

# CWMLS' TIPS TRICKS & ISSUES

Greetings CWMLS Paragon Users! Welcome to the first edition of CWMLS' TIPS TRICKS & ISSUES. This is an informational publication that will highlight user tips and issues that will help you use Paragon more effectively. A wide range of topics will be highlighted in this and future issues. Topics arise from member calls, upgrades to the system, changes to rules and or board policy. This issue will have quite a few topics to cover, as it is the first, and many of the topics you may already be well versed in. Our goal is to make sure information is available to all of our PARAGON users. This, and future issues will be emailed to all members and then can also be found at our website [www.cwbr.org](http://www.cwbr.org) which is easily accessible through the center frame of PARAGON on your home page. You can also access updated rules and regulations, policies and procedures and bylaws from the website. We hope you find this publication helpful and please let us know of any suggestions you may have.

## GETTING HELP

The first and most effective place to learn how to use any aspect of PARAGON™ is the



HELP section found in the upper right hand corner.

Here you

will find helping tools such as RECORDED WEBINARS, TRAINING VIDEOS, QUICK START GUIDES and other tools. CWMLS highly recommends QUICK START GUIDES. They cover every topic of use and are very easy to understand.

When you cannot find your answer, please call PARAGON™ directly at 877-657-4357 or call CWMLS at 715-693-6579.

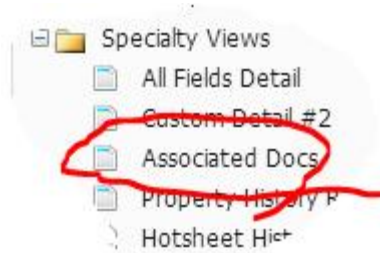
## CUSTOMIZATION



Most aspects PARAGON™ are customizable. If you see the customize symbol (shown above) you can customize it. You can customize any of the many different views that

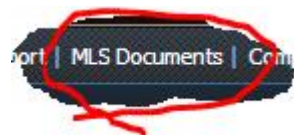
we offer. You can also customize any search fields. If you are looking for a field that is not showing up in a view or not finding a search field, chances are you only need to add it through customization.

## ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS



Associated Documents found under “Specialty Views” in your reports section is a great place to put any documents associated with the property. Documents like Condition Reports and Lead Based Paint documents. It is also a great place to put documents that are only to be shared with other agents and not the public. Documents of a confidential matter or documents explaining a broker bonus offer can be put in this section. It is always a good practice to stamp a confidential document as “CONFIDENTIAL” as to identify that fact to all users that access the document. Associated Documents can only be printed out or accessed by a licensed MLS user and are not released to the public through an IDX feed.

## MLS DOCUMENTS



Found at the top of the screen, MLS Documents holds a bevy of information.

1. **AGENT DATA WORKSHEET** - This is the form used by new agents to start an account on PARAGON®. This form can also be used by an existing user to change their password and login.
2. **HOME STYLE** - Here you will find a handy document that explains different styles of homes. i.e. Bungalows, Cape Code etc....
3. **LIMITED LISTING DISCLOSURE** - If you are a limited service provider you will find the required form to submit your listings to CWMLS here
4. **LISTING INPUT SHEETS** - The most heavily used area of the MLS Documents tab. Here you will find the data input forms for all listing classes as well as a status change form.

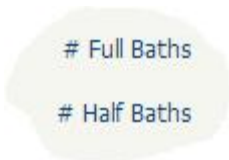
5. **MANUALS & HANDOUTS** - Information relevant to CWMLS will be posted here. For example, if you have a question on what a VOW is, check this area. Future CWMLS policy updates will be stored here as well.
6. **MLS DATA** - Don't know what "EXA: Y/N" means on your data input form? In this folder you will find definitions to all of the fields for residential data forms. One of the most common errors in definitions is "ABOVE GRADE FINISHED SQUARE FT" - This is the "Amount of square feet that is heated, finished above the earth line.
7. **MLS EXCLUSION** - If your seller wishes to withhold their listing from the MLS the form in this file must be completed and sent to CWMLS.
8. **ROSTER CHANGE FORMS** - For broker use. When adding or dropping an agent from your MLS roster, this form must be used.
9. **SELLER ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES** - These forms will help evaluate listings as to their accessibility for people with special needs.

### LOGGING OFF PARAGON™



When you are finished using PARAGON™ you need to click "Log Off". Do not click the "X" button before you click "Log Off". By clicking the "X" button the system will still assume you are logged in and will freeze you out of the system for an hour and a half. There are a minimum number of times that you can be logged in. If you click "Log Off" you can log in and out as many times as you like. If you do freeze yourself out of the system by clicking "X" too many times contact CWMLS so we can reset you.

### BATHS



At the end of 2011 CWMLS changed the way that bathrooms are entered. This was a necessary change in order to accurately record the number of full and half baths that a property has. Both the "#Full Baths" and the "#Half Baths" fields will only take whole numbers, meaning that you cannot use a decimal in these fields. For example, if you have a home that has 3 full baths and 1 half baths you will show this as

# Full Baths 3

# Half Baths 1

The above example cannot be entered as 3.5

Three quarter baths (toilet, sink and shower) are considered full baths.

If you have an active listing from 2011 that has not been updated to show baths in these two fields, the bath data will not show up on the fact sheets.

If you are searching sold listings make sure that you have customized your views to include the “# Full Baths”, “# Half Baths” and the “Baths” fields. Because sold data did not have to be changed for the new baths fields this will ensure that you will show the bath data on your report from the old and new fields. This is for *sold* searches only. All active listings should be using the two new baths fields, “#Full Baths” and “#Half Baths”.

HELPFUL TIP: Do not use the bath fields in your primary search criteria. If you must search using the bath fields you will need to do 2 separate searches. One using “baths” and one using “#Full Baths” and “#Half Baths”. You cannot search all three fields at the same time. By adding all of the bath fields to your reports, the number of baths will show up in your search and you can filter your listings from there.

## **LEASE PRICE**



Lease Price is a new field entered in each class, though it will be primarily used in the commercial class. If a property is for *lease only* you may enter \$0 in the Asking Price field but then you must enter a price in the “Lease Price” field. This field is alphanumeric and will hold up to 10 characters. So, for example, if a property is being leased for \$15 per square foot, you would enter “15.00 sqft”

## **MOST COMMON ISSUES**

The following are some of the most common issues and complaints that are called into CWMLS. Please, when there is an issue give us a call.

1. **ENTRY OF SOLD INFORMATION:** Per the CWMLS Rules & Regulations all solds must be entered into the MLS within 3 days. If for some reason this will not be possible, you must contact CWMLS. The penalty for late entry is \$100 per listing.

2. **ENTRY OF BUYER'S NAME:** In 2009 the CWMLS board of directors required that all buyers' names must be submitted to the MLS with the sold information. The penalty for non-entry is \$100 per listing.
3. **PICTURES:** CWMLS often gets a call when a listing changes brokers and the new broker uses the pictures from the previous listing. Pictures for a listing are copy written to the person that took the pictures. If you have a listing that was previously with another broker you cannot use their photos for your listing.
4. **A PROPERTY CAN ONLY BE LISTED ACTIVELY ONCE IN THE MLS AT A TIME:** Some properties may fit many categories i.e. a home with 40 acres is willing to be sold as the home with the land, the home alone or the land alone. You cannot enter this property into the MLS 3 times. You must decide the best way to enter it once and you can use the REMARKS and ADDENDUM sections to describe other selling options.
5. **BUSINESS PROMOTION IN PICTURES AND REMARKS:** It is a violation of the CWMLS Rules & Regulations to show your company sign in the photos that are uploaded to your listing. It is also a violation to promote yourself in the REMARKS/ADDENDUM portion of the listing. Example of this would be "Call Jane Doe for a personal showing." This is a violation.
6. **INCORRECT DATA ENTRY FINES:** This pertains to purposely or consistent data entry errors. By no means will we fine someone for a typo or accidental field error entry. The most common form of purposely incorrect data entry pertains to the MUNICIPALITIES field. Many times this field is fraudulently filled in with a different municipality (usually nearby) because the agent feels that it will show up in more searches. This cannot happen. The municipality filled in this field must match the tax records to the property. Fines for incorrect data entry are \$5/day that the listing has been on the MLS. Please use due diligence in obtaining the correct information for as many fields as you can. It is the broker's responsibility to double check the listing data after it has been entered into the MLS.
7. **INCORRECT DATA FEEDS (IDX) TO NON-AFFILIATED WEBSITES:** CWMLS' IDX policy is pretty basic in that we will only license our feed to Member Brokers and Member Agents (with broker consent) for use solely on their personal websites. We also license our IDX feed to REALTOR.com and our own website [www.cwbr.org](http://www.cwbr.org) . We also provide a feed to ListHub (listing syndicator) but they can only use the data when under contract with one of our members We DO NOT provide a feed to 3<sup>rd</sup> party websites. This includes Zillow and Trulia and a host of numerous other home selling websites. If a CWMLS listing is on a third party site it is either because the listing agent contracted with the vendor, or the

information was “scraped” Many times when the information is scraped, it will be incorrect on that website. We have received many calls from upset home sellers when they see their home on these websites and the information is not correct. It reflects poorly on the listing agent in their eyes. 99.99% of the time the listing agent didn’t know that their listing was showing up on these websites, and is in hot water with their seller through no fault of their own. A helpful tip may be to educate your clients as to where you use the IDX feed and warn them about websites that may show their home on them with incorrect information and that you have no control over that unless you are contracted with that vendor.

I hope that you have found the information here helpful. This was not intended as a hand slapper for rule breakers, just an update to all users on some of the most common issues and complaints that we see here at CWMLS. If you ever have any questions about the technical aspects of our MLS or the rules, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are here to help.