

Safeguarding Your Work

An outline for an effective backup strategy for CARStat/DUMPStat users.

Over the years we have discovered that a number of our clients were not following a backup procedure for their data. Since your database is cumulatively created, it is extremely important to keep it safe. Losing your database could result in your having to re-merge every data file that you have used to date. Data loss can happen without your knowledge or intent. Hard drives sometimes crash and may become corrupted. Or, you may have merged a few data files only to find out later that your lab sent you the wrong files. Please note that both of these problems have occurred, and these victims have been left in the unenviable state of having to start over through no real fault of their own. There are a variety of ways that your database can be damaged and with database editing and aliasing capabilities, the risks are even greater.

We recommend that after every monitoring event, when you have merged your new data and are satisfied with it, you backup your site and save it externally from your computer. To this end, we have a suggested backup scheme that you may wish to adopt in your office. It requires that you use the site functions; even if you are a single site user it is beneficial to define your site and use the backup function.

When you receive new data:

1. Preview your new data file. If you have any doubts as to its validity, you should check with your lab.
2. Merge the new data.
3. Set any new aliases/unit conversions required.
4. Perform your analyses and create your reports.
5. Run Backup Site. This will copy your database, the well network and all site specific files to your archival directory.
6. Using a file utility, *i.e.* PKZIP, compress the archival directory and save it as a file under a name that is easily identifiable. For instance, if these are the results for the 3rd quarter of 1997, you may wish to name the file SITE97Q3.ZIP.
7. Save the file on diskette, tape, network drive or whatever means is used in your office.

The next quarter, when you receive your data, if you have or create any problems, this backup of your archival directory can be restored by retrieving the data from your archive into the directory specified for that site and loading or reloading that site. You will now be in exactly the same state as when the archive was created.

If you have any questions or difficulties performing these operations please contact Discerning Systems

by e-mail at support@dsi-software.com or
by phone at (604) 298-3748.