



## **Sage advice from the Accountability Wizard: *NOW is the time to prepare for winter.***

The Accountability Wizard is an online review service that helps nonprofit organizations demonstrate responsibility, integrity and transparency to their donors and constituents. Nonprofits that meet the Charity Review Council's standards are granted the Council's "Meets Standards" seal, which can be used on web sites and in promotional and fundraising materials. The seal provides a clear indicator of a nonprofit organization's commitment to accountable and ethical practices.

### **How does it work?**

The review process requires board involvement and the Council staff's independent verification of information. It's completed in a few easy

steps:

- 1) Complete a simple online pre-enrollment form to learn if the process is right for your organization.
- 2) Assemble the documents you'll need for the process.
- 3) Answer the Wizard's questions online.
- 4) The Council reviews and verifies information and issues a report.
- 5) You are encouraged to respond to the report for donors who visit your web page on the Council's Smart Givers Network website ([smartgivers.org](http://smartgivers.org)).

### **How much does it cost?**

You pay one percent of one percent (.0001) of your annual expenses, good for three years (a minimum of \$100 and a maximum of \$1,500). Organizations with expenses less than \$2 million qualify for a 50% discount through a Marquette Financial Companies grant—while funds last.

### **When should you start?**

The Wizard says: *Summer is the perfect time to complete a review.* Enroll NOW to be done in time for the holiday giving season. While the Accountability Wizard questions can usually be completed in one or two sittings, participants have up to 60 days to make any needed changes in order to comply with standards. Charities Review Council staff are available to help you make those changes.

The Wizard says: *Please keep an October 1 deadline in mind.* If you are finished by October 1, you will be listed in the winter printed Giving Guide and featured in the holiday advertising campaign that includes Twin Cities and Greater Minnesota newspapers, reaching hundreds of thousands of people statewide. Go to [www.smartgivers.org](http://www.smartgivers.org) and click on the Accountability Wizard icon to get started.

Join more than 300 nonprofits – including Second Harvest Heartland and a number of our member agency partners - that have completed the Accountability Wizard review and proudly display the "Meets Standards" seal on their websites and other materials. Together we are building public trust in Minnesota's nonprofit sector.