Volume 9-Issue 1

January 2014

Brickyard News

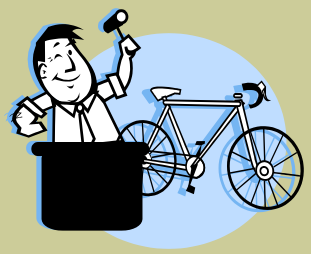
Louisiana Property Assistance Agency

Special points of interest:

- Personnel Updates
- Helpful Hints
- Spotlight: IT
- From the Auditors
- January Training Schedule

Auction Information

The next auctions will be held on January 11 & February 8. Remember you can view the items at the auction site three days prior to the auction date. For a copy of the auction brochure and buyers guide, please view our website the week of the



auction.

LA Property Assistance Agency

P O Box 94095

1059 Brickyard Lane

Baton Rouge LA 70804-9095

(225) 342-6849 Main

(225) 342-6853 Compliance

(225) 342-6855 Fleet

- www.doa.louisiana.gov/lpaa

Personnel Updates: New Faces

New Fleet Manager– We are pleased to announce that Shannon Rushing has been selected as the new State Fleet Manager. She can be contacted at 225-342–6855 or Shannon.Rushing@la.gov.

New Pick-Up Coordinator– We also want to welcome James (Jim) Desormeaux to our agency. Jim has taken Jeremy Rist's place as the pick-up coordinator. He is here to help with all of your scheduling needs. He can be contacted at 225-342-3407 or James.Desormeaux@la.gov.

Changes in Compliance- In addition to Shannon's promotion, Ben Mercer is no longer a compliance officer. We are sad to see him go, but happy that he is advancing his career. The good news is that in the coming months the compliance department will be adding three new compliance officers!

Thanks for being so patient with our agency as we are trying to fill multiple truck driver positions.

Helpful Hints: Before Surplusing

Take a minute to think about the items your agency surpluses, and where those items end up. After being picked up by LPAA, the majority of these items end up at auction being sold to the public. So what has been found in some surplus items? You would be surprised.

One of the most important things that need to be checked prior to surplusing is computers. LPAA doesn't turn on surplus computers to see if they have been sanitized or wiped of information. Auction customers have told us stories of computers they purchased that still had agency specific information, patient/customer records, wedding pictures, and all kids of personal information. **Agencies are responsible for removing information from computers prior to surplusing.** The Office of Information Technology Policy for Data Sanitization can be found on their website: http://www.doa.louisiana.gov/oit/pdf/IT%20Pol%201-04%20Data%20Sanitization%20(2).pdf

Although computers hold the most sensitive information, think about what could be in filing cabinets. Make sure to empty filing cabinets and desks before surplusing them. If LPAA does find files in a filing cabinet or desk, the agency will be required to come pick up the files. Medical equipment is also very important. **Please do not surplus medical equipment that contains any type of medicine or prescriptions, needles, or hazardous waste.** We cannot accept these items into our warehouse. Be sure to double check your surplus before letting it leave your agency.

Putting IT on the Spot

One thing that every agency has in common is information technology (IT). All agencies have some type of computer, monitor, laptop, fax machine, copy machine, or some type of electronics. Every agency has an IT section, an IT guy, or a token computer person. It's time to put the IT Department on the spot. Here are the most common questions and concerns we receive from IT.

- ***"Well her computer went out and we had to give her a new one."*** Sounds good! LPAA doesn't want to hinder your operation by not allowing you to move computers around, but IT needs to be aware of the repercussions of moving equipment and not notifying the appropriate personnel (mainly the property manager). Oftentimes when an auditor is conducting an audit and looking for a computer, we find out that an employee's broken computer has been replaced by a new one. Where is the old computer? Any time IT switches or moves a computer from its designated location, there needs to be some type of internal procedure to let the property manager know. This can be done in paper format, in email, or any other form of communication as long as the property manager knows to update the location code in AMS. Keep in mind that an audit goes by your location codes. If the computer is moved to another location and it is not corrected in AMS it is assumed to be unlocated. **Computers** that are out of their location is one of the most common audit findings and can easily be fixed with good internal procedures.

- ***"We have to keep these computers as spare."*** Sounds good! LPAA understands that your IT may need to keep a few computers as spares incase some break. Do you really need 40 spare computers if you only have 20 employees? The fastest way to lose and have missing property is to hoard it. It's very rare that the big, bulky, white computers from the 90's work properly and can even handle today's technology. So why keep these as spare? LPAA auditors also look at where the spares are located. If you are keeping spares that work and are in good condition in a specified IT closet it's much more believable than keeping the spares in a shed that is not protected from the elements. Don't end up with too many spares and get an audit finding of idle equipment.

- ***"I needed this computer for parts to keep another working."*** No problem! We all know money is tight and for some agencies it's unrealistic to have to buy new computers when one breaks. There is a procedure set up to help this problem and as long as you follow the correct steps you will have no issues. First, your IT needs to let the property manager know they intend to cannibalize equipment **prior** to it being done. The property manager can create a disposal transfer for dismantle, and request to dismantle the equipment for parts (mostly computers). Once the transfer is approved by LPAA, your IT department is free to use the parts. This is where it could get tricky during an audit. If your IT dismantles the computers without approval, it is an audit finding. Always receive approval prior to any dismantle. Another problem we see is agencies having dismantled computers stockpiled. To solve this problem, have IT take what they need from the computer then scrap the shell of the computer. If a computer is dismantled and IT wishes to keep it in the shell, use a marker and write on the shell that it's approved for dismantle and write the transfer number. This way, during an audit or inventory, there is no confusion as to the purpose of this asset.

- ***"IT has their own inventory listing."*** That's a great idea, but keep in mind that LPAA auditors are required to use AMS during an audit. If the location code of computer equipment is correct in an agency's internal system and incorrect in AMS, it can still result in an audit finding. Some agencies have given their IT access to AMS to ensure the information is correct. Property Managers can even give just Read Only access to their IT.

- ***"They have that computer at home."*** If a computer, or any equipment is home stored, be sure to have some type of sign out sheet, responsibility form, or employee assignment form. Having the employee's name in AMS or just typed into a document is not enough. These forms need to show acknowledgement and have original signatures from the employee responsible and the property manager or supervisor. These forms also need to have enough information to identify the asset. Some fields should be property tag number, description, and serial number. If you need a sample form, email your compliance officer.

Always keep a good working relationship with IT. Most audits call upon the IT department for assistance. Make sure something like below isn't found at your agency.

From the Auditors

- **Location Code Index**. Your agency's location code index is a huge part of effective property management. How can you find your agency's property without some type of index telling you where it is? Think of the location code index as a crosswalk. Every asset in AMS has a specified location code, and sometimes that code needs to be deciphered. Your agency can use words (Compliance Department, Administration), numbers (001, 002, 003), and some larger agencies use city names. Create a crosswalk of these location codes with more specific information. For an example, email your compliance officer. Location code indexes are used during an audit and must be turned in annually with your inventory certification.
- **Inventory Working Papers.** During an audit there is some paperwork we can help you obtain, but inventory working papers is not one of them. Working papers are the pages you actually use during your inventory. Most have check marks, highlights, and notes scribbled on them. These papers show us that you actively went out and conducted an inventory, and these are also an important part of an audit. The only exception to theses pages is if your agency uses AMS scanners for inventory, which the report can be produced from Scan & Validate.
- **Surplus!** For some reason, people think they can only surplus after inventory or only a few times a year. This is completely untrue. You can surplus as many times as you need to. Don't wait until after an audit to surplus, because you are subject to getting an idle assets finding. Surplus any unused items prior to the audit and prior to inventory. If you think about it, the more you surplus, the less you have to keep up with.
- **Training.** We encourage all property/fleet managers to attend a training class. If you are new in the property/fleet world, or you've been there a while, everyone can benefit from attending a refresher class. Training is also offered to agency employees. LPAA has a training that isn't as in-depth and is geared toward what every state employee should know about their responsibility when it comes to state property. If you would like to request training for your employees, contact your compliance officer.

January Training Schedule

The **training schedule** has been set for January If you would like to attend property/fleet, certification and audit, or AMS training, you can sign up through LPAA's website at **www.doa.la.gov/lpaa/training.htm**.

Type	Location	Date	Time
AMS 8	LPAA	January 29, 2013	9:00 am — 11:30 am
Certification & Audit Prep	LPAA	January 29, 2013	1:00 pm — 3:30 pm
Property Rules & Regulations	LPAA	January 30, 2013	9:00 am — 11:30 pm
Fleet Rules & Regulations LPAA	LPAA	January 30, 2013	1:00 pm—3:30 pm

The next available training will be April 2014.

If you have any questions that you would like reviewed in detail in the Brickyard News, send an email to whitney.williams@la.gov.