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BUSINESS 101: Payroll Taxes

The following articles are designed to give basic information and advice about filing your federal payroll tax payments. They represent synthesized information from a number of public and private publications.

ELECTRONIC TAX REFORM

Did you know that starting January 1, 1999, the IRS requires all businesses with employment taxes over \$20,000 to submit their payments electronically. Using the IRS's Electronic Federal Tax Payment System (EFTPS), taxpayers must electronically transfer funds—over the telephone, via personal computer, or through their banks—to cover incurred federal payroll and business tax liabilities. This is in response to the 1993 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) legislation, which required the IRS to electronically collect 94 percent of all business taxes by 1999. If your business has grown over the last year and has reached a size where you are now required to convert to the electronic transmission format at the start of the new year, read on.

If your payment threshold drops beneath the \$50,000 mark, once you've filed electronically, you must continue to do so and cannot revert to the old paper coupon method. Also, while the IRS does not charge for the Automated Clearing House (ACH) electronic processing, your bank may. Consult with your bank to determine the amount they charge (if any) for the transactions.

ELECTRONIC TRANSFER OF FUNDS: HOW TO GET STARTED

The first step, for those who will be participating in the program, is to enroll with the IRS. Call 1-800-945-8400 or 1-800-555-4477 to receive the enrollment form.

Once you are enrolled, here's a rundown of the basic procedures you will use to make your transfers:

You have two choices for making the wire transfer. Under the first choice, you'll instruct one of the government's banking agents to transfer funds from your account to the government's account. The process is begun by calling either a toll-free number, or using your personal computer (either bank will send you software if you prefer this option). You'll give the agent both your taxpayer's identification number and a special personal identification number you will have been given for verification. The agent bank will then instruct your bank to withdraw funds from your account and send it to the government's account. Under the second choice, you'll instruct your

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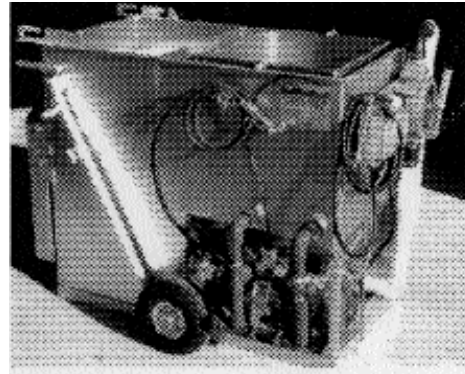
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Save time and money by bringing the training to your staff, your clients, and other preservation partners!

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WHAT TO DO IF YOU'RE BEHIND ON YOUR PAYROLL TAXES

What do you do if your business is having a problem keeping up with its payroll taxes because some of your largest providers are not paying on time, or not at all, or they are filing for protection from creditors under the U.S. bankruptcy laws? Are you scared to file your payroll tax returns and have the IRS show up at door and close down your business?

Some experts advise that the best way to stop you from getting in deeper trouble with the IRS and save your business is to follow these steps. First, prepare all old payroll tax returns and file them with the IRS even if you can't pay a penny of the taxes owed. Second, pay your current payroll taxes. Third, stay current with all future payroll taxes. If you do these three things you will have a substantially reduced likelihood of the IRS closing your business.

If you cannot follow these steps, then your business is in serious jeopardy. The IRS is somewhat reasonable to business owners who fall behind in payroll taxes but who have at least filed all of the required payroll tax returns and are current for this period's taxes. However, there is no guarantee that your business is completely safe when you owe payroll taxes. Dealing with the IRS on payroll tax issues is a very delicate situation. It is strongly advised that any business with payroll tax problems seek immediate professional advice and avoid any direct personal discussions with the IRS. Avoid talking with the IRS or meeting with them by yourself. Do not let them speak to anyone on your staff.

Why wait until it gets so bad that you have to do whatever the IRS wants? If you take control of the situation and do something about your IRS problems, you'll have many more options available to you. If you wait for that knock on the door or, even worse, wait until your bank account or accounts receivables are levied, then your options are limited.

Recent changes in tax laws provide more methods to appeal IRS decisions than ever before. The problem with some of these methods is that most people have never heard about them and they are only available for a limited time. The clock is ticking on some of the best deals and programs available with the IRS.

Possible options and strategies may include requesting abatement of all penalties (and in some cases, interest) due to reasonable cause. This avenue in and of itself may reduce your tax bill by 25-33%. Another option is to prepare and submit an Offer in Compromise, due to doubt as to collectibility. If you fit the criteria and formula, the IRS will settle, in full, the total amount of the tax liability for around 10-15% on the dollar.

Know your rights! You have the right to be represented by an attorney, CPA, or Enrolled Agent when you are dealing with the IRS. Be sure to consult with an expert before you say something to the IRS that you may later regret. Remember, no matter how nice the IRS revenue officer may seem, they are paid to look out for the government's interest, not yours!

Electronic Tax Reform

..continued from page 1

own bank directly to withdraw funds from your account for transfer to the Treasury Department's account. You should be aware, however, that this choice is only open to you if your bank offers this service. Depending on the bank, you'll use your phone, computer, or either to initiate the transfer. You won't be charged any fees by the government, its agents, or the IRS for their services, but you may be charged fees by your own bank for the services it provides you. Make sure that you talk to your banker before reaching any decisions about which option to choose.

Make sure you keep good records of your wire transfers. You want to be prepared in the event that the system malfunctions and proof of your transfer is lost. Your own bank's records of your withdrawals will be your best evidence, but there are still two additional steps you should take. First, if you use one of the agent banks, make sure that you get an acknowledgment number from the bank with each transfer. Second, each time you authorize a withdrawal, write down the time, date, and amount and keep this with your payroll tax records.

MEMBERS ONLY**Hartgen Archaeological Associates, Inc.***Karen Hartgen***Lifelong Passion Unearths Region's Historic Treasures**

By [Elizabeth Benjamin](#), Staff writer
[Time Union Online News](#)

North Greenbush, New York— Archaeologist Karen Hartgen balances goals of preservation and development. A love of digging runs in Karen Hartgen's family. Her father was head of the agronomy department at the university in her hometown of Orono. He was a "soil management man," she says. Her brother is a pedologist — a soil scientist — for the county health department in Birmingham, Alabama. As one of the Capital Region's prominent archaeologists, the 53-year-old Hartgen has followed in her family's footsteps — she has made a name for herself by uncovering what soil has long obscured.

Blue-and-white tiles used by early Dutch settlers. Strings of an Indian wampum. Broken bits of Colonial-era crockery. Parts of the stockade that encircled Fort Orange, the precursor of the city of Albany. Hartgen has unearthed it all.

Archaeology has been a lifelong pursuit — the first school paper she can recall writing was on King Tut. But the path that led from Maine to the Capital Region has as many layers as her intricate excavations.

There was, for example, the year-long detour she took in her 20s to teach English in Brazil. Later, she went back to school to study library science because she was convinced that there weren't enough in-the-field jobs in archaeology.

"It was definitely not a straight-line education," Hartgen said. "I took advantage of travel and had a good time, which I think is just as important."

Yielding to an adolescent desire to get "as far away from home as possible," Hartgen attend the University of Coral Gables in Florida, but soon decided she hated the tropical south. So she returned to the University of Maine at Orono to study anthropology.

She finished her undergraduate work at the University at Albany after moving to the city in the late 1960s with her first husband, who had landed a job with the New York

Department of Transportation. At Albany, she took classes with former state archaeologist Robert Funk and, as a graduate assistant, worked with him in excavating old Mohawk Indian villages and later at Native American sites in the Susquehanna River valley.

In 1973, Hartgen went to work on one of the first large state-funded cultural resource projects — a dig investigating what would eventually be paved over to become Interstate 88. Also on the job was fellow graduate student Charles Fisher, who would eventually become her second husband. They have three children — Kate, Rob and Sarah. Fisher is now an anthropologist at the State Museum.

The 1976 Environmental Quality Review Act proved to be a boon to the business of archaeology. The landmark law requires investigation of sites for their historic significance before they can be developed, and Hartgen soon found there was enough archaeological work to keep her busy.

"These jobs kept coming along, and I couldn't say no," said Hartgen, who was so engrossed that she didn't find the time to finish her master's degree until 1988.

Incorporated in 1985, Hartgen Associates is now one of the state's largest archaeological firms, at times employing up to 50 people. Hartgen's main office is in a historic house in North Greenbush where she is also the town historian. She also has satellite offices in Geneseo and Putney, Vermont.

These days, Hartgen has largely delegated the actual digging to her staff so that she can concentrate on the tricky part of the business: balancing the demands of development with the integrity of her science.

"Doing this kind of work is like walking a tightrope," Hartgen said. "You're hired by developers who don't really want to do archaeology, and your work is reviewed by experts who want to protect what you find."

Not everything can be saved. Sometimes, she realizes,

archaeologists must be content with digging up the past, removing the most important artifacts, chronicling the findings and then reburying the site so construction can proceed.

On occasion, however, Hartgen has chosen to quit a project rather than compromise her professional standards. In 1996, she was lead archaeologist on the construction of the state Dormitory Authority headquarters on Broadway. But she walked away from that job, claiming the agency had downplayed the significance of the Dutch and later Colonial-era artifacts uncovered at the site, which was thought to be just inside the north gate of the 1652 Beverwyck stockade.

The New York State Archaeological Council sued the Dormitory Authority, and the case was settled out of court with the authority putting up \$250,000 to help offset the costs of predevelopment archaeological work in Albany, Troy, and Schenectady.

One of Hartgen's most significant discoveries came last summer when her team unearthed a 300-foot-long stretch of a 1780 bulkhead along the original Hudson River shoreline and remnants of the eighteenth century stockade behind the Foley Federal Courthouse. Despite their importance, these foundations were soon reburied and lie beneath the multistory parking garage being built for SUNY Central employees.

Calling the discovery "the premiere eighteenth century waterfront site found in this century," Hartgen said she supported the state's decision to cover it because preserving the wooden bulkhead would have cost millions of dollars and taken years.

"Usually, I'm with the preservationists," Hartgen said, "but in this case, there was no way it could have been done. In 50 or 60 years, someone may actually dig it up."

Before it disappeared from view, the site attracted widespread attention. Thousands of residents and downtown workers got a first-hand look at the dig on free lunchtime tours. Hartgen said she has been encouraged by the public's increased interest in archaeology as well as the city's recent creation of a task force that focuses on preserving its historic assets.

"They're starting to have a real vision and think seriously about heritage tourism," she said. "I believe that's the way to go. We certainly have a lot of history here."

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Note from the Editor..

The ACRA Edition encourages all ACRA members to contribute to the MembersOnly forum. We provide this forum for members to inform the membership of announcements, such as recognition awards, contract awards, or company changes. Furthermore, we invite the membership to submit corporate profiles to share with our readers. This is your newsletter, make it work for you.

The Louis Berger Group, Inc.

On July 1, 1999 Louis Berger International, Inc. and Louis Berger & Associates, Inc. (Domestic Operations) merged into a single company known as the The Louis Berger Group, Inc. A new company logo reflects this change.

committee information

ACRA 2000

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GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

ACRA recently negotiated an agreement with Nellie L. Longworth of Bethesda, Maryland, to provide a weekly on-line news service and other services relating to federal legislative activity. The weekly online news service is provided on issues the ACRA Board desires to track when Congress is in session. During periods of congressional recess, the newsletter will become biweekly or less, with greater emphasis placed on federal agency actions that are of interest to ACRA; for example, an investigation of the new National Heritage Areas legislation and the National Park Service response to it. Legislative activity includes representing ACRA to members, staff and committees of Congress (on request) and the National Preservation Coordinating Council. The ACRA board will be informed of appropriate group letters going to the Congress for signature. Upon request by ACRA, Ms Longworth will also plan and execute an annual Washington, DC Advocacy Day to include appointments with congressional staff and members on key committees in both the house and Senate, and/or organize meetings with key federal agencies to address contracting issue. ACRA members can look forward to meeting Nellie Longworth in person at our annual meeting in Phoenix this fall.

REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE MEMBER UPDATES

The list of committees and committee members illustrated on Page 6 is up to date as of the October 1999 Annual meeting. Please inform us if changes have been made to a committee on which you serve, or no longer serve, as the case may be.

ACRA WEB SITE

[<www.acra-crm.org>](http://www.acra-crm.org)

[Update to Membership Database](#)

This is a reminder to members who wish to be included in the online membership database. Please complete and return the forms that were sent to you earlier this year by Executive Director Tom Wheaton. Furthermore, if there are changes or errors in your online information, please contact Tom Wheaton via email (tomwheaton@newsouthassoc.com) at your earliest convenience.

If you think that listing your corporate information on ACRA's web site doesn't make a difference, at last reporting our web site receives approximately 1000 hits per day.

[New: A Consultants Site](#)

ACRA is developing a new section on its web site for clients to find consultants. With the requested information on staffing and branch offices, ACRA plans to build a web site that will be marketed to potential clients via trade organizations and trade association. The goal is to have these organizations to provide a link on their site to ACRA's consultants site. While the site is not quite ready for public use, it can be viewed at: [<http://www.acra-crm.org/consultantpage.html>](http://www.acra-crm.org/consultantpage.html)

legislative update

FEBRUARY 2000

by Nellie L. Longworth

Welcome back to the Online Newsletter. As you may have noted, CEHP is no longer sponsoring this activity. Bill Beckner invited me to take over the Online News and I have begun working to beef up the membership of both organizations and individuals. I hope to have more information by next week as to how the newsletter will be set up (weekly when Congress is in session, less regularly when they are out) and am planning to following the election and results of the election next fall. All of this will focus on the issues of interest to you.

State of the Union Address

A smiling, jubilant President Clinton took the podium for the State of the Union Address to remind all Americans that we have come through the longest period of economic growth in our entire history under his leadership: 20 million new jobs, Treasury surpluses, decrease in welfare, increase in adoptions, and double the investment in education and crime prevention. These became a backdrop for a FY01 call for cooperation from Congress to pass a real patients health protection measure, common sense gun safety legislation, campaign finance reform, and an increased investment in education to reduce class size and upgrade schools and classrooms.

In the hour and 29 minute speech, the President did touch on environmental issues, though never mentioning historic resources by name. Calling for the creation of a permanent conservation fund, the president specified funding "to restore wildlife, protect coastlines, save natural treasures from the California redwoods to the Florida Everglades." He plugged the Lands Legacy program for livable communities and did mention the Save America's Treasures as an example of partnerships that work.

(EDITORS COMMENT) The continuing omission by the President to mention historic or cultural resources highlights the need to convince both the Administration and Congress of their contribution to smart growth, livability and sustainability of communities large and small. Any proposal from the Executive for permanent funding of conservation programs

must be met with a barrage of support for the inclusion of historic resource funding through the Historic Preservation Fund. It was the intention of Sen. Scoop Jackson (R-WA) and others who created the Land and Water Conservation Fund in 1956 and the Historic Preservation Fund in 1976 that natural and built resources are natural partners and that their protection provides a quality of life richly deserved by all Americans.

Clinton Designates Four National Monuments Using the Antiquities Act in Mid-January.

With the Grand Canyon as a backdrop, President Clinton announced four new monuments and vigorously defended his decision to protect federal lands of over one million acres as scenic areas. Three of the new monuments were the Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument on the northern rim of the Grand Canyon (one million acres), the Agua Fria National Monument 40 miles north of Phoenix (71,000 acres, including rock pueblos from centuries ago), and the California Coast National Monument (thousands of islands, rocks and reefs along 840 miles of the California Coast.) He further added 7,900 acres to the Pinnacles National Monument in California, south of San Jose.

Evoking the fact that Theodore Roosevelt used the Antiquities Act to designate the Grand Canyon, he stated "this is not about locking lands up; it is about freeing them from the pressures of development and the threat of sprawl for all Americans, for all time.

The action was not popular with Arizona Governor Jane Hull and Arizona Republicans in Congress who had expressed their concern to the press that local authorities had not been consulted and deserved a voice in the use of the lands. While sensitive to Federal protection of scenic and historic sites, Arizonians have grave concerns that only 17% of their land is in private ownership. The federal government owns 42%, the State 13% and Indian reservations count for the additional 28%.

Clinton plans to propose the purchase of 18 additional sites with the \$35 million Congress allocated for Federal land acquisition but that has not been earmarked for a specific

purchase. Those areas include the Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge (FL- \$4.6 million) two Civil War battlefields: Stone Rivers in TN and Fredericksburg-Spotsylvania in VA (#3.8 million), Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthplace and burial site (GA- \$3.5 million), enlargement of the Hakalau Forest National Wildlife Refuge (HI - \$1.6 million) and land around Lake Logan and Shining Rock Wilderness in Pisgah National Forest (NC - \$1.3 million).

The current and future designations have set a fire under GOP Resource Committee members who have challenged the use of the Antiquities Act to designate national monuments as "unfair to the states and citizens of these states." House Resource Committee Chair Don Young (R-AK) believes the President's action shows "a total disregard for the law and public process."

There is certain to be an effort to move the Senate to complete legislative action similar to HR 1487 which passed the House last year. With Rep. Hansen's (R-UT) original bill softened by a substitute amendment offered by Rep. Vento (D-MN), more public participation and consultation on public lands to be designated was required "to the extent consistent" with the protection of landmarks, structures and other objects of historic or scientific interest. This bears watching in the Senate in the weeks ahead.

[Taken from ACRA/ROPA ONLINE NEWS, Vol. 5:1. Prepared by Nellie L. Longworth, Consultant, for ACRA and ROPA, exclusively for their subscribers, who agree they will not post weekly or special reports on paper or any computer network, homepage or bulletin board accessible by any entity or individual other than its members, officers, directors, board members, staff, and any others listed above. ACRA and ROPA may, however, make "fair use" of the weekly news or special reports or periodical newsletters and may rewrite or paraphrase and distribute information contained in them.]

Congressional Calendar for the Year 2000

Second Session of the 106th Congress

This calendar is designed to assist the planning of visits to Capitol Hill during 2000.

January 24	House and Senate Reconvenes
January 27	State of the Union Address
February 12 - 22	SENATE in recess
February 12	Lincoln's Birthday
February 21	President's Day
February 21 - 25	HOUSE President's Day District Work Period
March 11 - 20	SENATE in recess
April 15 - 25	SENATE in recess
April 17 - 28	HOUSE Spring District Work Period
April 20	Passover
April 23	Easter
May 14	Mother's Day
May 29	Memorial Day
May 27 - June 4	SENATE in recess
May 29 - June 2	HOUSE Memorial Day District Work Period
June 14	Flag Day
June 18	Father's Day
July 1 - 10	SENATE in recess
July 3 - 7	HOUSE Independence Day District Work Period
July 4	Independence Day
July 29 - Sept 5	SENATE in recess
July 31 - Sept 5	HOUSE Summer District Work Period
Sept 4	Labor Day
Sept 29 - Oct 2	SENATE in recess
September 30	Rosh Hashanna
OCTOBER 6	TARGET FOR ADJOURNMENT

1 3 1 8 M a i n S t r e e t , C i n c i n n a t i , O h i o 4 5 2 1 0

ACRA's Members-Only Listserv

ACRA now has an online discussion group just for members. "Membersonly" is a listserv that operates much the same way as ACRA-L, with the exception that it is only available to ACRA members. Its purpose is to offer the board, members, and the executive director a venue to share the latest news from ACRA; promote dialogue between members on current issues; and enable members to post announcements or inquiries.

To subscribe to the list, a member must contact ACRA's Executive Director, Tom Wheaton. Once you have supplied Tom with your e-mail address, he will subscribe you to this list. Contact Tom at 770-498-5159 or e-mail: tomwheaton@newsouthassoc.com.

DEADLINE PRODUCTION

February 7	February 18
April 3	April 14
June 5	June 16
August 7	August 18
October 2	October 13
December 4	December 15

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ACRA Edition

is a bi-monthly publication of The American Cultural Resources Association. Our mission is to promote the professional, ethical and business practices of the cultural resources industry, including all of its affiliated disciplines, for the benefit of the resources, the public, and the members of the association.

This publication's purpose is to provide members with the latest information on the association's activities and to provide up-to-date information on federal and state

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