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***File & Serve* October 2009 Newsletter** **Third Judicial Circuit, Madison County, Illinois** **Cook County, Illinois Asbestos E-service**

I. Madison Arbitration Cases Using File & Serve Effective October 12, 2009

The Third Judicial Circuit of Madison County, Illinois has selected LexisNexis® ***File & Serve*** as the electronic filing and service solution for their Arbitration Cases. Effective **Monday, October 12, 2009**, all firms involved in an arbitration case may use ***File & Serve*** to electronically file and/or serve documents into these cases. While the court is closed on October 12, 2009, firms will be able to submit transactions through File & Serve on that day, but they will not docket with the court until Tuesday, October 13, 2009. It is the expectation of the Court that participating law firms will realize the benefits of improved access to information and a streamlined approach for managing the flow of paper throughout the arbitration process. For information on e-filing and e-service for Arbitration Cases including registration for ***File & Serve*** and training classes, [click here](#).

II. Plaintiff Firms: Are you using the "Party Group" feature to your Advantage?

Many plaintiff firms do not realize the advantage and time savings of creating "party groups" in ***File & Serve*** for e-filing new cases and creating customized service lists. A party group is simply a customized list of parties. Typically, if you create a party group, you will use that list of parties or that party group for future transactions (i.e., filing new asbestos cases through ***File & Serve***).

Creating a custom party group is easy. Simply follow these steps:

- Click on the ***File & Serve*** Tab and select File a New Case.
- Select court and click find.
- Select case class.
- Enter case type and case name.
- Upload your documents.
- ****Important****: To create a party group of all defendants which you can use for every new case, **enter the defendant parties first**. Click "additional party" and change the entity type to organization. Add the party name and select save party.
- As you save the defendant parties you enter, they will appear on the right hand side of the screen. The "AP" designation before the party name stands for Additional Party.

- Once you have entered all your defendant party names, click the link on the top right called "Create Party Group with Party List". [See attached screen shot](#).
- You will then be prompted to enter a name for your party group.
- The next time you are entering a new case, you can select this party group and will not have to re-enter all the defendants.
- You also have the ability to delete or add parties from your custom party group.
- *****Note*****: If you do not enter the defendant parties first, you will wind up having a plaintiff party in your party group which you will not want for future filings of new cases. While you do have the ability to remove parties, it is easier to just create the party group by entering all defendant parties first. Then go back and add your plaintiff party for that particular case.
- Once a party group has been created, it can be accessed by all users at the firm.

III. Top Reasons for Rejected Filings in Madison County

We continue to see firms making the same mistakes over and over again. Rejected transactions cost your firm money and the court extra time in having to review transactions. I wanted to share with you the top reasons Madison County Clerk's office is rejecting transactions.

1. Firms E-filing into the **E-Serve Only Master Case** (this case actually has the words **E-serve Only** as part of the case name- it is not to be used for E-filing).
2. Multiple documents scanned together and uploaded as one document. You must parse out your documents and upload them separately, but in the same transaction if they apply to the same case.
3. Wrong information on pleading (i.e., wrong case number).
4. Firms attaching the wrong documents.
5. Party on whose behalf documents have been filed is not a named defendant in the case.

If you open the PDF version off the document before you submit the transaction, you will be able to minimize these errors by reviewing the pleadings before you e-file or e-serve the documents.

IV. Cook County Asbestos: Please Do Not Upload Multiple Documents for Multiple Cases Using the Multi-Case Feature When the Documents Properly Belong in an Individual Case

Firms have notified us that some filers are submitting their transactions using the multi-case feature to submit documents in multiple cases instead of serving them in the individual cases. **Remember, the multi-case filing feature should only be used when the document properly belongs in all cases selected for service. By using this feature incorrectly, you put documents in cases that don't belong there.** While there is no court clerk review of these transactions, it is still

important that you follow the rules for proper e-service of documents. It becomes very difficult to search and locate documents if filers are adding unrelated documents to case dockets. You would not paper serve documents regarding a case that did not apply to that particular case, so please do not e-serve them either.

V. Changes to Administrative and Paper Invoice Fees, Effective October 1, 2009

Effective October 1st, 2009, Court Fees (i.e., statutory filing fees) not paid within thirty (30) days after the invoice date will bear an administrative fee increased to twenty percent (20%) of the outstanding statutory Court Fees, where applicable.

Also effective October 1st, 2009, fees for paper invoices are increasing to \$10.00 per month. If you wish to receive an electronic invoice and avoid the paper invoice fee, have your firm's **File & Serve** administrator change the setting of your account to electronic invoices and enter the email address of the person responsible for payment of the invoice.

Current pricing for all Optional Services, including paper invoices, can be found online under Pricing in the **File & Serve** Resource Center.

VI. Find Out How You Can Set Up Other Cases On File & Serve

We often hear that our clients wish more courts were allowing E-filing and E-service of documents because it streamlines the process of filing and service and reduces the cost of traditional document delivery and related processes. What surprises us is when our customers think they need to wait for a court to implement electronic filing and service in order to use **File & Serve** to E-serve all parties in a case. Well - we want you to know you do not need to wait. If you are involved in a complex civil matter, a class action suit or a commercial litigation involving multiple parties and firms, and you have your court's permission to serve documents electronically, you should contact **File & Serve** to get your case online for **E-service**. You will also increase your efficiency with access to an online repository of documents including discovery.

Hopefully we've piqued your interest in how you can benefit from adding your firm's cases to **File & Serve**. If you have questions or want more information, please contact Christopher Shaw at **937-550-4423** (christopherdean.shaw@lexisnexis.com).

VII. Are you Aware of *File & Serve's* "Saved Transactions" Feature?

If your system connection is lost while you are in the middle of a transaction, did you know that *File & Serve* actually saves the transaction? It does. "Saved Transactions" is an excellent feature because it enables you to pick up where you left off, whether you purposefully close out of *File & Serve* or your internet or browser connection is lost. The "Saved Transactions" feature is located under the *File & Serve* tab.

Many of you are interrupted during the course of submitting a transaction in *File & Serve* to work on something else. If this happens, just click "save" and return to the transaction using the "Saved Transactions" feature later in the day or hte next day. A "saved transaction" will remain in *File & Serve* for 30 days.

File & Serve Contacts

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If you have any questions about E-filing or E-service in Madison or Cook County, please do not hesitate to call customer service at **888-529-7587** or you can contact me directly.

Regards,

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