you have an account that is accumulating.

## Education

The preliminary PVR education schedule is available at <https://tax.vermont.gov/municipal-officials/certification-education-programs/online-registration>. You may also scroll to the Education section of this newsletter for more details. The Education section also provides offerings and links to NEMRC's Grand List seminars as well as VALA's IAAO schedule.

## Town Officers' Education Conference - 75<sup>th</sup> Annual

Organized by UVM Extension, the conference is designed to help town clerks, planners, listers, select board members and other officials do their jobs more effectively by providing updates on tax laws and regulations, municipal recordkeeping and effective strategies for handling planning, zoning and other town issues. The Vermont Department of Taxes continues to be a Gold Sponsor of this annual event. This year's conferences will be held at Lake Morey (April 8) and Burlington (April 15). For more information and to register, please visit <https://www.uvm.edu/extension/toec>.

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## News You Can Use

*From the desk of Tim Terway, Vermont Center for Geographic Information . . .*

### *Vermont Statewide Parcel Mapping Program Updates*

December 2019 brought the successful completion of the three-year (2017-2019) Federal and State funded digital parcel mapping project. Thank you to those of you in towns who supported this work in any way!

In short, more than 300,000 parcels were digitally updated statewide by GIS map vendors, completing first-of-its-kind statewide coverage for Vermont. Digital parcel data were created or updated for every single municipality, made uniform in their data structure, joined with an annual grand list via a parcel's unique SPAN, and are now freely available in GIS format for [viewing](#) and [use](#). It's worth repeating -- every town in Vermont now has a digital parcel map layer joined with a recent grand list that they can [freely view online](#), build upon for future updates, or [even use for other purposes](#).

This article aims to give a brief update of what lies ahead for parcel mapping, while providing links to far more detail about the ongoing maintenance program, and importantly, what expectations, opportunities and resources are available for towns moving forward.

*What is the difference between the parcel project and parcel program?*

The [Parcel Program](#) is an outgrowth of the [Statewide Property Mapping Project](#) mentioned above. Staffed and overseen by [VCGI](#), the Parcel Program supports the ongoing collection and publishing of municipal parcel data in GIS format statewide, continuing to use the SPAN number as a [unique parcel identifier](#) to enable joining with the [annual grand list](#).

Unlike the three-year Parcel Project, there is no state-administered funding for payments to vendors for GIS mapping services. Contracts for map products and services remain the responsibility of each municipality. VCGI provides guidance on parcel mapping contracts [here](#).

While participation is voluntary, the parcel program ultimately relies on cooperation among towns officials who oversee their grand list and map maintenance and [their map vendors](#) to update and [share parcel data](#) with VCGI. These updates will be joined by VCGI with the annual grand list and incorporated into the freely available [parcel data, services, and applications](#) that are useful for towns, agencies, organizations, and the public alike. Applications such as the [ANR Atlas](#) or [E911 viewer](#), for example, also display these parcel data.

*Why participate in the parcel program?*

Many uses at municipal, regional, and statewide levels are currently built upon the statewide, grand list joined layer. Whether it is understanding statewide patterns in the distribution of resources or evaluating publicly funded programs and investments, to enabling dynamic tax mapping and expediting records research, these uses and many more are now possible with uniform, grand list joined parcel layer that is statewide in coverage. A few examples and images [are viewable here](#).

Municipalities are also encouraged to use online parcel viewer applications such as the [Vermont Parcel Viewer](#) for making it easier to understand who owns what lands where within their bounds. VCGI will continue to publish the viewer providing a free-of-charge way for towns to share grand-list joined parcel data with their citizens. A town's digital parcel updates that are shared with VCGI will continue to be published in these applications. In addition to the viewer, the newly created [Vermont Land Survey Library](#) may also grow to become a useful tool for towns as it displays copies of [now required surveys for boundary line changes](#) statewide and in relation with parcel data.

Future applications such as the forthcoming [Integrated Property Tax Management System](#) and a possible digital current use mapping update will also likely rely on the GIS parcel data published by the program.

*Where can we learn more?*

The [Parcel Program page](#) is a good place to start. It contains a program overview to questions such as how parcel data are maintained and updates published, how towns can participate in the program, links to [frequently asked questions](#), available data and status town-by-town, example uses, related documents and more. Parcel-related activities are also announced on VCGI's website under the [news and updates section](#), training tools are linked [on the resources page](#), and events are cataloged [in the calendar](#) that are also viewable on the site's [homepage](#). Feel free to reach us by email at [vcgi@vermont.gov](mailto:vcgi@vermont.gov) with questions as well.

#### *Parcel Related Online Resources*

[Vermont Parcel Program Overview](#)  
[Parcel Program Frequently Asked Questions](#)  
[Vermont Parcel Viewer](#)  
[Vermont Parcel GIS Data](#)  
[Example Uses of Parcel Program GIS Data](#)  
[Parcel Program Town Data Status](#)  
[Parcel Program Known Town Map Vendors](#)  
[Vermont Land Survey Library](#)  
[Digital Parcel Mapping Guidelines and Contract Guidance](#)  
[For Map Vendors: Guidance in working with VCGI and the Parcel Program](#)

#### **Homestead Downloads**

Homestead Downloads became available February 18 for your 2020 Grand List. Before downloading your files please remember to run the NEMRC **Live Update** if indicated.

For Homestead Declarations and related topic links please visit

<https://tax.vermont.gov/property-owners/homestead-declaration>

For 'How-to' instructions, the following links should be helpful:

[Fact Sheet Form HS-122 Instructions download and report \(GB-1071\)](#)

<http://www.nemrc.com/support/grandList/>

For a more in-depth look at the homestead process including instructions, guidelines, and scenarios please refer to your listers handbook [Guide for Vermont Listers and Assessors](#).

For Current year Lister Certificates for Housesite Value:

- For full parcel purchase or multiple housesites on the same span  
<https://tax.vermont.gov/sites/tax/files/documents/PVR-315.pdf>
- For a new span/subdivided parcel  
<https://tax.vermont.gov/sites/tax/files/documents/PVR-316.pdf>

Tax forms can be found at <https://tax.vermont.gov/forms-and-publications>

Helpful handout for your residents, the Fact Sheet for [The Vermont Homestead Declaration](#)

## Backup, Restore Points & Live Update

We all know the importance of backing up our work and have experienced the dismay of when we haven't, but do we remember to do this quick task as often as we should? In addition to daily backups, creating a restore point before downloads or correcting errors gives you a point to easily return to if something does not go as planned. Now is a good time to review the backup and restore points process to protect your data and hard work. Additionally, running NEMRC Live Update prior to downloading any state files is critical to ensuring synchronization between NEMRC and these downloads. When the menu option is lit in NEMRC, Update!

[NEMRC Backing up data](#)

[NEMRC Restore Points](#)

[NEMRC Live Update](#)

## myVTax

PVR is asking that you make it a routine process in your office to process sales in the validation screen on an ongoing basis. This will allow both you and us more time to research sales as well as allow us more time to advise towns in the fall.

When reviewing pptrs in myVTax, please check that the Current Use Questions are answered correctly (Question G1 and G2). In the event you notice an error such as a current use property transferring, and the boxes are not checked please send Current Use a notice through your myVTax or email them directly at [TAX.CurrentUse@vermont.gov](mailto:TAX.CurrentUse@vermont.gov). Doing so helps Current Use notify the landowner to submit Current Use Applications and Withdrawals in a timely fashion.

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## Current Use

### 2020 per acre values

The Current Use Advisory Board has set the Use Values for the 2020 Tax Year as follows:

- \$382/ acre                      Agricultural Land
- \$151/ acre                      Forest Land
- \$113/ acre                      Forest Land Greater than a Mile from a Class 1, 2 or 3 Road

These use values represent an increase from last year's values. This means that if everything remained equal (i.e., tax rates, value of land, income sensitivity, etc.) landowners will owe more property taxes for their enrolled land.

### File Exchange

Current Use will have the first file download available for review sometime on Monday, March 16<sup>th</sup>. We do not expect you to return your file immediately, but we do expect at least a monthly turnaround of the file. Before your initial download please remember to

- Make sure you have run the NEMRC **Live Update** before downloading
- Make sure you are in your current 'working grand list' before downloading

2020 Current Use Instructions for downloading the file as well as the processing procedure for your enrolled Current Use parcels may be found at

<https://www.nemrc.com/support/grandList/Current%20Use%20NEMRC%20Instructions%202019.pdf>

Additional refresher materials are also available at our Current Use Training course materials link [Current Use training](#) as well those found at [NEMRC Current Use Instructions](#).

## eCuse

Town clerks should be checking regularly for applications that have been approved and are awaiting recording. The helpdesk (802) 828-6844 is available for both listers and clerks if assistance is needed with your password.

## Land Use Change Tax

Please routinely log into your myVTax account at <https://myvtax.vermont.gov> to see if you have any "LUC Values Requests" that need to be entered. As a reminder, the statutory time frame is 30 days for listers to provide fair market value of the discontinued land [32 VSA 3757\(c\)](#). Once FMVs are submitted to CU, we will modify the current use enrollment and the current use file will be sent to you for updates.

Detailed myVTax instructions may be found at [LV-314 Navigation for Listers](#)

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## Education

### PVR Initial Classes

Our 2020 course offerings are being finalized, please check back regularly at [Education program online registration](#) for additions.

#### ***myVTax and Grand List Cleanup***

- March 12, 2020 Capitol Plaza Hotel, 100 State Street, Montpelier

#### ***Current Use Training***

- March 13, 2020 Capitol Plaza Hotel, 100 State Street, Montpelier

#### ***New & Seasoned Lister Training***

- March 25 & 26 Capitol Plaza Hotel, 100 State Street, Montpelier
- March 30 & 31 Northern Vermont U, Lyndon Campus, 1001 College Road, Lyndonville
- June 9 & 10 Okemo Mountain Resort, Ludlow

NEMRC has announced their annual ***Grand List Seminars*** will be held as follows:

Rutland	March 16th
Lake Morey	March 18th
S Burlington	March 20th

Please check their website <http://www.nemrc.com/> for details as they become available and to register.

VALA's education schedule has been posted and registration for the 2020 course offerings is available at [VALA 2020 IAAO](#).

- IAAO 101 October 5-9<sup>th</sup> White River Junction
- IAAO 112 October 26-30<sup>th</sup> Manchester
- IAAO 155 September 3-4 Colchester

PVR classes will continue to be of no charge to listers. PVR sponsorship of select NEMRC seminars & VALA hosted IAAO classes also continues. Grant money continues to be made available for **pre-approved** mileage and lodging expenses (distances apply).

[Grant Agreement form](#)

Now is a good time for you to investigate or review requirements for the Vermont Property Assessor Certification program and register for the upcoming classes you may need. Details may be found in the [VPACP Handbook](#)

**Grant Funding/ Reimbursement for Travel**

If you are independently taking courses related to assessment, please know that certain expenses related to training (mileage above 50 miles one way and lodging for multiple day classes) for municipal listers and assessors that are not PVR sponsored but are related to assessment **may** be reimbursed through the grant application process. This grant funding **may** also apply to related travel expenses to our sponsored trainings. Applications for grants **must be preapproved prior to attending the training**. To apply, follow the Course Funding link below. If you need assistance with this process, please contact (802) 828-6887.

[Course Funding](#)

**Help Desk & DA numbers**

**PVR GENERAL HELP LINE (802) 828-5860**  
**IT HELP DESK (802) 828-6844**

[District Advisors & Territories](#)

**DISTRICT ADVISOR HELP LINE (802) 828-6887**

<b>Barb Schlesinger</b> <a href="mailto:barbara.schlesinger@vermont.gov">barbara.schlesinger@vermont.gov</a>	(802) <b>369-9081</b>	<b>Nancy Merrill</b> <a href="mailto:nancy.merrill@vermont.gov">nancy.merrill@vermont.gov</a>	(802) <b>522-0199</b>
<b>Christie Wright</b> <a href="mailto:christie.wright@vermont.gov">christie.wright@vermont.gov</a>	(802) <b>855-3897</b>	<b>Roger Kilbourn</b> <a href="mailto:roger.kilbourn@vermont.gov">roger.kilbourn@vermont.gov</a>	(802) <b>233-4255</b>
<b>Cy Bailey</b> <a href="mailto:cy.bailey@vermont.gov">cy.bailey@vermont.gov</a>	(802) <b>233-3841</b>	<b>Teri Gildersleeve</b> <a href="mailto:teri.gildersleeve@vermont.gov">teri.gildersleeve@vermont.gov</a>	(802) <b>855-3917</b>
<b>Deanna Robitaille</b> <a href="mailto:deanna.robitaille@vermont.gov">deanna.robitaille@vermont.gov</a>	(802) <b>323-3411</b>	<b>Theresa Gile</b> <a href="mailto:theresa.gile@vermont.gov">theresa.gile@vermont.gov</a>	(802) <b>522-7425</b>
<b>Nahoami Shannon</b> <a href="mailto:nahoami.shannon@vermont.gov">nahoami.shannon@vermont.gov</a>	(802) <b>828-6867</b>		

Please leave a message for your district advisor. However, if you need immediate assistance and are unable to wait for a return call please call (802) 828-5860, select option #3 and ask to speak to another district advisor that is available.

**Online Resources**

**Assessment Toolbox**

<http://tax.vermont.gov/municipal-officials/listers-and-assessors/assessing-property>

**Current Use Property - Assessing & Allocating**

<http://tax.vermont.gov/municipal-officials/listers-and-assessors/assessing-property/current-use>

**Documents & Forms**

<https://tax.vermont.gov/tax-forms-and-publications/municipal-officials>

**Exempt properties**

<https://tax.vermont.gov/business-and-corp/nonprofits/property-tax>

<https://tax.vermont.gov/content/form-pvr-317>

**Insurance value reporting**

<https://tax.vermont.gov/sites/tax/files/documents/ReportingForExemptPropertiesFS.pdf>

<https://tax.vermont.gov/search/node/CR-001>

**Lister Handbook**

<https://tax.vermont.gov/sites/tax/files/documents/GB-1143.pdf>

**Lister Task List**

[https://tax.vermont.gov/sites/tax/files/documents/lister\\_calendar.pdf](https://tax.vermont.gov/sites/tax/files/documents/lister_calendar.pdf)

**myVTax and eCuse**

<https://tax.vermont.gov/municipal-officials>

**NEMRC Grand List Support**

<http://www.nemrc.com/support/grandList/>

**NEMRC MicroSolve CAMA/ APEX Support**

<http://www.nemrc.com/support/cama/>

**Open Meeting Law**

<https://www.vlct.org/resource/quick-guide-vermonts-open-meeting-law>

<https://www.vlct.org/resource/open-meeting-law-faqs>

**Property Tax Appeals**

[https://www.sec.state.vt.us/media/258674/tax\\_appeal\\_handbook\\_2007.pdf](https://www.sec.state.vt.us/media/258674/tax_appeal_handbook_2007.pdf)

<https://www.vlct.org/municipal-assistance/municipal-topics/property-tax-appeals>

**Public Records**

[VLCT Public Records Act FAQ](#)

<https://www.sec.state.vt.us/archives-records/certifications-fees/uniform-fee-schedule.aspx>

**Property Tax Bills**

<https://tax.vermont.gov/property-owners/property-tax-bill>

<https://tax.vermont.gov/research-and-reports/tax-rates-and-charts/education-tax-rates/faqs>