What is a CUSIP?

CUSIP is an acronym that refers to Committee on Uniform Security Identification Procedures and the nine-digit, alphanumeric CUSIP numbers that are used to identify securities, including municipal bonds. A CUSIP number, similar to a serial number, is assigned to each maturity of a municipal security issue. The first six characters are known as the base, or CUSIP-6, and uniquely identify the bond issuer. The seventh and eighth digit identify the exact bond maturity and the ninth digit is an automatically generated “check digit.” This document provides helpful tips for obtaining CUSIP numbers.

How Can I Find a CUSIP?

The MSRB’s Electronic Municipal Market Access (EMMA®) website, at emma.msrb.org has an advanced search function that can be used to find securities and locate a CUSIP number. Other ways to locate a CUSIP number are to find it in an official statement (available on EMMA) or by consulting an external source such as a municipal securities dealer. If an investor has purchased a particular bond, the CUSIP number can be found on the confirmation of purchase and in periodic financial statements.

Searching for a CUSIP on EMMA
Searching for a security's CUSIP number on EMMA can be done through EMMA's Advanced Search tab in the main navigation menu of the EMMA website.

Use the Security Information Filters to enter known information about the security, such as state, the name of the bond issuer and/or a description of the issue.

**Sample Search**

For example, an investor may wish to search for an education security issued in the Commonwealth of Virginia by the City of Chesapeake.
This sample search returns a list of securities that match the search criteria. Examine the listed security descriptions, maturity dates, dated dates and other information to determine which security is the correct match. Click on that security description.

The security description leads to the security details page for that security, which displays the security’s CUSIP number. The security details page also provides access to the associated official statement and continuing disclosure documents for that security.
Locating a CUSIP on an Official Statement

CUSIP numbers are also typically available on the first couple of pages of the official statement, which is the primary offering document. Municipal securities dealers are obligated to provide investors with a copy of the official statement or tell them that it can be obtained electronically on EMMA.

Locating a CUSIP through External Parties

If an investor would like to locate a CUSIP number but cannot find the particular security on EMMA, he or she can contact a municipal securities dealer. If the investor has purchased a bond, he or she can find the CUSIP number on the confirmation received from the dealer. MSRB Rule G-15 requires the dealer to send confirmation of a municipal trade to the investor that includes the CUSIP number, among other relevant information. Also, the CUSIP number would be listed on the investor’s periodic financial statements.

Direct Access to Security Details

Using a CUSIP number is the best way to access a bond on EMMA. If an investor knows the CUSIP number of a security, entering the CUSIP in the quick search box provides direct access to the security details page for that security. Quick Search is located above the main navigation menu in the right-hand corner of every page of EMMA.

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