Codes for the Identification of Cities, Townships and Unorganized Territories (CTUs) in Minnesota

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Introduction:
This standard provides a set of codes that uniquely identify more than 2700 cities, townships and unorganized territories (CTUs) within the state of Minnesota. These codes originate from the U.S. Geographic Names Information System and are recognized as a formal federal standard.

Applicability:
Who cares about this standard?
This standard is important to all developers of public databases containing information about cities, townships and unorganized territories in Minnesota.

When do they apply? When do they not apply?
This standard has been developed to improve the exchange of public data about cities, townships and Census Bureau-defined unorganized territories. It is understood that some counties define unorganized territories differently than the Census Bureau. Such county-defined unorganized territories are not included within the scope of this standard. Use of this standard is *mandatory* when both of the following two conditions exist:
• a state agency is transferring data to an external requestor, AND
• no other previously-agreed-to coding scheme for CTUs has been designated.

Use of this standard is recommended when local governments exchange data, or when any new public databases are being designed that must incorporate a coding scheme for these CTUs. Use of this standard by local government, the private sector and the public in general is strongly encouraged, but voluntary. This standard applies to data that are being transferred, and does not attempt to restrict how those data are internally stored or used.

Purpose of this Standard:
The purpose of this standard is to provide a single, common coding scheme to identify all cities, townships and Census Bureau-defined unorganized territories in Minnesota. It is intended to be used primarily when data are being transferred between a state agency and some external customer. Its use will improve the shareability of data resources by avoiding unnecessary duplication and reducing incompatibilities in collecting, processing and disseminating data.

Standard Requirements:
The city, township and unorganized territory identification codes that make up this standard comprise a subset of the federal Geographic Names Information System (GNIS). The GNIS is maintained by the U.S. Board on Geographic Names, U.S. Geological Survey, Department of the Interior; http://geonames.usgs.gov/. These GNIS feature identifier codes are also American National Standards Institute standards (ANSI INCITS 446-2008); http://webstore.ansi.org/

GNIS contains a nationally unique six to eight digit Feature ID code for each city, township and Census Bureau-defined unorganized territory in Minnesota and the nation. Within GNIS, cities and townships fall within the "civil" class of features. Census Bureau-defined unorganized territories fall within the "Census" class of features.

GNIS implements these codes as integers (e.g. City of Saint Cloud = 2396483). The U.S. Census Bureau implements the codes as eight character text codes with leading zeros included (e.g. City of Saint Cloud = 02396483). Each format may be useful for different purposes. Because both formats are so prominently used at the federal level, both of these formats are considered to be in compliance with this Minnesota state standard. The text-with-leading-zeros format is recommended for most purposes.

GNIS Feature ID codes are unique nationwide. However, at times a state or county code will be used in conjunction with these codes. This is typically done to identify the portions of a city that are split by multiple counties. In such a case, two existing State of Minnesota data standards are of use:

1. *Codes for the Identification of the States, and the District of Columbia*
   http://www.state.mn.us/portal/mn/jsp/content.do?programid=536911234&id=-536891917&agency=OETweb

2. *Numeric Codes for the Identification of Counties in Minnesota*
   http://www.state.mn.us/portal/mn/jsp/content.do?programid=536911234&id=-536891917&agency=OETweb

Used together, these three codes provide a unique identifier for all portions of cities that cross county boundaries (termed *Minor Civil Divisions* by the U.S. Census Bureau) For example, the City of Saint Cloud falls within the Counties of Benton, Sherburne and Stearns:

State Code	County Code	GNIS Feature ID Code for Saint Cloud	Composite Code
27	009	02396483	2700902396483
27	141	02396483	2714102396483
27	145	02396483	2714502396483

Therefore, the Census unique identifier for that portion of St. Cloud within Benton County is 2700902396483.

Examples of GNIS feature identifier codes for CTUs are listed below. A complete list with a crosswalk to legacy Census codes can be found at www.mngeo.state.mn.us/CTU

CTU Identifier Code		CTU Name	CTU Type
GNIS Feature ID Text Format	GNIS Feature ID Integer Format		
02394789	2394789	Forest Lake	City
00664194	664194	Forest Lake Township (historical)	Township
00664196	664196	Forest Prairie Township	Township
00664197	664197	Forestville Township	Township
02394797	2394797	Fort Ripley	City
00664201	664201	Fort Ripley Township	Township
00664202	664202	Fort Snelling (unorganized territory)	Unorganized Territory

Compliance:
What constitutes compliance?
In cases where a state agency's databases include information about cities, townships and/or Census-defined unorganized territories, that agency must be capable of incorporating CTU identifier codes in a form consistent with this standard (in either GNIS Feature ID text or integer format) for the purpose of exchanging data between organizations. Agencies may continue to structure and store data using alternate coding schemes as they see fit, provided the capability

exists to readily output a format that complies with this standard if requested to do so by a data sharing partner. It is recommended that agencies integrate this standard into new database designs whenever possible.

How will compliance be measured?
Evidence of compliance will be determined based on reports of satisfactory data transfers from receiving customers.

References and Sources of More Information:

Further information about this standard may be obtained from the Land Management Information Center (LMIC), 658 Cedar Street, Room 300, St. Paul, MN 55155; phone: 651-201-2499; fax: 651-296-3698; e-mail: clearing.house@state.mn.us

The Metropolitan Council distributes a CTU code crosswalk table for the seven county Twin Cities metropolitan area. The table includes many attributes related to CTUs including coding schemes currently or historically used by other organizations.
http://www.datafinder.org/metadata/county_ctu_lut.htm

The U.S. Department of Interior, United States Geological Survey maintains the Geographic Names Information System, which includes codes for a wide variety of geographic features.
http://geonames.usgs.gov/