Minnesota Geospatial Advisory Council

CTU ID Standard

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About the GAC

The mission of the Minnesota Geospatial Advisory Council (GAC) is to act as a coordinating body for the Minnesota geospatial community. The GAC is authorized by legislation passed in 2009 and reauthorized in 2014 Minnesota Statutes (16E.30, subd. 8). It represents a cross-section of organizations that include city, county, regional, state, federal and tribal governments as well as education, business and nonprofit sectors.

As part of this mission, the GAC works with the Minnesota geospatial community to define and adopt standards needed by the community. GAC standards are developed and proposed by geospatial community subject matter experts. The GAC's Standards Committee administers a process to ensure community-wide public review and input for any proposed standards.

The GAC does not mandate or enforce standards. It offers the standards as a resource to the community. Organizations may choose to adopt the standards and require their use internally.

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 (GNIS) and are recognized as a formal federal standard.

A note about unorganized territories: GNIS includes unorganized territories as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. Many counties in Minnesota do not recognize or use the unorganized territory boundaries and names defined by the Census Bureau and may create their own divisions and names for unorganized territories. Such county-defined unorganized territories are not included within the scope of this standard, unless they become included within GNIS.

Purpose of this Standard

This standard has been developed to improve the exchange of data about cities, townships and Census Bureau-defined unorganized territories. It provides a single, common coding scheme to identify all cities, townships and Census Bureau-defined unorganized territories in Minnesota. It is intended to be used when data are being transferred between organizations. Its use will improve the sharing of data resources by avoiding unnecessary duplication and incompatibilities when collecting, processing and disseminating data.

Applicability

Use of this standard is recommended when organizations exchange data, or when any new databases are being designed that incorporate a coding scheme for Minnesota cities, townships and/or unorganized territories. Use of this standard 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. Specific organizations within the state may choose to adopt this standard and require compliance with it. For example, it has been adopted as an official state government data standard.

Sources of this Standard

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 as well as the U.S. Census Bureau. These GNIS feature identifier codes are also American National Standards Institute standards (ANSI INCITS 446:2008).

GNIS contains a nationally unique six to eight-digit feature identifier 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.

A complete list of GNIS feature identifier codes for CTUs in Minnesota with a crosswalk to legacy Census codes can be found at: http://www.mngeo.state.mn.us/CTU/.

Compliance Notes

A dataset that complies with this standard will include either the text or integer format of the GNIS code for cities, townships and unorganized territories in accordance with the data specifications defined below in this standard.

Inclusion

Fields listed as optional are not required. Fields listed as conditional are mandatory if a certain condition exists. In this standard, either the CTU ID Text code or the CTU ID Integer code must be used to comply with the standard. If one code is used in a dataset, then the other code is optional.

Standard Requirements

GNIS contains a nationally unique six- to eight-digit feature identifier 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.

A complete list of GNIS feature identifier codes for CTUs in Minnesota with a crosswalk to legacy Census codes can be found at: http://www.mngeo.state.mn.us/CTU/.

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 formats are considered to be in compliance with this Minnesota Geospatial Advisory Council standard. The text-with-leading-zeros format is recommended for most purposes.

GNIS Feature ID codes are unique nationwide. However, at times a 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, the Minnesota Geospatial Advisory Council County ID Standard is useful.

Commented [mjk1]: Link to new location of standard once approved and moved.

Used together, these two 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. Therefore, the Census unique identifier for that portion of St. Cloud within Benton County is 2700902396483. See the table below:

County Code	GNIS Feature ID Code for St Cloud	Composite Code
27009	02396483	2700902396483
27141	02396483	2714102396483
27145	02396483	2714502396483

Examples of GNIS feature identifier codes for CTUs

GNIS ID (Text Format)	GNIS ID (Integer Format)	CTU Name	CTU Type
02394789	2394789	Forest Lake	City
00664194	664194	Forest Lake Township (historical)	Township

02394790	2394790	Foreston	City
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
02394799	2394799	Fosston	City
00664204	664204	Fossum Township	Township

Data Element Details

1.1 CTU ID Text

Database Name	No database name is specified in this standard. CTU_ID_TXT is commonly used.		
Data Type	Text	**Inclusion**	Conditional
Width	8	**Domain**	CTUIDText
Examples	02394789, 00664194		
Description	The GNIS feature identifier code in 8-character text format with leading zeros. Either the CTU ID Text code or the CTU ID Integer code must be used to comply with this standard.		

1.2 CTU ID Integer

Database Name	No database name is specified in this standard. CTU_ID_INT is commonly used.		
Data Type	Integer	**Inclusion**	Conditional
Width	Long	**Domain**	
Examples	2394789, 664194		
Description	The GNIS feature identifier code in integer format. Either the CTU ID Text code or the CTU ID Integer code must be used to comply with this standard.		

1.3 CTU Name

Database Name	No database name is specified in this standard. CTU_NAME is commonly used.		
Data Type	Text	**Inclusion**	Optional
Width	100	**Domain**	CTUName
Examples	Bloomington, Lake View Township, Rushford		
Description	The name of the city, township, or unorganized territory		