

## Newsletter #1 (May 22, 2005)

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### What's New

#### **This Newsletter**

Welcome to the first issue of the Campground Master newsletter. With any luck (and with your help!) we will publish a newsletter at least twice each month. We hope you'll find it informative and helpful, and possibly even enjoyable.

The primary goal of this newsletter is to better communicate with our customers (and potential customers) -- to provide tips and information to help you get the most out of your reservation system, and to encourage active feedback from you so that we can learn what would make our product better.

As with any publication, it's difficult to get the right balance -- to include enough information to make it worthwhile, but not so much that it becomes a burden to read. We'll probably vary the content for awhile, with some newsletters being short so that we can get the word out about one particular thing, and some having numerous articles. A lot of the content will likely be inspired by the support calls we get from our customers. We know that if one customer asks a question, there are probably a dozen more that want to know the answer too but just don't get around to asking. In any case, please let us know how we're doing!

So, let's get on with it...

## Rate Setup Examples

One of the most daunting tasks of setting up Campground Master is the Rates. If you've put off setting up your rates because it's too technical, we can certainly understand that. Questions about rates setup are the most common type of support call we get, and admittedly it's due to the lack of practical examples in the documentation.

We're working on changing that, and we've already come up with a number of examples for the most common situations. We'll add more examples eventually, but the basic ones we've created should certainly help get you started, or perhaps help you fine tune your own setup. The rates examples have already been added to the 3.1 version software manual on the web site (as well as the downloadable PDF manual or e-Book).

Here's a direct link to the examples in the manual on our web site:

<http://campgroundmaster.com/help31/ratesetupexamples.htm>

If you're reading this newsletter online or as an e-Book, click here: Rate Setup Examples

If this is the PDF version of the newsletter, the examples are already included at the end.

We welcome any suggestions for more examples!

## Beta Releases

If you're current on your updates license, you've already received a few beta release notices with download links. If not, you've probably just received one note about the beta release.

We just want to let you know that the beta is moving along nicely and we're getting some feedback from a few people starting to use the online reservations functions. We've also been adding quite a few enhancements while waiting for the final release, such as a better sites setup tool, an updated zip/postal code database, and better receipts by category reporting. Another beta release will be out next week, which will also include better support for Friend Communications' online service, giving you another choice for handling online reservations more automatically without creating your own web site for them.

So far the beta is very stable, so don't be afraid to try it if you have a chance (you'll need to be current on your updates license, of course, so let us know if you need to renew).

To see all of the changes in the current 3.1.10 beta, use the link below:

<http://www.campground-master.com/rel32/index.html>

## Feedback

### Looking for Feedback (Your Comments Here)

What's a newsletter without input from it's readers? Well, it's a monologue!

If you have tips to share, comments, ideas, complaints, or questions, please send them in (just reply to the E-mail if you're reading your E-mail, or send it to our support E-mail address (see Help / About Campground Master in the program). We can't promise to publish them all, but your efforts to help "fill the pages" will be welcome. Just be sure to let us know whether you wish to remain anonymous or what identification you would like -- your name, park, and even your web site address or phone number will be included if you like.

We also like to ask you specific questions. For instance, this time we're trying to find out if anyone else is having a couple specific problems that have been reported by someone, which we can't reproduce here. This can help us locate and fix unusual bugs in the program.

Don't be shocked -- yes, there might be bugs in the program. Every program has bugs, it's just a matter of how serious they are and how quickly they're solved. We pride ourselves with the stability of Campground Master and the attention we give to quickly solving any and all problems found. But in order to solve them, we need to know about them -- so don't hold back! If you notice a problem, let us know about it.

## Q & A

Since this is the first newsletter, we've just pulled a few recent support questions for some Q&A samples.

### **Q: How long is the Notes field for reservations?**

The Notes fields for any type of records (Reservations, Customers, Sites, etc.) can be any length. You could copy entire pages of text there if you like. Obviously it only shows a little bit at a time on the Reservation Details page, but you can scroll the field -- or better yet, click the little "..." button next to the notes to open a multi-line editing box. In addition, reservation notes will be shown entirely if you view the Quick-Info window by double-clicking the reservation on the Rack view or other tab views.

### **Q: How can I change the "Normal RV" and "Deluxe RV" site types to show something else?**

These come from the Site Types pick list, so not only can you change them, you can add as many different types as you like. The normal and deluxe types are just defaults used as examples. Go to Maintenance / Pick Lists / Site Types to edit the list. You'll need to check the box "Allow editing of fields" before changing anything -- this is like a safety switch, since any changes made here are instant and non-reversible.

Be careful about deleting types already used -- it's better to just change the text for the ones that are there, and add any more needed. Also note that you can change the order using the Move Up and Move Down buttons -- this changes the order they appear in various lists, reports, etc., so that you can arrange them any way you like.

### **Q: Are you available for tech support on weekends?**

Yes, we are available on weekends. In fact that's a slower time so you'll probably get an even faster response. As always, just leave a message if we don't answer immediately (we're probably helping other customers), and we'll reply as soon as possible.

Of course E-mail is also an efficient way to get support, and we will respond as quickly as possible (almost always within a couple hours).

### **Q: Why do my Occupancy and Availability reports show all 0's instead of correct data?**

This is most likely due to the filtering, since each type of report always uses the last filter settings used. In the report dialog, click "Site / Reservation Filtering", then click "Reset All", then click "OK". Don't forget to Generate the report if you don't have Auto-generate selected.

**Q: Can I print two copies of the Ticket Form on one page?**

Unfortunately this isn't an option yet. Several people have asked for this so it would be considered high priority, however we haven't done it yet because an upcoming release will support fully customizable forms anyway. Special code to do it now would be redundant and quickly obsolete, while delaying other features. This should be available by the end of this summer (with beta releases coming out sooner of course).

**Bug Hunt - Sharing the POS on a Network**

(A bug hunt is where we ask if you're experiencing a particular problem. In most cases, it would help us to know even if you don't see the problem, so that we can eliminate certain possibilities.)

This issue only applies if you're using the POS (Point of Sale) option and also networking multiple workstations.

To test for this problem:

1. Open the POS on one workstation, enter an item and payment, then print a receipt but DON'T close the POS dialog. (If you have set the option to auto-close when a receipt is printed, you would need to remove that option first.) Leave the POS dialog open with that sale still showing.
2. On a different workstation, try to open the POS dialog.

Does it prevent opening the POS on another workstation, reporting that records are locked, until you close the other one? Let us know whether you have this problem, and what version of Campground Master you're using (see Help / About for the version number).

**Bug Hunt - Changing the 'From' date on the Rack doesn't work properly**

This issue is believed to apply only to Windows XP (a Windows system problem), and possibly only in version 3.0 or later of Campground Master, but we would like to know if it happens on any version of Windows or Campground Master.

To test for this issue:

1. On the Rack view, click Reset/Today.
2. Now click the drop-down arrow for the From: date, and click on a date in the calendar that's a few days in the future. This should close the calendar and show that date in From.

Does it also change the To: date to that same date, and scroll the Rack to start with that date? If so, then it's working properly. But if it doesn't do this, instead leaving the original date in the To date and not moving the Rack, let us know.

## Tips & Techniques

### **How to keep duplicate credit card charges from being rejected**

If you're using the X-Charge or ICVerify software for credit card processing through Campground Master, you may have noticed that it will reject duplicate charges (for the same amount for the same customer if they happen on the same day). A common reason situation this comes up is if the one person is making deposits for multiple reservations.

There are a few ways to avoid this problem:

1. You can tell X-Charge to allow duplicate transactions -- in the X-Charge Server, go to Setup, click the Credit Cards section, and check the box to Allow duplicate transactions. (We don't know if there's an equivalent option in ICVerify or where it is -- if you know how to do it, let us know.)

HOWEVER, we don't necessarily recommend this method because it can result in accidental duplicate charges in certain timing conditions (see the next article).

2. You can enter slightly different amounts for the charges. For instance, enter \$49 and \$51 instead of two \$50 charges. This is obvious enough but it's a messy solution.

3. If you're trying to make deposits or payments on non-synchronized reservations (as opposed to merchandise sales outside of reservations), then instead of entering separate payments, make the payment for the overall total on the first reservation. Then use the Transfer Deposit or Transfer Payment function to transfer individual amounts of the payment to the other reservations. For instance if you need four \$25 deposits, enter a Deposit of \$100 charged to the credit card. Then use Transfer Deposit three times to move \$25 to each of the other reservations.

Of course this last technique can also be used for any deposit, even if it's paid by check or by a credit card that you don't process through Campground Master.

### **How to avoid duplicate credit card charges**

If you're using the X-Charge or ICVerify software for credit card processing through Campground Master, there is a timing condition that can cause charges to be processed twice while Campground Master thinks it was only processed once. More specifically, if you get a "Timed-out" message in Campground Master when processing a card, it's possible that X-Charge or ICVerify is still going to submit the charge.

There are a couple ways to avoid this problem:

1. The most foolproof way to prevent this is to tell X-Charge or ICVerify to NOT allow duplicate transactions -- in the X-Charge Server, go to Setup, click the Credit Cards section, and UNCHECK the box for Allowing duplicate transactions. (We don't know for sure if there's an equivalent option in ICVerify -- let us know if you know how to do it.) Of course this makes it more difficult to enter the payments needed in some cases, as mentioned in the previous article. Nevertheless, we recommend this to prevent double-charging your customers -- use one of the other ways mentioned previously to handle multiple charges on reservations when needed.

2. If you can't use the method above, then you need to make sure that Campground Master will never time out before the credit card processing software gives up. Make sure the Dial Attempts is set to only 1 in the X-Charge server, for instance (see Setup, Credit Cards, Connections.). Also increase the Timeout in Campground Master to a larger number (see Maintenance, Credit Card Processing Setup). if you continue to see timeouts, keep increasing the timeout value.

So what if you get a time-out anyway, or if when you do retry it returns an error that it's a duplicate charge?

First verify in the processing software that the charge is there. Then to enter the charge in Campground Master without attempting to process it again, disable the Credit Card Processing function temporarily (uncheck the "Enabled" box in the setup), enter the payment, and then re-enable Credit Card Processing.

### How to quickly select dates for short-term stays

Here's a quick tip that can speed up entering some multiple-day reservations.

1. Instead of double-clicking on the Rack, just click the telephone icon for a New Reservation.
2. Locate the site you want to use, and make sure the dates you want are visible in the grid.
3. Now click-and-hold the mouse button on the beginning of the new reservation (in that site's open cell under the start date), drag the mouse over to highlight all of the nights needed, and then release the mouse button. The open cells on that site for the dates needed should be highlighted (usually in dark blue).
4. Click the Add Selection(s) button.

There, you've replaced multiple clicks with one click-drag and one click!

**Bonus:** If it's a group reservation and the sites are all together, you can drag down to highlight multiple sites at the same time you're dragging across to highlight multiple dates, and all of the highlighted sites will be added as synchronized reservations!

**Double Bonus:** You can continue to add multiple sites the same way, only you don't need to select the exact dates -- just drag straight down to select multiple sites for a single date, and the previous date range will be assumed when you click Add Selection(s).

**Triple Bonus:** Ctrl-click and Ctrl-click-drag also works to highlight multiple sites that aren't all together. The only restriction is that they all have the same dates selected, or only one date selected (in which case it uses the same dates you previously selected).

### How to rearrange sites on the Rack

This mainly applies to versions prior to 3.1.7 (beta release). If you're using the latest beta, moving sites is more easily done directly through the new Park Setup / Sites dialog.

When you're setting up your sites, you probably at least once forgot to enter a site in order, or wanted to change their order on the Rack later. The trick is that they will appear on the Rack in the same order as they appear on the Raw Data Table.

To move sites after they're added:

1. Go to Maintenance / Raw Data Tables / Sites (you must be logged in as an administrator, of course).
2. Check "Allow editing of fields" to enable the functions.
3. Locate the site to be moved, and click on the first cell of the row (on the grey record ID #) to select that row.

4. Click the "Move Up" or "Move Down" button to move the site, repeating as needed.

Multiple sites at once can be moved simply by selecting the ones to be moved -- using click-drag, Shift-click or Ctrl-click. Just be careful to only click on the grey column so it selects the whole row. While it will technically work even if you click on other cells, you may accidentally wipe out a whole bunch of data this way.

## **Miscellaneous**

### **See your park from space!**

Have you tried the free Google Satellite Mapping feature? Depending on your location, you can get a rather detailed satellite image of your park, with the RV's clearly shown in each space.

Try it:

- Go to <http://maps.google.com> - It may take a minute to load.
- Enter an address -- a street address or at least a city & state, and then Search.
- OK, a street map is nice -- but now click on "Satellite" in the upper right.
- Hello! Wave to the satellite! (OK, it's not real-time and it doesn't have fine detail in all locations, mostly just around large cities, but it's still a lot of fun.)
- Try zooming in as far as possible, then zoom out to see the surrounding areas. You can move the map around just by grabbing it with the mouse and dragging it.

We hope you've enjoyed this diversion. We've actually used it a few times to see what our customers' parks look like!

### **Contacting Us**

To respond to this newsletter, just send us an E-mail (reply to this E-mail if you're reading the E-mail version).

See our web site for complete contact information and an E-mail link if needed:  
<http://www.Campground-Master.com/contact.html>

### **How to unsubscribe or change your subscription**

To unsubscribe an E-mail address, go to this link:  
<http://campgroundmaster.com/unsubscribe.html>

To subscribe with an additional address:  
<http://campgroundmaster.com/subscribe.html>

To change the address this newsletter goes to, use both links above to unsubscribe from the old address and subscribe with the new address.

## Attachments

### Rate Setup Examples

The examples below assume you still have the default pick lists, as seen in the demo or a new database -- naturally if you've changed the pick lists for Transaction Categories, Site Types, or Discounts, or if you've changed the available Reservation Attributes, then your choices may be different. Actually we recommend changing those Pick Lists to reflect your needs -- so do that first before setting up your rates. In particular, check the Transaction Categories pick list to see if it covers all of the things you need (e.g. you may want separate categories for RV rent vs. Cabin rent, or you may need to add a Seasonal category, etc.)

For each example, it's assumed that you're already in Maintenance / Park Setup / Rates.

### Basic Daily Rate

To set up a \$20.00 per day rate for Normal RV sites:

1. Click New rate definition.
2. Enter "Basic daily rate, Normal RV" in the Description field.
3. Click the Charge button.
4. Select (click on) "Daily Rate" from the drop-down category list.
5. Press the **Tab** key to change to the Item Description field, and change it if you want (e.g. "Normal RV, daily"). You can just start typing to replace it entirely, or press F2 to enter editing mode. The Item Description is what will show on the customer's receipt.
6. Press the **Tab** key twice to get to the Each field (no Qty is necessary).
7. Enter the daily amount, not including taxes, for instance "20". No dollar sign or decimals are needed (assuming it's a round dollar amount)
8. Press the **Tab** key to accept the amount.
9. Check the boxes for one or more taxes under Auto-add tax, if they apply.
10. Select "Days" from the drop-down list after Rate is per 1 (# of).
11. Verify that the Resv Types shown is "Normal, Group, Monthly" and that the boxes are checked by Multiply by # periods and Multiply by # sites. These are the defaults and will probably be correct unless you have special cases.
12. Click the Site Types button, select "Normal RV" from the list, and click OK.
13. Click the Save button -- you're done with your first rate!

This shows how to set up a rate for a single site type, "Normal RV". You probably need to set up separate rate definitions for each of your site types, or at least each group of site types for which you charge one rate (if you charge the same for 2 or more types, then simply include all of those types in step 12 above). Repeat each of the steps above for each of your site types or rate groupings (likewise for other rates below). This can quickly turn into a large list of rates, but that's normal. It's tedious, but not difficult -- especially using the Copy function as described below.

### Weekly and Monthly Rates

To set up a weekly rate of \$120 (for instance if they get the 7th day free, you would simply charge them for 6 days on a weekly stay):

1. Make sure the daily rate added above is selected, and click Copy Selected Rate(s). This will make a duplicate rate definition so we don't have to do everything over again.
2. Select the new copy (click to highlight it), then click Edit rate definition. (Or you can just double-click on it to edit it.)
3. Change the Description field to "Basic weekly rate, Normal RV".
4. Select (click on) "Daily Rate" under the Category for the charge, then click on the drop-down arrow and select "Weekly Rate".
5. Press the Tab key to change to the Item Description field, and change it if you want (e.g. "Normal RV, weekly").
6. Press the Tab key twice to get to the Each field.
7. Enter the weekly amount, not including taxes, for instance "120". No dollar sign or decimals are needed (assuming it's a round dollar amount)
8. Press the Tab key to accept the amount.
9. Select "Weeks" from the drop-down list after Rate is per 1 (# of).
10. Everything else is the same, so click the Save button.
11. This rate should still be highlighted in the rates list, so click the Move Up button so that it's above the daily rate. This is important so the weekly rate takes precedence over the daily rate. If they stay extra days, it will use the daily rate for the additional days.

To set up a monthly rate, follow the same steps above, substituting the appropriate descriptions, category, and amount, and select "Monthly" in the Rate is per... field. Or if you charge per 30 days instead of calendar months, enter it as Rate is per "30" (# of) "Days".

Then in the last step, move it twice so it's above the weekly rate. Again, the monthly rate will be used first, then the weekly for extra weeks, and/or the daily rate for extra days.

## Monthly Pro-rate

If you pro-rate the days when they stay a month or more, then you wouldn't want it to use the weekly and daily rates as mentioned above. So to add a fixed amount per day when they stay 1 month (we'll assume 30 days) or more:

1. Make sure the Basic daily rate is selected, and click Copy Selected Rate(s).
2. Select the new copy (click to highlight it), then click Edit rate definition. (Or you can just double-click on it to edit it.)
3. Change the Description field to "Daily pro-rate, Normal RV".
4. Select (click on) the Item Description field, and change it to "Normal RV, daily pro-rate").
5. Press the Tab key twice to get to the Each field, and enter the amount (e.g. "10").
6. Press the Tab key to accept the amount.
7. Enter "31" in the Applies if >= .... Days field. This will force this rate to be skipped unless they're staying more than 30 days (see below).
8. Everything else is the same, so click the Save button.
9. This rate should still be highlighted in the rates list, so click the Move Up button until it's above the weekly rate but below the Monthly rate. This is important so the monthly rate takes precedence, and if they stay extra days it will use this rate for the additional days instead of the normal weekly or daily rate.

Note that we're using 30 days as the definition of a month here, so technically this would only work correctly if you defined your monthly rate to always be for 30 days instead of a calendar month. It would also work OK for calendar months as long as you still want to charge a fixed amount per day for extra days (regardless of the length of the month), except for February, because it will skip this rate if they stay 29 days (Feb 1st to March 1st).

If you use calendar months for your monthly rate, then you will need to set up a separate pro-rate rate for February. You would duplicate this rate, change the Applies-if days to 29, and enter "3/1 to 3/30" in the Season dates applicable field. Why enter March dates? Because if they stayed the full month of February, the extra days would be in March so this rate must apply to those days, not the February days. Note that if they stay the full month of March, it would apply the monthly rate for March anyway.

## Add-on for 50A service

To set up a \$2.00 per day extra charge for all RV sites (not just Normal RV):

1. Click New rate definition.
2. Select "Add-On" in the Rate Type field.
3. Enter "Add-on for 50A" in the Description field.
4. Click the Charge button.
5. Select (click on) "Electricity" from the drop-down category list. (You might want to add a more appropriate category for this, which would be done in Maintenance / Pick Lists / Transaction Categories).
6. Press the **Tab** key to change to the Item Description field, and change it if you want (e.g. "50A service,

daily").

7. Press the **Tab** key twice to get to the Each field (no Qty is necessary).
8. Enter the daily amount, not including taxes, for instance "2".
9. Press the **Tab** key to accept the amount.
10. Check the boxes for one or more taxes under Auto-add tax, if they apply.
11. Select "Days" from the drop-down list after Rate is per 1 (# of).
12. Verify that the Resv Types shown is "Normal, Group, Monthly" and that the boxes are checked by Multiply by # periods and Multiply by # sites.
13. Click the Site Classes button, select "RV's" from the list, and click **OK**. Note we're simply selecting the RV site class, not a site type. You could have selected multiple Site Types if you preferred.
14. Select "50A" from the Applies if reservation field drop-down list. Additional fields will appear, and in this case we just keep the default "True" selection.
15. Click the Save button.

The key items in this rate are the fact that it's an Add-on (so it can be added to the rental rate), and the 50A selection so the program knows that it only applies if you've selected that option on the reservation.

### Add-on for Extra Adults

To set up an add-on charge of \$3 per extra adult after the first 2 adults:

This will be another add-on rate, so follow the first 13 steps from the add-on rate above (with appropriate changes in the description, category) and for the Each amount enter the \$3 amount per extra adult. You might select different Site Classes also, for instance if the additional adults charge also counts for cabins and tents.

In step 14, select "# Adults" for the Applies if reservation field. Since this is a numeric field, different options will appear. Enter "3" for is  $\geq$  entry, check the Per each more than box, and enter "2" after that. Thus if they have 3 or more adults, it will charge \$3 for each one except for the first 2.

You can repeat this for extra children, but it gets complicated if you allow for instance 4 people regardless of whether they're adult or children. It can't combine # adults and children to decide whether to add the rate. One way to handle this is to always count "extras" as adults, and assume children are never charged for (don't create a rate for children). Thus if they have 1 adult and 4 children, where you should really charge for 1 extra person, then enter it in the reservation as 3 adults and 2 children so it catches the extra "adult" charge. Another option is to simply disable the "# Children" field for customers and reservations, and change "# Adults" to "# People". Just enter total persons for the reservation, and make the rate apply to 5 or more people, per each more than 4.

## Discount for Good Sam

If you give discounts for organizations like Good Sam, you need to set up completely separate rate definitions that apply to the selected discounts. So first you need to make sure the discounts you accept are in the Discounts Pick List (Maintenance / Pick Lists / Discounts).

There are a couple ways you can set up discount rates, depending on how you want the customer's receipt to show it -- either as a separate line item showing the discount amount, or simply as a reduced amount for the basic charge. We recommend separate line items, not only for the customer's benefit, but because this also allows you to see the discounts on transaction reports.

For now we'll assume that the Good Sam discount only applies to the daily rate (since a discount is already built into weekly and monthly rates).

To set up a Good Sam rate of 10% off:

1. Make sure the basic daily rate is selected, and click Copy Selected Rate(s).
2. Select the new copy, then click Edit rate definition.
3. Change the Description field to "Good Sam daily rate, Normal RV".
4. Click the Discount button (the one next to Charge), to add a discount transaction.
5. Select "Daily Rate" from the drop-down category list. You could leave this as "Discount", or you could set up a specific category, but in this case assume we want to include it in the Daily Rate category for accounting reasons (it will simply reduce the total income shown for the Daily Rate category). We'll still be able to get a report showing the discount amounts if we want, because the Type is Discount.
6. Press the **Tab** key to change to the Item Description field, and change it if you want (e.g. "Good Sam 10% discount").
7. Press the **Tab** key twice to get to the Each field (no Qty is necessary).
8. Enter the daily amount of discount, not including taxes. We can't enter a percentage, but we know the amount will be \$2 because we know the normal rate is \$20, so just enter "2".
9. Press the **Tab** key to accept the amount.
10. Click the Discounts button (the one below Sites), select "Good Sam" from the list, and click OK.
11. Everything else is the same, so click the Save button.
12. This rate should still be highlighted in the rates list, so click the Move Up button so that it's above the Basic daily rate, but below the basic weekly rate. This is important so the weekly rate takes precedence over the discounted daily rate, but the discount rate will be applied if you select Good Sam as the discount used for the reservation. Otherwise it will skip this one and use the basic daily rate.

If you offer more than one type of discount, you would repeat the above process for each discount you offer. You would also repeat this for any Add-on rates that the discount should apply to -- so you might end up with many copies of daily rates and add-on rates, one for each type of discount.

However there's a shortcut if you offer the same amount of discount, e.g. 10%, for several different organizations. Make the following changes in the steps to make one rate apply to multiple discount types:

In step 6, make the item description "Discount". When the program sees that the description is the same as the Type, it will add the discount type on the receipts and it will show up like "Discount : Good Sam".

In step 10, select as many different discount types as needed (hold the **Ctrl** key down when clicking to select more than one).

Now you have one rate that will apply to multiple discounts.

### Weekend vs. Weekday Rates

Setting up separate rates for weekdays and weekends is very simple. It's just a matter of setting up two separate daily rates and selecting the appropriate days of the week for each one. Of course this could be expanded to a separate rate for each day of the week if needed.

First you need to make sure the Rates fields for the days of the week are all enabled. If you don't see the checkboxes for them at the bottom of the window when you edit a rate, they've been disabled -- go to Maintenance / Data Field Definitions / Rate Fields, and enable the "Unavailable.." fields for the days of the week.

When you set up the daily rate for weekdays, just remove the check marks from the days of the week that the rate should not apply to. Keep in mind that these are actually "nights", not "days" -- so if the weekday rate should apply to Sunday night through Thursday night, uncheck the Fri and Sat boxes.

Copy that rate, edit it to change the descriptions and amount accordingly for weekends, and now uncheck all boxes except Fri and Sat.

Since they're mutually exclusive (they can't both apply to the same day of the week since they have different days checked), the order in the list with respect to each other won't matter. Make sure you don't have a third basic daily rate still in the list -- it shouldn't be needed since these two cover all days of the week, and it could cause confusion.

Naturally if you also have discount rates, this will have to be repeated for each discounted daily rate.

### Special Season or Holiday Rates

Creating special rates for holidays, peak seasons, etc. is similar to defining weekend/weekday rates. You'll need to duplicate each rate that will be different for the special dates, and enter the appropriate dates for which each one applies to.

This is usually done with the Season Dates Applicable field and the Special Dates Not Applic. field. While the Special Dates Applicable field can be used in some cases, you should ignore this one for now.

As a simple case, let's say that you have a special rate for July 3rd and 4th:

1. Duplicate the Basic daily rate (using Copy Selected Rate(s)).
2. Edit the new one, and change its descriptions as appropriate to indicate "July 4th rate", and of course change the Each amount.
3. In the Season Dates Applicable field, enter "7/3 to 7/4". Note that the year isn't needed since it's the same days every year. (If you have special cases like long weekends where you need to include an extra day, then you would have to include the year for those cases.)
4. Click Save.
5. Move that rate above the normal rate (Basic daily rate), so it will apply first if the reservation is on those dates. Note that it will only apply to those two days, and the regular rate will be used for the remainder of the days if the reservation is longer.

That's basically it. You can repeat as needed for other dates -- or if all holidays are the same rate, just include all of the holiday dates in the Season Dates Applicable field, separated by commas. For instance: "7/3 to 7/4, 5/28/05 to 5/30/05, 12/24" to include Memorial weekend in 2005 only, and Christmas Eve every year.

Naturally for any year-specific dates, you'll need to remember to adjust the dates every year. Be sure to leave in the old dates for awhile just in case you still have active reservations covering those dates, to prevent it from recalculating them incorrectly.

We mentioned the Special Dates Not Applic field but we didn't use it yet. Technically the right way to do it would be to also enter those same dates into the Special Dates Not Applic field in the Basic daily rate, to keep the normal rate from applying on the holidays. However if you make sure the holiday rate is above the normal rate so it will always be applied first, then you could skip this step. This reduces the maintenance needed each year, and also speeds things up a tiny bit.

Creating seasonal rates works basically the same way, simply with a larger date range. This often applies to monthly and weekly rates as well, so you would have to make seasonal copies of those rates also.

One thing to watch out for when entering seasonal dates is the end-of-year wraparound. If you don't include the year in the date range, it won't understand that "10/1 to 3/31" is supposed to wrap around the end of the year (and in fact it will think you entered it wrong, automatically changing it to "3/31 to 10/1"). So if a season wraps around the end of the year, enter it as two parts like "10/1 to 12/31, 1/1 to 3/31".

### Special Reservation Types

So far the examples assume that all of your reservations are just general reservations ("Normal"), or variations on those that don't really affect the rate you charge ("Monthly" or "Group"). The Resv Types selection in the example rates has always been left with these defaults. You could change the monthly and pro-rated rates to only apply to "Monthly" reservation types if you prefer, to help keep things separate. Of course you would need to remember to set the reservation type appropriately for the reservations themselves.

You might also have special types of reservations like Seasonal that need separate rates, or special cases that have no other easy way to qualify the rate it should use like a "Grandfathered" rate for certain people, or a special rate for "Online" reservations. It's often best to create special Reservation Types for these (see the Pick Lists), which not only lets you specify appropriate rates but also allows more detailed reporting.

Once you've created the special Reservation Types needed, you can define rates that apply to only those reservation types. This is simply a matter of selecting the appropriate Resv Types in the rate definition.

Be sure to check all of your rates to make sure there's no missing Resv Types that should be selected, or accidental overlap (rates applying to reservation types that it shouldn't) -- and remember that if the Resv Types selection is blank, the rate will apply to ALL reservation types.

### Rates for Fixed Fees

If you have a fixed fee that should reservations regardless of the length of stay, then you can do it as an add-on rate. This can be used for things like a reservation fee, a key deposit, or other one-time charge. It doesn't necessarily have to apply to everyone (you can qualify a key deposit to just cabins, for instance), just modify the steps below if needed to make it apply to the appropriate cases.

To set up a \$5.00 fixed fee that applies to all stays:

1. Click New rate definition.
2. Select "Add-On" in the Rate Type field.
3. Enter "Fixed reservation fee" (or whatever it is) in the Description field.
4. Click the Charge button.
5. Select (click on) "Misc Extras" from the drop-down category list (or whatever category you might have added for this).
6. Press the **Tab** key to change to the Item Description field, and change it if you want (e.g. "Service charge").
7. Press the **Tab** key twice to get to the Each field (no Qty is necessary).
8. Enter the amount, not including taxes, for instance "5".
9. Press the **Tab** key to accept the amount.
10. Check the boxes for one or more taxes under Auto-add tax, if they apply.
11. Remove the checkboxes for Multiply by # periods, Multiply by # sites, and Ask for other quantity. Of course it this should apply multiple times for multiple sites, leave that box checked.
12. Select any Resv Types, Site Types, etc. that this charge should apply to. if it applies to everything, make sure these selections are cleared out.
13. Click the Save button.

That's it -- this rate will be added to all reservations matching the selected Applies-only-to criteria.

## Merchandise Rates

If you have the Point of Sale option, you probably won't want to enter merchandise here. Otherwise, you can set up any number of rates that are actually merchandise items. This saves time when entering sales of fixed-cost items like RV supplies and dump services, or fixed-rate things like propane.

Once you have Merchandise rates set up, all rates with this type will be shown in Select Rates when you choose the "Merchandise" rate type at the top of that dialog. In addition, when you open Unbound Transactions, for instance by clicking the cash register icon in the toolbar, it will show all merchandise rates by default. This makes it easy to pick the selected rate and enter a quantity.

Setting up a merchandise rate is similar to setting up a fixed fee rate. To add Propane as a merchandise item at \$1.299 per gallon:

1. Click New rate definition.
2. Select "Merchandise" in the Rate Type field.
3. Enter "Propane" in the Description field.
4. Click the Charge button.

5. Select (click on) "Propane" from the drop-down category list (or whatever category you might have added for this).
6. Press the **Tab** key to change to the Item Description field, and change it if you want (e.g. "Propane per gallon").
7. Press the **Tab** key twice to get to the Each field (no Qty is necessary).
8. Enter the amount per unit, not including taxes, for instance "1.299". Notice that you can include the fractional cents as added decimal places. It will show up to 4 places in the dialog, but the number will actually be stored and used for calculations exactly as you enter it.
9. Press the **Tab** key to accept the amount.
10. Check the boxes for one or more taxes under Auto-add tax, if they apply.
11. Click the Save button.

This is a simple example but should cover most merchandise issues.

### **Electric Meter Rates (also Water and Gas Meters)**

Rates for meters are handled in a special way by Campground Master. They are used automatically when entering batch meter readings, and if you select a meter rate from Select Rates, it knows to ask for a reading. There are also some special parameters for meter readings so that you can handle things like tiered electricity rates or exclude a certain minimum amount that's included in their rent.

One key thing to know about meter rates is that when it's applying the rates automatically, it can apply one or two rates. One must be a variable rate, which is multiplied by the number of units used. The other one, if present, must be a fixed rate that's not multiplied (for instance a base service charge). If more than these two rates are found that apply to a given reservation, or if no variable rate is found that applies, it will show an error message.

As with rental and add-on rates, you can use any of the "applies-only-to" qualifying fields to create separate rates for different seasons, different reservation or site types, and so forth. You would create multiple sets of rates to handle each situation as needed, just like for rental rates.

This first example is the simplest case -- a single per-kWh rate for electric use, with no special filtering:

1. Click New rate definition.
2. Select "Electric Meter" in the Rate Type field.
3. Enter "Electric meter" in the Description field.
4. Click the Charge button.
5. Select (click on) "Electricity" from the drop-down category list (or whatever category you might have added for this).
6. Press the **Tab** key to change to the Item Description field, and change it if you want (e.g. "Metered electric"). Keep in mind that the current and previous readings will automatically be added to this description on their receipt, for instance "Metered electric (2500-2200)".
7. Press the **Tab** key twice to get to the Each field (no Qty is necessary).

8. Enter the amount per unit, not including taxes, for instance ".0623". Notice that you can include the fractional cents as added decimal places. It will show up to 4 places in the dialog, but the number will actually be stored and used for calculations exactly as you enter it.
9. Press the **Tab** key to accept the amount.
10. Check the boxes for one or more taxes under Auto-add tax, if they apply.
11. Notice that the box Ask for meter reading will be checked automatically, and some other entry fields will appear. In this simple case, leave these as they are. (As a simple variation, you could enter "100" in the Meter allowance field if the customer gets the first 100 units for free and should be charged for the remainder of his usage, if any.)
12. Click the Save button.

Now if you go into a reservation's transactions, click Select Rates, and select "Electric Meter" for the rate type, this rate will appear. If you click this rate and Add, a window will appear showing the previous meter reading and asking for the new reading. Simply enter the new reading and it will do the rest, including updating the last reading the in the Site Details.

### Electric Meter - Base Charges

Sometimes a base service charge must be added every time the meter is read. This would be in addition to the per-unit charge, so you need to add a separate rate for it. So after adding the meter rate above, add another rate, let's say for a \$4.50 service charge:

1. Click New rate definition.
2. Select "Electric Meter" in the Rate Type field.
3. Enter "Electric meter service charge" in the Description field.
4. Click the Charge button.
5. Select (click on) "Electricity" from the drop-down category list (or whatever category you might have added for this).
6. Press the **Tab** key to change to the Item Description field, and change it if you want (e.g. "Meter reading charge").
7. Press the **Tab** key twice to get to the Each field (no Qty is necessary).
8. Enter the amount of the charge, not including taxes, for instance "4.5".
9. Press the **Tab** key to accept the amount.
10. Check the boxes for one or more taxes under Auto-add tax, if they apply.
11. Remove the check in the Ask for meter reading box. This must be removed to indicate that it's a base rate, not a per-unit rate. If you don't do this, you'll get an error because multiple per-unit rates exist. Two other fields will still be shown below this because it's a meter rate, but leave those blank in this case.
12. Click the Save button.

Now when you meter charges, this rate will be added in addition to the per-unit charges. This will happen each time you enter a meter reading, no matter what the actual usage is or how often you do it.

As an additional note, remember that you're not limited to one transaction in a rate definition. For instance if you need to indicate more than one base charge like a service fee and separate meter reading fee, you can't create two separate base rates so just add the two Charge transactions into the one base rate.

### Electric Meter - Tiered Rates

This is where it can get a little complicated, primarily in figuring out the amounts to enter for the rate charges. Remember that only one per-unit and one base rate can apply for any set of conditions -- this is solved by using the extra fields for Applies if >= ... units and Applies if <= ... units, which were ignored in the simple examples above.

The general process is to create a pair of rates for each range of units that define a different electricity rate. (If there is no base charge then the lowest range will only need the per-unit rate, but that's the only exception.) So we need one per-unit rate and one base rate for each range, and set the applies-if parameters accordingly for each pair of rates so that only one pair applies for any given meter reading.

As an example, lets say the rate is \$.06 for the first 200 units, \$.07 for 201 to 400 units, and \$.08 for any usage above 400. In addition, there's a service charge of \$10.00 per month (presumably the same as per reading). The per-unit portion of the rates in each range is simple enough, but you need to figure out how much the fixed, or base, part should be for each range.

- For 200 and under, the base is just the \$10.00 service charge.
- For 201 to 400, we need to add the total amount for the first 200 units of usage (because the per-unit rate will only calculate the \$.07 per unit above 200 units). So  $\$.06 \times 200 = \$12$ , plus the \$10 service charge = \$22.
- Likewise for 401 and above, we need the total amount for the first 400 units. This would be the \$22 above (which includes the first 200 units), plus  $\$.07 \times 200 = \$14$  for the next 200 units (201 to 400), for a base charge of \$36.

Now we're ready to create the rate definitions. Rather than go through each step for every rate, we'll just show a table below with the appropriate entries for each rate. Hopefully by now you know the basic mechanics of adding rates.

#### Rate 1: **Base rate, up to 200 units**

Each amount: **\$10.00** (service charge)  
Ask for meter reading checkbox: **NOT checked**  
Meter allowance field: (blank)  
Applies if >= field: (blank)  
Applies if <= field: **200**

#### Rate 2: **Per-unit rate, up to 200 units**

Each amount: **\$.06**  
Ask for meter reading checkbox: **CHECKED**  
Meter allowance field: (blank)  
Applies if >= field: (blank)  
Applies if <= field: **200**

#### Rate 3: **Base rate, 201 to 400 units**

Each amount: **\$22.00** (service charge + 200 units)  
Ask for meter reading checkbox: **NOT checked**  
Meter allowance field: (blank, doesn't matter)  
Applies if >= field: **201**  
Applies if <= field: **400**

Rate 4: **Per-unit rate, 201 to 400 units**

Each amount: **\$.07**

Ask for meter reading checkbox: **CHECKED**

Meter allowance field: **200**

Applies if >= field: **201**

Applies if <= field: **400**

Rate 5: **Base rate, 401 units and up**

Each amount: **\$36.00** (service charge + 400 units)

Ask for meter reading checkbox: **NOT checked**

Meter allowance field: (blank, doesn't matter)

Applies if >= field: **401**

Applies if <= field: (blank, no upper limit)

Rate 6: **Per-unit rate, 401 units and up**

Each amount: **\$.08**

Ask for meter reading checkbox: **CHECKED**

Meter allowance field: **400**

Applies if >= field: **401**

Applies if <= field: (blank, no upper limit)

Notice that the Applies-if fields define the 3 pairs of rates. Make sure they are mutually exclusive to separate each pair -- for instance don't put 400 in rates 5 and 6, or else two sets of rates would apply to exactly 400 units.