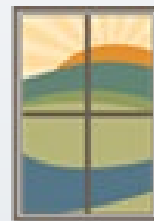


# Financial Oversight by Conservation District Boards



**CONSERVATION DISTRICTS  
OF WASHINGTON STATE**

*your window to healthy lands*





While it may not be the primary reason you decided to serve on a conservation district board, overseeing finances is widely viewed as your most important job.

# This is why it's important for boards to provide oversight to district finances....

[www.thegazette.com](http://www.thegazette.com) › [subject](#) › [news](#) › [public-safety](#) ▼

## [Conservation assistant will plead to embezzling nearly ...](#)

Mar 2, 2020 - ... Bremer County water conservation districts will plead guilty in federal ... one count of wire fraud, according to U.S. District Court documents.

[mageenews.com](http://mageenews.com) › [auditor-arrests-former-lawrence-cou...](#) ▼

## [Auditor Arrests former Lawrence County Conservation District ...](#)

Mar 5, 2020 - Russell is accused of using conservation district accounts to pay ... Suspected fraud can be reported to the Auditor's office online any time by ...

[www.desmoinesregister.com](http://www.desmoinesregister.com) › [story](#) › [news](#) › [2020/03/02](#) ▼

## [Iowa fraud: Former official charged with stealing \\$300k in ...](#)

Mar 2, 2020 - The audit the former Iowa soil and water conservation districts secretary withdrew nearly \$182000 in cash from one district and spent \$105000 ...

## RCW 89.08.210

### **Powers and duties of supervisors.**

The supervisors may employ a secretary, treasurer, technical experts, and such other officers, agents, and employees, permanent and temporary, as they may require, and determine their qualifications, duties, and compensation. It may call upon the attorney general for legal services, or may employ its own counsel and legal staff. The supervisors may delegate to their chair, to one or more supervisors, or to one or more agents or employees such powers and duties as it deems proper. The supervisors shall furnish to the commission, upon request, copies of such internal rules, regulations, orders, contracts, forms, and other documents as they shall adopt or employ, and such other information concerning their activities as the commission may require in the performance of its duties under chapter 184, Laws of 1973 1st ex. sess. The supervisors shall provide for the execution of surety bonds for officers and all employees who shall be entrusted with funds or property.

The supervisors shall provide for the keeping of a full and accurate record of all proceedings, resolutions, regulations, and orders issued or adopted. The supervisors shall provide for an annual audit of the accounts of receipts and disbursements in accordance with procedures prescribed by regulations of the commission.

The board may invite the legislative body of any municipality or county near or within the district, to designate a representative to advise and consult with it on all questions of program and policy which may affect the property, water supply, or other interests of such municipality or county. The governing body of a district shall appoint such advisory committees as may be

**Pay attention to your powers and duties as a board.**

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## RCW 89.08.215

### **Treasurer—Powers and duties—Bond.**

(1) The **treasurer** of the county in which a conservation district is located is ex officio **treasurer** of the district. However, the board of supervisors by resolution may designate some other person having experience in financial or fiscal matters as **treasurer** of the conservation district. The board of supervisors shall require a bond, with a surety company authorized to do business in the state of Washington, in an amount and under the terms and conditions which the board of supervisors by resolution from time to time finds will protect the district against loss. The premium on this bond shall be paid by the district.

(2) All district funds shall be paid to the **treasurer** and disbursed only on warrants issued by an **auditor** appointed by the board of supervisors, upon orders or vouchers approved by it. The **treasurer** shall establish a conservation district fund into which shall be paid all district funds. The **treasurer** shall maintain any special funds created by the board of supervisors for the placement of all money as the board of supervisors may, by resolution, direct.

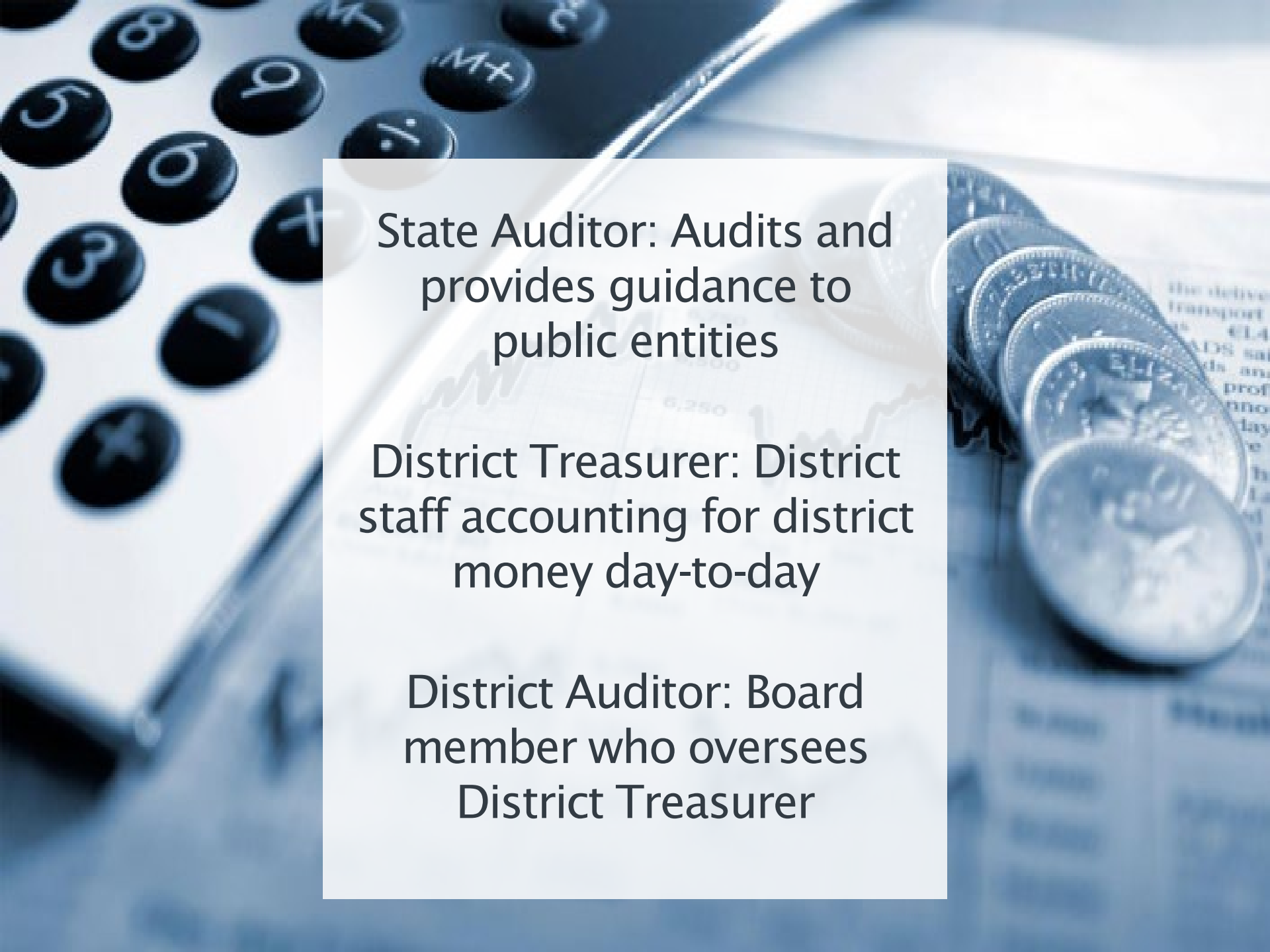
(3) If the **treasurer** of the district is the **treasurer** of the county all district funds shall be deposited with the county depositories under the same restrictions, contracts, and security as provided for county depositories. If the **treasurer** of the district is some other person, all funds shall be deposited in a bank or banks authorized to do business in this state as the board of supervisors, by resolution, designates.

(4) A district may provide and require a reasonable bond of any other person handling moneys or securities of the district, if the district pays the premium.

Pay attention to specific statutory language on how to manage and oversee public moneys.

s, wages, and any other of the district to any financial accounts in such financial or contractors' accounts in any as the definition in RCW



The background of the slide is a composite image with a blue tint. On the left, a close-up of a calculator's keypad shows buttons for numbers 1 through 9, 0, and mathematical symbols like '+', '-', 'x', and '/'. A silver pen lies diagonally across the center. On the right, a stack of US coins, including quarters and dimes, is visible. In the background, there is a faint image of a document with a line graph and some text.

State Auditor: Audits and provides guidance to public entities

District Treasurer: District staff accounting for district money day-to-day

District Auditor: Board member who oversees District Treasurer

Name of Book	Language	Date	Price
Spelling Lessons			
Hilop & Day		22-5-41	2 3 7 10
" "		11-6-41	2 3 7
" "		1-7-41	10
" "		29-7-41	10
Spell Speak and Write (Teachers)		16-10-41	3 7 7
Speech Training		1-11-41	3 13 3
A year course algebra		26-11-41	
Speech Training		8-12-41	10 9
Speak, Spell & Write		8-12-41	10 16 0
Modern Mathematics		11-12-41	4 7 1
		11-12-41	2 13 4
			24 5 5
First Aid		17-1-41	2 15 0
Practical Everyday Reading		24-1-41	5 7 9
Reading With Understanding		30-1-41	1 3 2
Practical First Aid		12-2-41	- 10 9
Practical Everyday Reading		- 2-41	
Garden of Great Times		1-4-41	1 1 8
Algebra		10-4-41	6 13 4
			14 17 1
Spell, Speak & Write		- - -	- 12-41

L. J. Smith  
9/7/42

- 7 = £1473-1-4      3/12/49

# Why cash accounting for conservation districts?

- Financial reports are more simple and easier to understand and use.
- Clear presentation of cash flows and available cash.
- Financial reporting is aligned with budgets.
- Financial reporting may be less costly.
- Less training required for staff.



# District board members need to:

- Provide direction on district financial priorities.
- Know who handles which role for financial tracking.
- Know funding sources, how they work and are used.
- Understand financial reports.
- Carefully consider financial debt.
- Make sure policies are up-to-date.

# District Auditor needs to:

- Be the board's primary oversight of the District Treasurer.
- Build a working relationship and clear understanding with District Treasurer.
- Have a basic grasp of financial management.
- Understand the do's and don'ts of what the State Auditor is looking for.

# District Auditor needs to:

Know what to look for if something seems “off”:

- Budget vs actual
- Income vs expenses
- Payments (e.g., unusual expenses)
- Future Liabilities (e.g., leave balances)
- Legal requirements (e.g., payroll expenses)



# For board meetings, the District Auditor needs to:

- Review and understand financial information provided by the District Treasurer for the board
- Make the motions for board actions on financial reports.
- Guidance at this link:  
[https://www.sao.wa.gov/bars\\_cash/accounting/expenditures/voucher-certification-and-approval/](https://www.sao.wa.gov/bars_cash/accounting/expenditures/voucher-certification-and-approval/)

# What to expect from your District Treasurer

- Partnership with district manager and auditor to help board understand district finances and processes
- Accurate, clear, and legal financial practices and reports
- A snapshot of where the district is at today
- Forecast for future cash flow

# Tools to help boards provide oversight to district finances

- State Auditor “Schedule 22 Internal Assessment Questionnaire”
- State Auditor Center for Government Innovation
- SCC Conservation Accountability and Performance Program (CAPP)
- CD Internal Audit



The background of the slide features a large, light gray gear with a wrench positioned diagonally across it. The gear is centered and occupies most of the frame. The wrench is positioned from the bottom right towards the center, with its handle extending towards the bottom right corner and its head pointing towards the center. The text is centered over the gear.

# **State Auditor's "Schedule 22 Internal Assessment Questionnaire"**

## The Center for Government Innovation

### EFFICIENCY TOOLBOX

Access the knowledge and resources to help your local government innovate and improve.



### Helping local governments help the people they serve

Formerly known as the Performance Center, we have resources to help local governments throughout Washington work better. We can help you solve problems, reduce cost and improve the value you provide. Whether you're tackling a specific question or simply want to improve operations, our team is available by phone, online or in person to offer assistance, programs and tools – at no additional charge.

#### Contact Us:

📞 360-725-5621

✉ [center@sao.wa.gov](mailto:center@sao.wa.gov)

[Sign up for Center news](#)

#### Get Financially Fit



Developed by the State Auditor's Office (SAO), the Financial Intelligence Tool is an award-winning interactive program that helps local government officials assess and monitor their finances.

[Financial Intelligence Tool »](#)

#### Learn to be Lean



Local governments across Washington are regularly asked to do more with less. SAO staff can help with programs designed to get you started, and build better, smarter and leaner operations.

[Find out more »](#)

#### Access Advice



Connect to a network of skilled government officials and experts all looking for ways to improve government. Online and in-person opportunities to better manage performance, finances, transparency and more.

[Find out more »](#)

### Funding

The tools, programs and support provided to local governments are supported by the funding created when Washington voters passed [Initiative 900](#) in 2005, authorizing SAO to undertake performance audits.

# State Auditor's Center for Government Innovation

- Financial Intelligence Tool (FIT)
- Getting “Lean”
- Help Desk




# **Conservation Accountability and Performance Program (CAPP)**





# **Internal Audits**

A group of approximately ten people are seated around a large, dark wooden conference table in a well-lit room. The room features four large, bright windows along the back wall, which provide natural light. The participants are engaged in a meeting, with some looking at documents or laptops. On the table, there are various items including water bottles, coffee cups, a bowl of fruit, and some food. A small television is visible on a stand in the background on the left. The overall atmosphere is professional and collaborative.

Conservation district board oversight paired with financial staff day-to-day management is the best formula for public accountability.





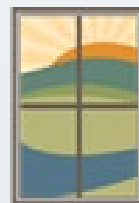
## More information

Contact your Conservation  
Commission Regional  
Manager:

[scc.wa.gov/regional-managers](http://scc.wa.gov/regional-managers)

Visit our website:

[scc.wa.gov](http://scc.wa.gov)



**CONSERVATION DISTRICTS  
OF WASHINGTON STATE**

*your window to healthy lands*





Washington State  
**Conservation  
Commission**