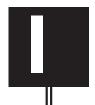


Manual for Preparing the Form 571-L

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Overview for Filing a 571-L Business Property Statement

I. Overview for Filing a 571-L Business Property Statement

Purpose

This user-friendly reference guide will review the requirements, answer questions and provide a step by step guide for filing Business Property Statements. The guide is divided into five sections – an overview of Business/Personal Property, the steps for filing a 571-L paper document, the steps for filing a 571-L electronically, our contact information, and an appendix with samples of various forms. Our contact information will help you reach us with any follow-up questions or concerns that you may have.

Why is personal property taxed?

The California Constitution states that "all property is taxable (assessable) unless exempt by the Constitution or statutes." This taxable property may be defined as real property and personal property. However, for purposes of this manual and the filing of 571-L Business Property Statement, our focus will be on business/personal property.

What is business personal property?

Business Personal Property is tangible property that may be seen, weighed, measured, felt, touched or which is in any manner noticeable to the senses except real property.

Examples of business property that would be assessed as personal property would include but is not limited to:

- Operating Supplies
- Machinery & Equipment
- Office Furniture
- Copiers & Fax Machines
- Telephones
- Computers
- Restaurant Equipment
- Cameras
- Printing equipment
- Leasehold Fixtures
- Leasehold Structures (Tenant Improvements)

In essence, Business Personal Property is all property used in the course of doing business that is not exempt.

What business personal property is exempt?

Personal Property is and can be exempt by reason of its ownership, use and/or type.

Types of property that are exempt:

- Business Inventories held for sale or lease
- DMV licensed vehicles
- Application software (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.)
- Fire suppression systems
- Solar panels

Equipment owned by banks and financial institutions and insurance companies are exempt by **ownership** while churches, public libraries and schools are exempt by **use**.

Who is required to file the 571-L?

Basically, anyone who is sent a property statement by the Assessor's Office is required to file the Business Property Statement. However, businesses with over \$100,000 in business/personal property and fixtures are required to file the Business Property Statement even if the statement was not sent to them. A blank statement can be downloaded from our website www.smcacre.org under the Business Services section. If you happen to download a statement from our website, we request that you call our office at 650.363.4501 and ask for a business account number if one has not already been assigned to you. Each business is assigned an account number that relates to their business information and assessment information.

What is the "lien date"?

The lien date is January 1st, 12:01 a.m. every year. All business personal property costs are to be reported or declared as of that date. Since the lien date is 12:01 a.m. you will report all personal property in your possession as of December 31st of the previous calendar year. If the lien date is January 1, 2010, then you would report all personal property in your possession as of December 31, 2009.

When are the filing deadlines?

All property statements are due on April 1st annually. The statements are accepted as timely filed until May 7th at 5:00 p.m. When mailed through the post office the forms are required to be postmarked May 7th. If May 7th happens to fall on a weekend or holiday, then the deadline becomes the next business day. For your protection it is helpful to get a postage paid receipt for the statements mailed on the deadline day or close to that day. This will help eliminate the possibility of receiving a late filing penalty, because you will have proof of the date it was mailed. For statements filed electronically, the May 7th deadline also applies.

What if I file after May 7th?

May 7th is the last day to file without incurring a penalty. Section 463 of the Revenue and Taxation Code states "that any person who is required by law or is requested by the assessor to make an annual property statement fails to file the property statement within the time limit specified, will be subject to a penalty of **10% of the assessed value of the personal property.**"

When is my bill due?

Your tax bill should be received by the end of July. The payment is due on August 31st at 5 p.m. Payments received after the due date will be subject to interest and penalties. Although, the assessment is the responsibility of the Assessor, the tax bills are the responsibility of the Tax Collector's Office. The Assessor's Office can handle any questions related to how your bill was determined. Questions related to billing and payment of bills should be directed to the Tax Collector's Office.

The Tax Collector's phone number is 650.363.4142 and the website is: www.sanmateocountytaxcollector.org.

What if I do not file at all?

The penalty for not filing the business property statement is also 10% of the assessed value. However, the assessor is also allowed by law to estimate the value of the property based on the information in his possession. This generally is based on the prior year's filing or a site inspection of the business at the physical location.

What if I closed my business?

If your business closed prior to the January 1st, lien date, then you would not be responsible for property taxes. However, if you were sent the form, a Business Change Form is attached (see Appendix 3). Please fill out the business change form and return it with the form you were mailed. Your account will be inactivated if you are no longer doing business in San Mateo County. If your business closed after January 1st, then you will still be responsible for filing the Business Property Statement and will be assessed property taxes. The Assessor's Office does not prorate property taxes. You will not be sent a statement for the next filing season, if you inform the Assessor's Office that your business closed.

Is this form subject to audit?

Yes, the Business Property Statement is subject to audit by the Assessor's Office. A new law was enacted that became effective January 1, 2009. This law basically gives the Assessor the discretion to audit a significant number of all businesses to encourage the accurate and proper reporting of personal property.

How do I get the details of my assessment?

If you would like the details of your assessment, simply request it. You can attach a note to your Business Property Statement or call the office at 650.363.4501 to obtain the details of how your assessment was calculated. We will mail you the calculations by July 15th.

What if I don't agree with my assessment?

If you disagree with the assessment that the Assessor has determined on your personal property assessment you have a right to an informal review with the Assessor's Office to see if it can be resolved. If you and the Auditor-Appraiser cannot come to an agreement, you have the right to an appeals hearing. An application for Assessment Appeals may be requested from the Assessment Appeals Board Clerk at 650.363.4573 or by downloading the form from their website at: www.co.sanmateo.ca.us/AssessmentAppeals. Please see the sample form under Appendix 2.

What information is needed?

The most useful item to aid in completing the form is an accurate and up to date asset listing. This list should include:

- The date of acquisition of the equipment
- The total cost (purchase price plus sales tax, freight and installation charges)
- Location of the equipment if you have multiple locations
- Disposal dates of equipment removed

Other records that could be helpful in completing the Business Property Statement are the California State Tax Depreciation Schedule-Form 4562, General Ledger, Balance Sheet and Income Statement. Some business owners may have purchased an existing business. The information needed in that situation would be the purchase agreement or the escrow papers that would show the breakdown of the equipment, fixtures and leasehold improvements acquired through the purchase of the business.

Confidentiality

The Business Property Statement is not a public document. Therefore, the information declared on the form will be held in confidence by the assessor.



Filing a 571-L Paper Document

II. FILING A 571-L PAPER DOCUMENT

Instructions for filing the 571-L

Owner name and DBA name (page 1)

Please make sure that the information regarding the Owner Name and DBA name are correct on the form. If the assessor's information is not up to date on the pre-printed form, please line through the incorrect information and write the correct information on the form.

Property location and mailing address (page 1)

It is important that this information is kept up to date with our office. The property location is the address of the business. The mailing address is the address you would like to have the Business Property Statement mailed. It is our office policy not to mail statements to the agent's addresses. However, if you are a sole proprietor and would like to have the forms mailed to your home or Post Office Box, that is perfectly acceptable. If the mailing address changes, please contact our office immediately to update the information.

PART I. General information (a) thru (g) (page 1)

All the information requested under this section of the Business Property Statement is vital to the Assessor's Office in keeping accurate records of your business as well as arriving at the correct assessment. Although, the email address is optional, it would be helpful information to assist us in contacting your business.

PART II. Declaration of property belonging to you (page 1)

This section of the Business Property Statement is where you declare the equipment that belongs to you and the equipment that you may be leasing to others. For most small businesses you will only need to fill out numbers 1, 2 and 4 of Part II of the Business Property Statement.

1. Supplies (Page 1)

Supplies are those items that are used up in the ordinary course of business and are not intended for sale or lease. The reportable supplies are those supplies on hand as of the January 1st lien date. Types of supplies could include stationary and office supplies, janitorial supplies, chemical supplies and computer supplies. Your business may be small enough to estimate the amount of supplies. If your business maintains an Income Statement, you would use the year end balances as of 12/31 of the previous calendar year and take the average of the 12 months. For example, you would take the Office Supplies year end total of \$12,000/12 months = \$1,000 worth supplies to be reported on page 1 of the form.

SCHEDULE A - COST DETAIL, EQUIPMENT (Page 1)

Everything reported under Schedule A of the form relates to Part II, No. 2, Equipment on page 1 of the Business Property Statement. Include expensed equipment and fully depreciated equipment on this Schedule. Also, include sales or use tax, freight and installation costs. Equipment should be reported by each calendar year of acquisition. To calculate this, add the totals of all equipment acquired in any specific year. Do not report equipment that has been removed from the site or disposed of. The disposals should be deducted from the year the equipment was originally acquired. Please do not report negative numbers or cents. Each cost should be rounded to the nearest dollar.

The equipment reported on this schedule is divided into **five categories**:

- 1. Machinery and Equipment for Industry, Profession or Trade
- 2. Office Furniture and Equipment
- 3. Other Equipment
- 4. Tools, Molds, Dies and Jigs
- 5. (a). Personal Computers (PC's)
- 5. (b). Local Area Network (LAN) Equipment and Mainframes

Machinery and Equipment for Industry, Profession, or Trade (Page 2)

The equipment reported in this category would include equipment specific to your trade or business. If your business is a restaurant, then the type of equipment you would report is restaurant equipment. This might include refrigerators, stoves, freezers and various other pieces of equipment related to the restaurant industry. This is why it is important to list the type of business under (a) in the general information section of the form. This will assist the assessor in determining the life of the equipment.

2. Office Furniture and Equipment (Page 2)

This category consists of furniture and office equipment.

3. Other Equipment (Page 2)

This category includes the special types of equipment that does not fit into any of the other categories. This section of the form asks you to describe the type of equipment that you report. Some types of the equipment that would fit into this category are: telephones, lab equipment, exercise equipment, fax machines, copiers, unlicensed vehicles and point of sale equipment.

4. Tools, Molds, Dies and Jigs (Page 2)

This category would include tools, molds, dies and jigs.

5 (a). Computers - Personal Computers (PC's) (page 2)

This category mainly includes: desktops, laptops, inkjet printers, laser printers, docking stations, mini towers, monitors, notebooks, netbooks, power supplies, scanners, and workstations. **Application software should not be reported.**However, the operational software should be reported. Any computers used in any application directly related to manufacturing, or that is used to control or monitor machinery and equipment should be reported in Column 1 and **should not be reported in this section**.

5 (b). Local Area Network (LAN) Equipment and Mainframes (Page 2)

This category includes: External storage devices, hubs, mainframes, network attached storage devices, routers, servers, switches and LAN components. **Do not include multi-function printers in this category; they should be reported as "other equipment".** Application Software should not be reported.

Schedule B – Cost Detail, Leasehold Improvements (Page 3)

Most small business owners would only have information for columns 1 and 2 of Schedule B. This is the section of Leasehold Improvements. It is divided into the two types of leasehold improvements, structures and fixtures.

1. Structure Items Only (Page 3)

Improvements are classified as **structures** when its primary use is for housing or accommodation of personnel, personal property or fixtures and has no direct application to the process or function of the business.

Examples: Store fronts, sprinkler systems, and permanent partitions (floor to ceiling).

2. Fixtures Only (Page 3)

Improvements are classified as **fixtures** if its intended use or purpose directly applies to or enhances the process or function of the business.

Examples: Signs (free-standing), Refrigeration systems (not part of the building), conveyors, partitions (not floor to ceiling) and boilers.

571-D. SUPPLEMENTAL SCHEDULE FOR REPORTING ACQUISITIONS AND DISPOSALS OF PROPERTY REPORTED ON SCHEDULE B (Page 4)

This form is where you report all acquisitions or disposals from Schedule B, columns 1, 2, 3 or 4. For all practical purposes, you will only be dealing with columns 1 and 2. The form is divided into two sections. The first section is for **Additions**, and the second section is for **Disposals**. The form has space for the details of both situations.

PART III. Leased property – Property Belonging to Others (Page 1)

This section of the form is where you list information on the equipment that is being leased from other companies. All the information requested is necessary to insure the equipment is assessed correctly. It is important to list the lessor's name and mailing address. Indicate the year the lease started as well as the year of manufacture of the equipment. A description of the equipment and the cost indicated on the lease to purchase the equipment must be reported. The lease identification number and the annual rent are also requested. Please do not report conditional sales contracts in this section, report them on Schedule A.

Conditional sales contracts or financing leases (agreements) are purchases rather than true leases; therefore, the tax responsibility is to the lessee (business owner). These agreements are often represented by a \$1 buyout cost in the contract.

SIGNATURE REQUIREMENTS (Page 1)

The law requires that the Business Property Statement, regardless of where it is executed, shall be declared to be true under the penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California. The Business Property Statement must be signed by the **business owner**, a duly appointed fiduciary, or a person authorized on behalf of the owner. In the case of a **corporation**, the Business Property Statement must be signed by an officer or by an employee or agent who has been designated in writing by the board of directors, by name or by title, to sign on behalf of the corporation. In the case of a partnership, the Business Property Statement must be signed by a partner or an authorized employee or agent. In the case of a Limited Liability Company (LLC), the Business Property Statement must be signed by an LLC manager, or by a member where there is no manager, or by an employee or agent designated by the LLC manager. If the Business Property Statement is signed by someone other than a member of the bar, certified public accountant, a public accountant, and enrolled agent or a duly appointed fiduciary, the San Mateo County Assessor's office requires a written authorization. An authorization form can be downloaded from our website www.smcacre.org. Please see Appendix 3 for a sample of the form.

A property statement that is not signed and executed in accordance with the above instructions is considered an invalid filing. The penalty imposed by Section 463 of the Revenue and Taxation Code for failure to file or late filing is applicable to an unsigned property statement.

What if I filed the statement incorrectly?

If you discovered that you made an error in reporting your Business Property Statement, you have until May 31st to submit an amended return. Make a copy of the original statement and make the changes necessary. Please identify on the return that it is an "Amended Return" so that the corrections can be made.



Filing a 571-L Electronically

Letter regarding Business Identification Number



555 County Center Redwood City, CA 94063-1665 **phone** 650.363.4501 **fax** 650.599.7456 email ppdutyauditor@smcare.org web www.smcare.org

Owner Name Company «MAIL1» «MAIL2» «MAII 3» «MAIL4»

Account Number: 0123450001 Business ID (BIN): 41 123456 18 Situs



Notice to File Your 2018 Business Property Statement

California State Law Requires business owners to file a Property Statement with the Assessor annually for every location within the county (R&T Code, Section 441(a)).

Small business filers can e-file Business Property Statements online quickly and easily using the new e-SDR system. The e-SDR system is a new component of the SDR network that was launched in 2005 for large business filers. The benefits and convenience of e-file are now available to businesses of all sizes.

Small business filers with one or a few locations are guided by e-SDR to file Forms 571-L, 571-R, 571-A & F. Each statement is completed one at a time by answering questions and filling in the blanks. The system does all the calculations for you, and you can save a statement and come back later to complete it. You will get a confirmation number with a time stamp when the statement is submitted. No new software is needed. Please do not mail a copy of the form.

Large business filers with multiple locations in one or more counties should use the SDR network to submit statements (data files), all in one upload. Programming or special software is required to create SDR data files in the approved XML schema. SDR users are required to register online at www.calbpsfile.org. To request a copy of the XML schema, print and submit a Schema Request Form from the Links menu on the homepage.

Filing instructions, help screens and reference materials are provided on SDR and e-SDR. Filers using e-SDR can print a completed Form 571 with schedules, filing confirmation and the exact time it was submitted. Statements are stored online for seven (7) years, so you can get a copy whenever you need one. Access to your statement(s) is protected with Account Number and Business ID Number (BIN) for e-SDR users, and Login ID and Password for SDR users. Statements are encrypted and transmitted on a secured site to protect confidential information.

> All businesses are encouraged to file electronically. Thank you for your cooperation and participation. Start filing e-SDR.

Go online to www.calbpsfile.org and enter your Account Number and Business ID Number (BIN) printed below and start filing e-SDR.

Account Number 0123450001

Business ID (BIN) 41 123456 18

IMPORTANT: KEEP THIS NOTICE IN A SAFE PLACE. This Account Number and BIN provides secure access to your statement, guards your confidential information and protects your privacy. The BIN number is changed annually for security purposes.

2018 STATEMENT DUE DATE AND LATE FILING (PENALTY) DATE

April 2nd... Business Property Statements Are Due
May 7th... Last Day before 10% Penalty is Applied to Late Filed Statements If May 7th falls on a weekend, a legal holiday, or a day the County Assessor's Office is closed, the

filing deadline is extended to the close of the next regular business day.

Filing deadlines are established in Revenue and Taxation Code Sections 441(b) and 463, and apply to hardcopy, SDR and e-SDR filings. Please file on time to avoid a late filing penalty. The law does not extend the filing period past May 7th If you prefer. to file by paper you can download a property statement from our website at www.smcare.org, and click on the Business Services tab. If you would like a property statement mailed to you, please email us at PPDutyAuditor@smcare.org or call us at 650.363.4501.

If you have any questions, please call 650.363.4501 and our staff will be glad to assist you.

Sincerely.

Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder & Chief Elections Officer

A002-7218 (R 11/10)

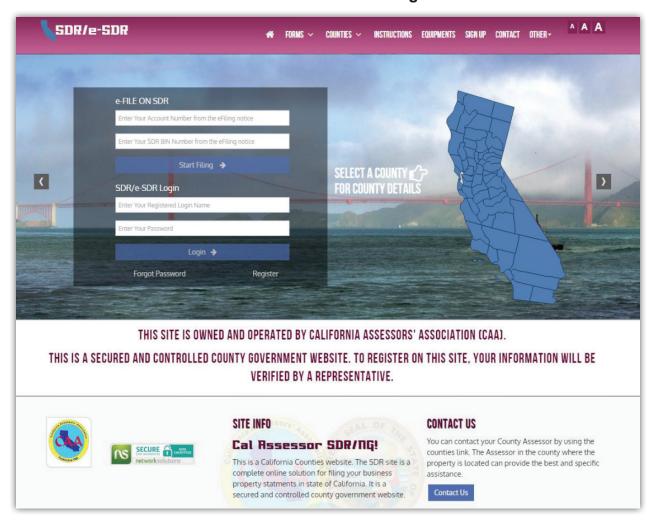
III. FILING A 571-L ELECTRONICALLY

Log into System

This is the SDR website for eFiling, www.calbpsfile.org.

Enter account number in the blank box under 'e-File ON SDR'.

Enter BIN in the blank box below it. Click 'Start Filing'.

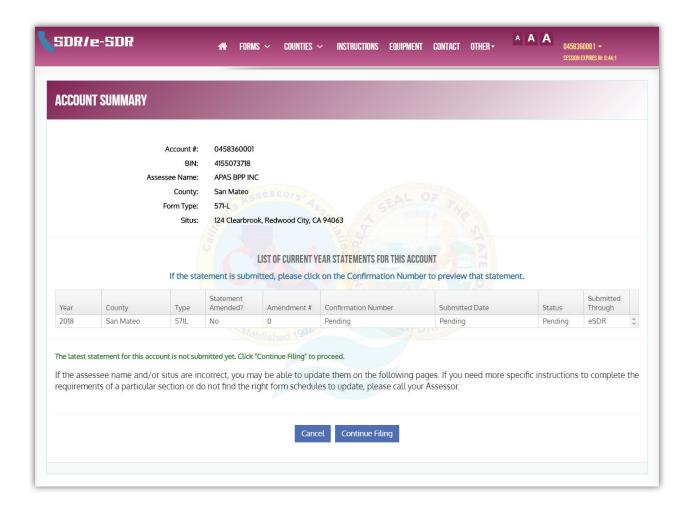


Account Summary

The company information will be shown. Click 'Start Filing'.

Note: Prior ESDR filings will be listed below the 'Cancel' and 'Start Filing' buttons.

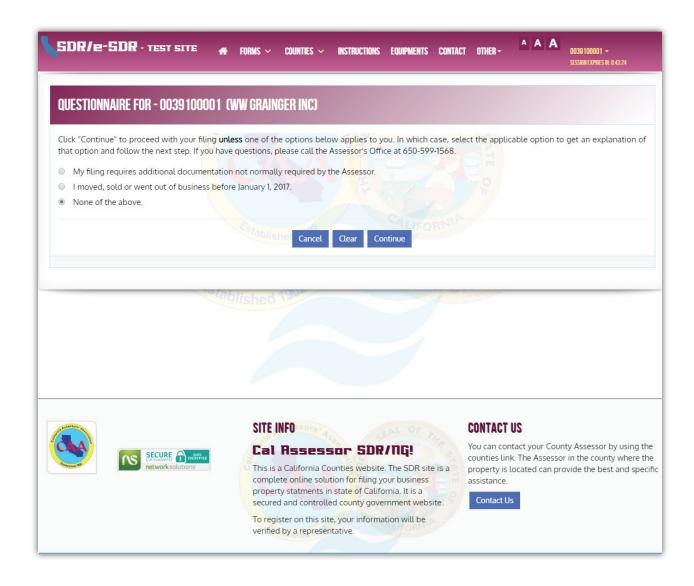
To re-download a statement click on the confirmation number.



Questionnaire

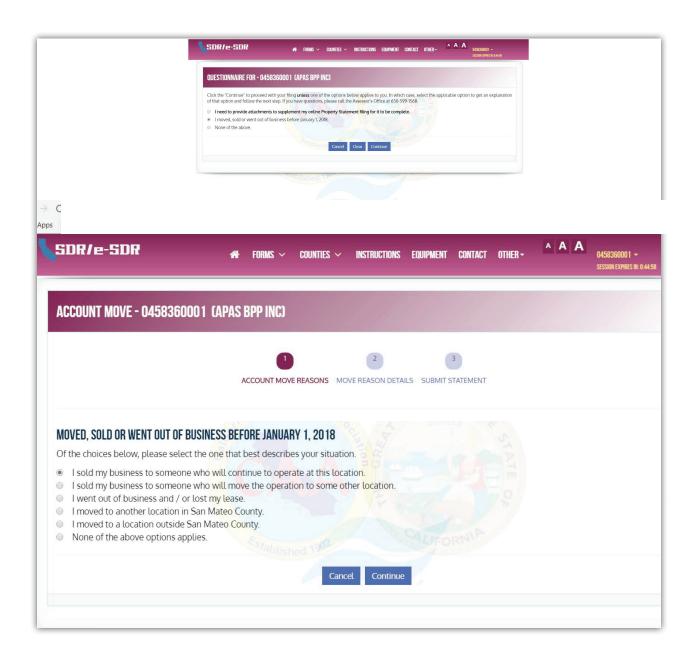
Click 'Continue' to start filing if the options do not apply.

*continue to Assessee Name and Situs Information page



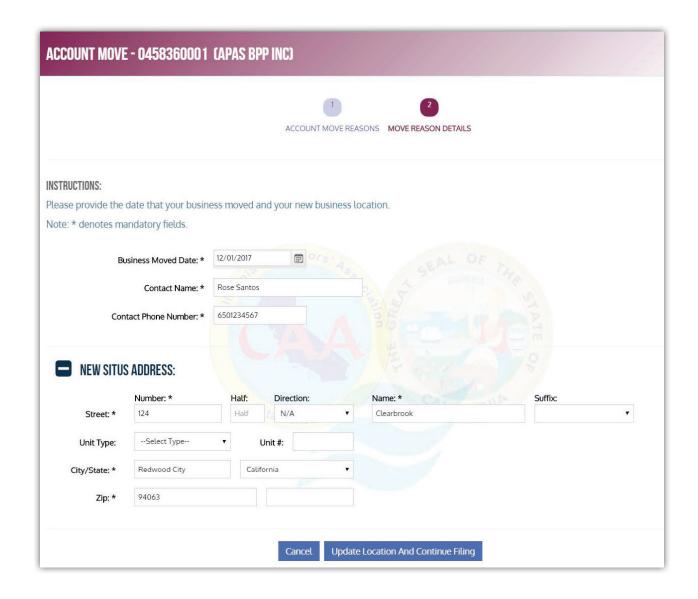
Questionnaire

To Make changes to account information, choose 'I moved, sold or went out of business before January 1st, 2018.' and click 'Continue'.



Account Move

If 'I moved to a location in San Mateo County' was selected, enter new information and click 'Update Location and Continue Filing'.



Assessee Name and Situs Information

This section is where you enter DBA, correct mailing address information and enter contact information. Fields with an asterisk must be completed. Click on 'Continue' if you wish to go to the next section. Click 'Save' if you want to save your entries and exit. By clicking 'Save' you can come back and complete the statement at a later date. The business owner can make specific notes for this section by clicking on 'Notes'. The 'Notes' button appears on most pages, allowing the user to make notes for that particular section. The business owner can also go directly to a specific section by clicking on one of the links at the bottom of the page.

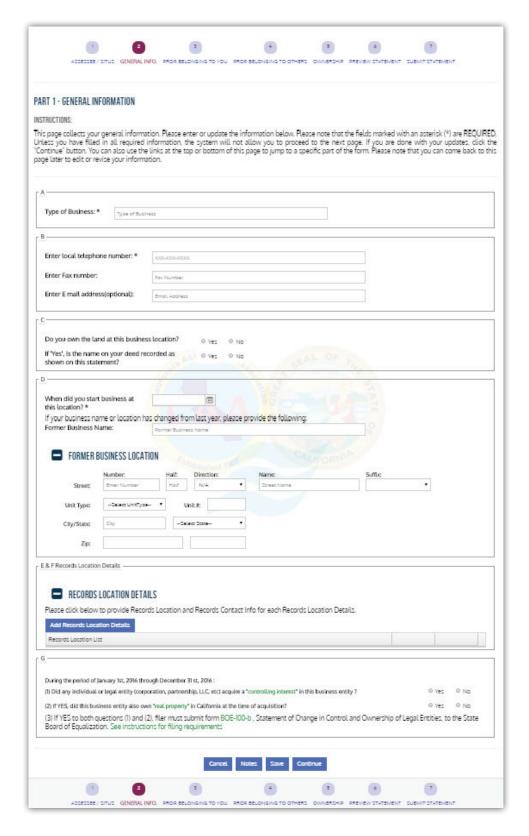
Note: If the mailing address is a PO Box, the user will have to delete the entry in the Street Name field and re-enter the box number in the PO Box field.



Part I

General Information is entered here. Fields with and asterisk must be completed.

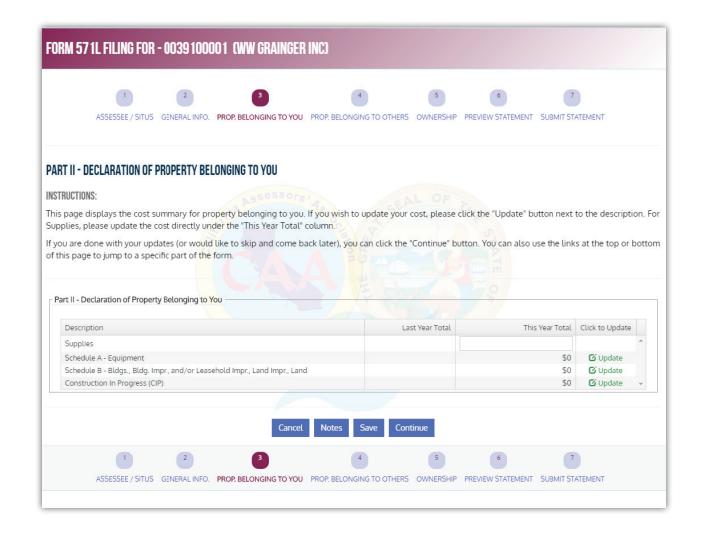
Like the prior screen, you can 'Save', add 'Notes', or 'Continue' to the next screen.



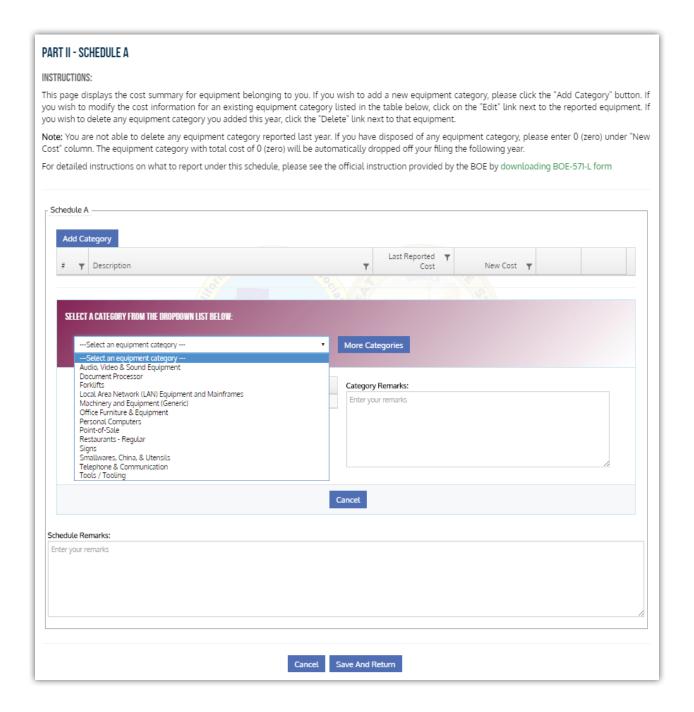
Part II – Declaration of Property Belonging to You (summary screen)

Enter the supply cost in the blank box across.

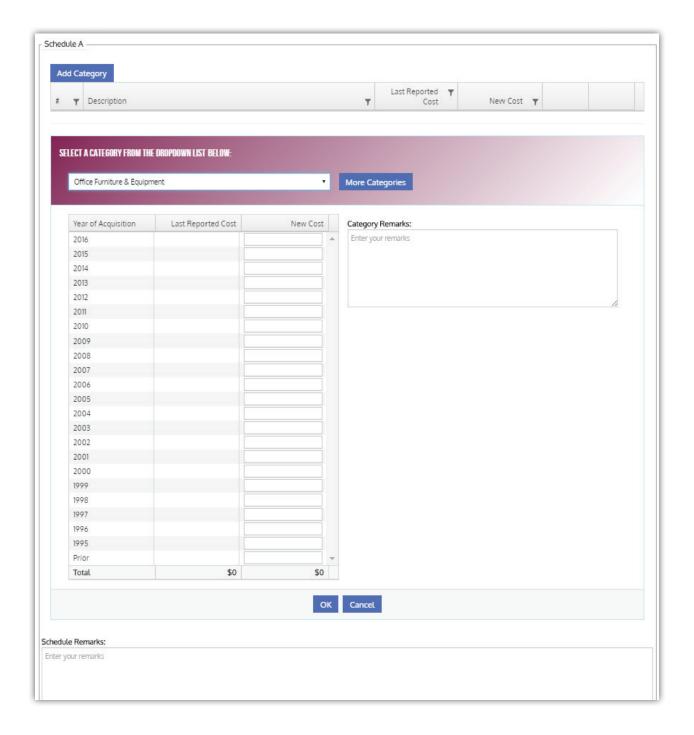
Click the green '**Update**' icon next to the category to be completed.



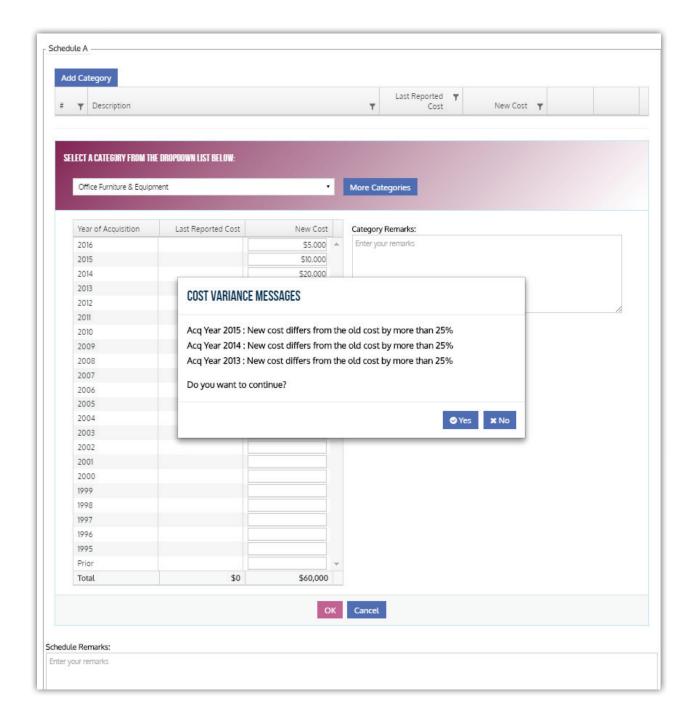
If you clicked the green '**Update**' icon in schedule A, click '**Add Category**'. From the drop down list, '**Select an equipment category**', click on the category to add and the years will appear. Only items listed in the menu can be used.



After the category has been selected, enter costs on appropriate line. Click 'OK' when finished.



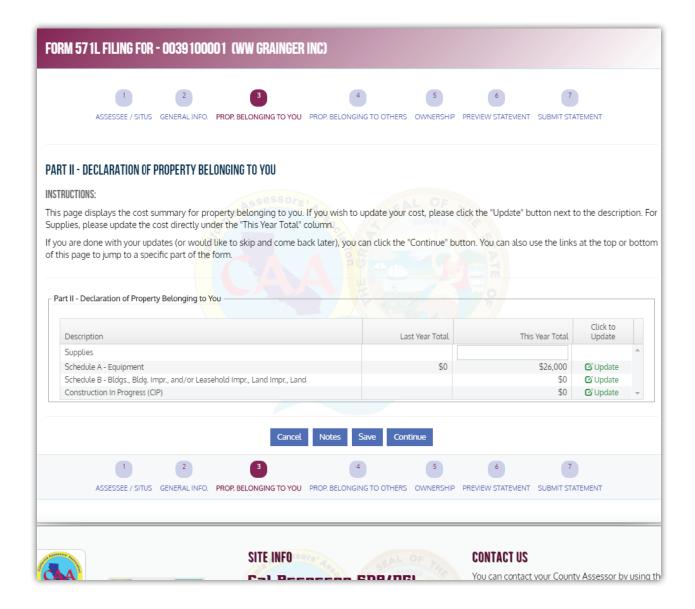
If changes are correct, click '**OK**' to continue. Continue adding categories until Schedule A is complete. The last step would be clicking '**Save And Return**'.



The business owner can see a summary of all **Schedule A** categories. You can add more categories and '**Edit**' an existing category. If everything is okay, click '**Save And Return**'. This will bring you back to the Part II summary screen.



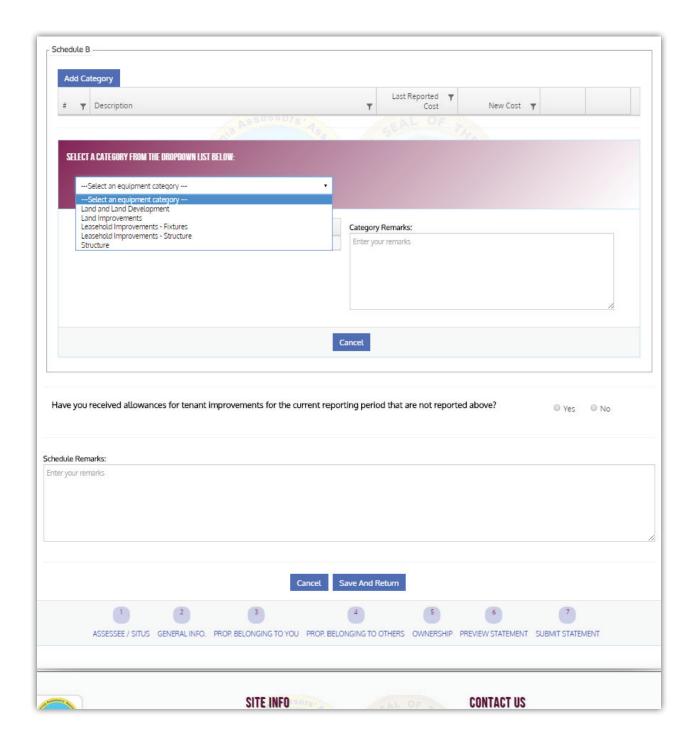
Select the next group to enter by clicking the associated 'Update' button. OR Click 'Save' and then 'Continue' when done.



A **Schedule B** summary screen, similar to the **Schedule A** screen will appear. Click '**Add Category**' to make a selection.



Again, select from the list of categories. Complete the schedule with costs per year. When done, click on 'Save And Return'.



Select the next group to enter by pressing the associated '**Update**' button.

(note: Schedule D appears if Schedule B is completed)

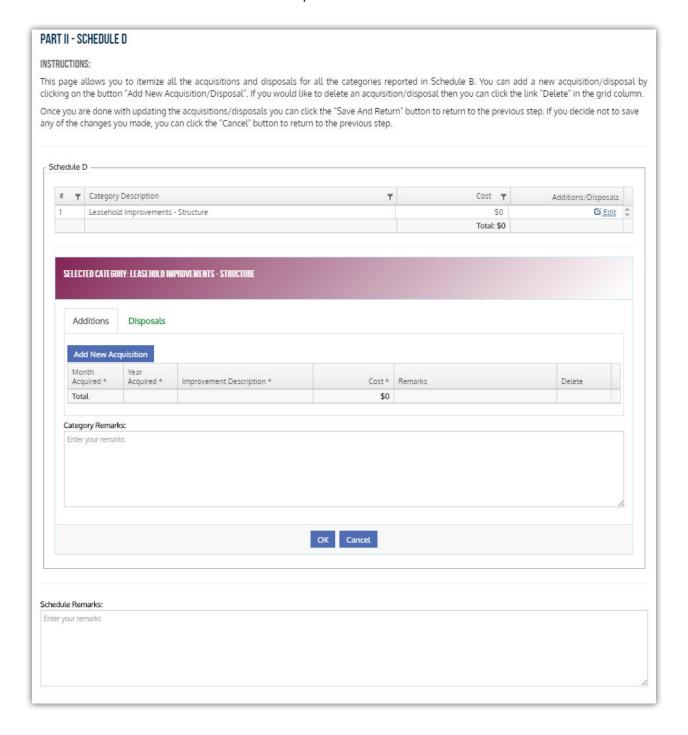
Click 'Save' and then 'Continue' when done.



Schedule D - Click 'Edit' for appropriate category.

Click 'Add New Acquisition' in the *Additions* tab. Click 'Add New Disposal' in the *Disposals* tab. Enter information on Schedule D from Schedule B.

Fields with an asterisk must be completed. Click '**Ok**' when done.



Part III - Property Belonging to Others

This is where leasing/vending equipment is entered. Click 'Add Lease Property', fields with an asterisk must be completed. Additional entries can be made by clicking 'Add Lease Property' again.

Click 'Save' and then 'Continue' when done.



Ownership Type and Business Description

After entering Ownership Type Info, the Name of Legal Entity box appears. Enter name (usually the owner name).

When done, click 'Save' and then 'Continue' to Preview Statement.



Click 'Preview Statement' to preview and a Preview PDF will be downloaded on the taxpayer's computer. Click 'Continue' to get to Submit Statement page.

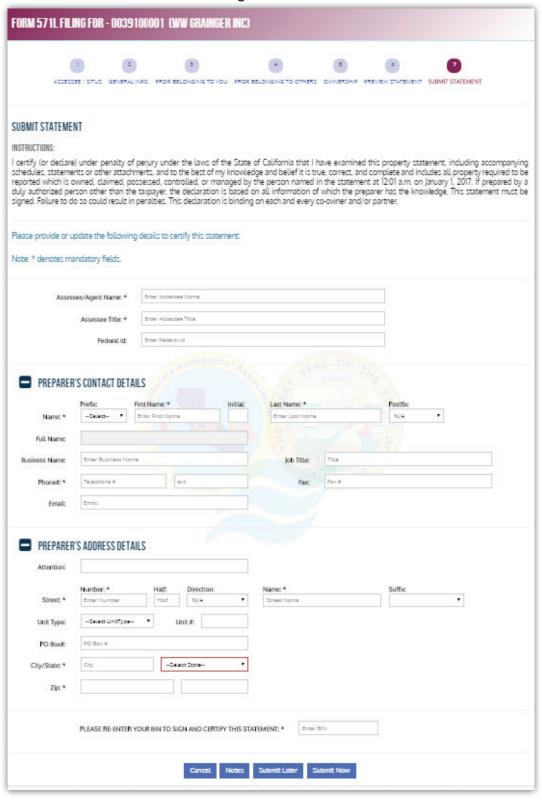


Submit Statement

This is the certification section, the last step before submitting the statement. Enter information requested. Fields with and asterisk must be completed.

The BIN is re-entered at the bottom for verification.

Click on 'Submit Now' to finalize filing or 'Submit Later' to submit at a later time.

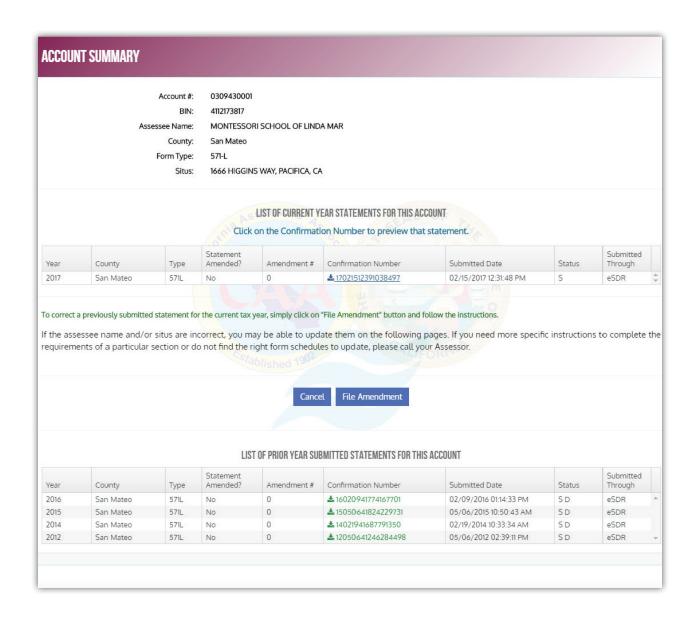


The *Confirmation* screen appears if 'Submit Now' is clicked. Account number, date and time, and Confirmation number are displayed. Click 'View And Print Form 571-L' to download a PDF copy. It will have confirmation info at the top right corner of the 571-L. Click 'Done – Click to Logout' to exit and return to the SDR home page.



Amended Filing

Taxpayers are allowed 3 total filings. (2 Amended) To file an Amended return follow the same instructions but instead of '**Start Filing**', click '**File Amendment**'.





IV. CONTACT INFORMATION

Please feel free to contact our office. The following is our current contact information. The Auditor-Appraiser on duty will be able answer your questions (ask for the Auditor-Appraiser on duty).

Telephone Number: 650.363.4501

Address: Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder's Office

555 County Center, 3rd Floor Redwood City, CA 94063

Website: www.calbpsfile.org

Email: PPDutyAuditor@smcacre.org

E-File: www.calbps.org (e-SDR)



Appendices

APPENDIX 1 – SAMPLE FORM 571-L

APPENDIX 2 – APPLICATION FOR CHANGED ASSESSMENT

APPENDIX 3 – BUSINESS CHANGE FORM

APPENDIX 4 – AGENCY AUTHORIZATION LETTER