

MARTINSVILLE CIRCUIT COURT RECORDS WEBSITE
USER'S GUIDE
April 2008

- Section I. Contents of the Website**
 - Section II. Computer Hardware and Software Requirements**
 - Section III. How to Use the Court Records Management System**
 - Section IV. How to Use the Archives/Municipal Records Section**
 - Section V. How to Use the Delinquent Taxes Section**
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Section I. Contents of the Website.

Search the **Archives/Municipal Records** section for Images of

Land Record Index pages from 4/20/42 to 6/30/72
Will/Fiduciary Index pages from 4/20/42 to 6/30/94
Judgment Docket pages from 1/01/80 to 6/30/86
Tax Map
Land Book
Personal Property Book

Search the **Court Records Management System** section for Indexes and Images of

Civil, Criminal and Miscellaneous Orders beginning 1/01/2002
Deed and Land Records beginning 7/01/1972
Financing Statements beginning 7/01/1994
Judgments beginning 7/01/1986
Marriage Licenses (Index Only) beginning 4/20/1942
Plats and Maps beginning 4/20/1942
Settlement of Receivers and Commissioners Book beginning 1/01/2002
Trust Fund Order Book beginning 1/01/2002
Wills/Fiduciary beginning 7/29/1992

Search the **Delinquent Taxes** section for a recent account of

Delinquent Real Estate Taxes

Computer RAM: 128 MB or higher.

Software:

- (1) Internet Explorer, versions 6.0 or higher is required view the web site.

Practice Tip:

If you need to install a newer version of Internet Explorer, go to <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/ie/ie6/default.msp>.

- (2) Adobe Acrobat Reader.

Practice Tip:

If you need to install Adobe Acrobat Reader, click on <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html> to download the free Acrobat Reader. Acrobat Reader allows you to convert document images to high quality PDF images.

Section III. How to Use the Court Records Management System.

The Court Records Management System (sometimes referred to as “CRMS”) provides indexing for land records and other document series. Court Records Management System is used to find a document using allowed search criteria.

If a document is found in the index, a digital image of that document can be retrieved and viewed using LaserFiche WebLink.

Court Records Management System involves a three-step process, described in detail below:

The Records Index is pre-set for Martinsville. Clicking the box beside “New (unverified) Records Only” will permit a search for records that have been newly-recorded, but have not been indexed and merged with the main database of records.

STEP ONE Select Document Category.

“1. Select document category”. Clicking on the drop-down arrow box activates a screen

STEP TWO Provide Desired Search Criteria.

“2. Provide desired search criteria”. You can find a record by several search methods, i.e., by instrument number, name, number or legal description.

Practice Tip:

The CRMS database went online on March 27, 2000. Most of the current database is converted from name-based index systems. Therefore, the best search option is currently the Last/Business Name (see below).

Searching by INSTRUMENT.

“Instrument Number” requires input of the specific seven-digit instrument number assigned to the instrument when it was recorded.

You may narrow the scope of your search by using:

“Instrument Type” - A list of document types used to classify each instrument when it is recorded. Clicking on the drop-down arrow box activates a pull down screen revealing some, but not all, instrument types.

“From Date”-“To Date” - An instrument search within a limited time frame.

“Business Only” and “Individual Only” - If neither are selected, CRMS will search for both types. Click only to limit your search to a specific type.

“Name begins with ...” - The default setting; and “Appears anywhere in name...” - An alternate search method.

Practice Tip:

Leave the setting on Name begins with..., unless you can only remember a partial title or name.

Searching by NAME.

“Name Type” - Used to classify the capacity in which the party entered his/her/its name upon the instrument, i.e., grantor. Clicking on the drop-down arrow box activates a pull down screen revealing some, but not all, name types.

Practice Tip:

This setting is not required to search a name. It is used to narrow your search to a

“Browse Names” - A browsing option that displays all index references for the name typed in Last/Business Name.

Practice Tip:

Try this at least once to understand its value. Browse Names allows you to see all indexed derivative versions of a person's name, i.e., initials, full Christian and/or middle names or abbreviations thereof, nicknames, or variations of a business name.

"Sort By" - The system provides Name/Date as the default setting, showing data in alpha name order in descending date order. The order of the data can be changed to request information to appear in Date/Name, Inst. Type/Name, or by Instrument. Data can be reorganized to show the older documents first by selecting Sort by Ascending Date.

Practice Tip:

For new users, it is probably best to leave these settings alone. The same data will look very different when its order is changed. The ability to reconfigure the data display is provided for the experienced and/or long-term customer.

Searching by NUMBER

"Book" and "Page" - A document may be found by reference to a Book and Page Number.

Practice Tip:

Older pre-July 1, 2000 documents were assigned book and page numbers. Since adopting Case Record Management System, recorded instruments have been assigned a seven-digit Instrument Number (see above). All recorded instruments are digitally scanned, and documents are no longer archived in physical books.

"Tax Map" or "Parcel ID" - A unique alpha-numeric reference appearing on all land records recorded on or after July 1, 2000.

Practice Tip:

Typing in the Tax Map reference may retrieve an index reference to a Deed or Land Record. The City of Martinsville has selected its Tax Map reference as the unique identifier for real estate located in its jurisdiction. Land records are not indexed by Parcel ID in Martinsville. When typing in the Martinsville Tax Map reference, delete parentheses, hash marks and front-end zeros. Example One: A tax map reference of 64 (02) 30/9 would be typed in as 64 2 30 9. Example Two: A tax map reference of 52 (11) 00/04 would be typed in as 52 11 4.

This option will show the user any Deed or Land Record indexed by the same, EXACT alphanumeric description. CAVEAT: Do not expect to find every instrument using this search method. Descriptions are indexed as they appear on each instrument, and variations of the same description are common. Test the Legal Description search method by confining the search to a road, i.e. Rives Road or Rives Rd.

STEP THREE Initiating or Canceling the Search Request.

"3. Begin Search". Clicking on "Search" will provide Search Results. Clicking on "Reset Search Parameters" will clear information typed on the Search Records Index page, to begin another search. Clicking on "Close" will return you to the Court Records Management System main page.

Using the Search Results Screen(s).

1. "Search Results" - Based on the parameters of the request, Court Records Management System will display search results.

Practice Tip:

If no record is found, the Screen will report "No records found". Click the "OK" button, and you will return to the Search Request screen. Try the Browse Names search option. If no record is found, this means there are no records in the CRMS database searched that match your request.

If a record is found, the Search Results screen will report the number of records found, listing them in Name-Date order (unless you have set another "Sort By" option).

2. Click on the notepad icon beside each index entry to review additional indexing details.

3. Click on "View Document". This will show the user a digital image of the instrument. The LaserFiche Weblink system will open, and the screen will show the user how many documents were found.

Practice Tip:

If the system displays any message other than "document found", exit using the "X" button on the top right of your browser screen to return to the screen showing additional indexing details (mentioned above), and click View Document again. Problems should be reported to the circuit court clerk's office.

4. If the LaserFiche Weblink system indicates "document found", click on the

Each page of the instrument can be copied by clicking the print button on the browser. Different pages of the instrument can be viewed by clicking on the up and down icon buttons at the bottom of the page.

The "Back" and "Forward" page arrow buttons on the browser will allow you to view all images that have been enlarged or reduced. The "Back" button will also take you back to the first LaserFiche screen. From there, to exit you must click on the exit ("X") button at the top right of the screen. This will return you to the CRMS indexing details screen.

5. If you choose to download the document image as a PDF file, click on the "PDF" button (Download PDF). Acrobat Reader will convert the image into a file layout that will permit high-quality viewing, copying, saving as a file, and other manipulation of the file indicated on the taskbar above the document.

Practice Tip:

To return to the LaserFiche screen from the Acrobat Reader screen, click on the exit ("X") button at the top right of the Acrobat page.

To return to the Court Records Management System from the LaserFiche system when you are finished viewing and/or copying the instrument, you may click on the exit button at the top right corner of the screen. This will return you to the Court Records Management System screen showing indexing details. Alternatively, you may use the "Back" button on the browser to back up, screen by screen, to the first LaserFiche screen. From there, you will click the exit button at the top right to return you to the Court Records Management System indexing details screen.

6. At the indexing details screen, click on the "Close" button to return to the Search Results screen.

Practice Tip:

The GIS feature is not available through Court Records Management System. Visit http://gis.co.henry.va.us/mapguide/mapviewerphp/martinsville_henry_county.html to see the current version of GIS.

7. View each document listed on the Search Results screen in the same manner as described above.

8. If more than one page of search results is indicated at the bottom of the Search Results screen, click on the > button to advance a page, and on the < button to go back a page.

Section IV. How to Use the Archives/Municipal Records Section.

The Archives database was added to provide continuity for the website, going back to April 20, 1942, the first day the Martinsville Circuit Court Clerk's Office opened for business.

The Land Record Index contains digital images of the physical Deed Book Index, covering transfers of real and personal property between the dates of 4/20/1942 and 6/30/1972. Note that this record database ends where the CRMS Deeds and Land Records database begins. Together, the two databases contain the full index of every Deed Book transfer in the City of Martinsville from 4/20/1942 to the present. This link is activated by clicking on the Land Record Search button.

The Judgment Docket section contains digital images of the physical Judgment Lien Docket and Execution Book, containing every judgment recorded in the Martinsville circuit Court Clerk's Office between the dates of 1/01/1980 and 6/30/1986. Note that this record database ends where the CRMS Judgments database begins. Together, the two databases contain more than twenty-years of judgment records docketed in the Martinsville Circuit Court Circuit Clerk's Office. This link is activated by clicking on the Judgment Search button.

The Will/Fiduciary Index contains digital images of the physical Will Book Index, covering fiduciary matters between the dates of 4/20/1942 and 6/30/1994. Note that this record database overlaps with the CRMS Wills/Fiduciary database. Together, the two databases contain the full index of every Will/Fiduciary matter recorded in the City of Martinsville from 4/20/1942 to the present. This link is activated by clicking on the Wills/Fiduciary Search button.

The Municipal Records database contains databases that are not under the control of the clerk of circuit court. They are added to enhance the value of the website for the user.

The Tax Map database contains the entire tax map of the City of Martinsville. The database contains 87 files. The first file displays an image of the entire City Tax Map, showing 86 grid sections. The following 86 files contain images of pages (Sections) 1 through 86, each page representing a corresponding grid section on the total map.

The Land Book and the Personal Property Book databases contain the names of all taxpayers in the City of Martinsville and provide specific information on real and

2. You may enter information in "First Name".

Practice Tip:

DO type in a first name when searching for an entry in any of these indexes. A surname-only search may net hundreds or thousands of hits.

3. Select a topic by clicking on one of the three buttons.

4. The LaserFiche WebLink program will open and provide a document reference.

Practice Tip:

If the system displays the message "0 found", exit the screen by clicking on the exit button at the top right corner of the screen. This will return you to the main CRMS screen.

5. If the system indicates "(#) found", click on the number appearing under the "Hits" column, and a listing of all matches containing the subject's name will appear in the lower box.

6. Click on the each link in the lower box. An image of an index page will appear on the screen. Repeat for each link.

Practice Tip:

To better view the index page, the user can enlarge and shrink the document by clicking on the "zoom+" and zoom-" buttons.

Different pages of the instrument can be viewed by clicking on the up and down icon buttons at the bottom of the page.

You read each page as you would visually scan an index page in a physical book.

*DO NOT attempt to download the document as a PDF file unless you limit your request for pages by changing the Create PDF file from page * to Page * instruction, located to the left of the "PDF" icon (Download PDF). If you try to convert too many pages into PDF format at once, your computer may lock up, and you will have to restart it.*

7. If you convert an image into a PDF document, you will see the message "WebLink is creating a PDF", your PDF software will open and create a PDF of the image. To exit your software, click on the exit button at the top right corner of the screen. This will return you to the previous WebLink page.

8. To exit the WebLink image screen, click on the "Back" button near the top left corner

10. When finished, click the "Clear Search" button to prepare the Archives section for a new database search.

11. To exit the Archives/Municipal Records page, click on the button at the top of the page "Return to Main Menu".

Problems should be reported to the circuit court clerk's office.

To use the Municipal Records section

To access the Tax Map

1. Click on the "Tax Map" button.

2. The LaserFiche Document Imaging program will open and provide a document reference.

3. Click on the desired file (Tax Map page) to view a tax map.

Practice Tip:

If you do not know the page of the Tax Map on which your parcel is located, the page number can be obtained from the Land Book, which is also available in the Municipal Records section. This number is also available through the City's Munis and Assessit databases, neither of which is web accessible. Once the tax map page is selected, the user can enlarge and shrink the document by clicking on the "zoom+" and "zoom-" buttons.

4. To download the document as a PDF file, click on the "PDF" icon space indicated. If you convert an image into a PDF document, you will see the message "WebLink is creating a PDF", your PDF software will open and create a PDF of the image. To exit your software, click on the exit button at the top right corner of the screen. This will return you to the previous WebLink page.

5. To look at another tax map, click on the "Back" button near the top left corner of your browser, and return to the main screen.

6. To return to the CRMS system when you are finished viewing and/or copying the tax map, click on the exit button at the top right corner of the screen. This will return you to the CRMS main screen.

3. The LaserFiche WebLink program will open and the number of document “hits”, the number of instances where the name appears in the database, will appear.
4. Click on the document found. A new screen will open.
5. Click on the each link in the lower box. An image of an index page will appear on the screen containing the subject’s data. Repeat for each link.

Practice Tip:

To better view the index page, the user can enlarge and shrink the document by clicking on the "zoom+" and zoom-" buttons.

Different pages of the instrument can be viewed by clicking on the up and down icon buttons at the bottom of the page.

You read each page as you would visually scan an index page in a physical book.

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6. If you convert an image into a PDF document, you will see the message “WebLink is creating a PDF”, your PDF software will open and create a PDF of the image. To exit your software, click on the exit button at the top right corner of the screen. This will return you to the previous WebLink page.
7. To exit the WebLink image screen, click on the “Back” button near the top left corner of the screen. This will return you to the previous WebLink index page. Repeat the procedure to view all name “hits”.
8. To exit the index page, click on the exit button at the top right corner of the screen. This will return you to the main CRMS screen.
9. When finished, click the "Clear Search" button to prepare the Archives section for a new database search.
10. To exit the Archives/Municipal Records page, click on the button at the top of the page “Return to Main Menu”.

Problems should be reported to the circuit court clerk's office.

The DELINQUENT REAL ESTATE TAXES database contains a periodically changing report providing unpaid real estate taxes on Martinsville properties.

To access the Delinquent Real Estate Taxes report

1. Click on the "Delinquent Taxes" button.
2. To enter the database, you must provide the nine-digit Parcel Identification Number assigned the property by the City of Martinsville.

Practice Tip:

The Parcel ID number is available from several sources. The number can be obtained from the Land Book, which is available in the Municipal Records Section. This number is also available through the City's Munis and Assessit databases, neither of which is web accessible.

3. Type the nine digit Parcel ID number into the space indicated, and click on the "Submit Query" button.

Practice Tip:

If not delinquent tax references are found, the database will report "No records returned" at the bottom under "Parcel".

If a reference is found, the database will reveal the parcel number, year(s) in which taxes is/are delinquent, name of record owner, unpaid balance of taxes, and property location.

4. If delinquent taxes are found, call the City Treasurer's Office to obtain the current balance. (276) 403-5240
5. To check on other parcels, either click on the "Reset" button or type over the old number, and click on the "Submit Query" button. THE RESET BUTTON DOES NOT WORK.
6. When finished, to exit the Delinquent Taxes page, click on the button at the top of the page "Return to Main Menu".