MONTANA
Department of Transportation

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# MDT Civil 3D State Kit - Create Data Link Table

YOUTUBE VIDEO DOCUMENTATION

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# OVERVIEW

Civil 3D can connect an Excel file to an AutoCAD table using data links. A data link reads data from an Excel file's named range(s) to populate AutoCAD tables. The **Create Data Link Table** command automates the data link creation process and the creation of AutoCAD tables.

Unlike inserting Excel data into a drawing as an OLE object, using data links and AutoCAD tables results in searchable text and eliminates OLE display issues and plotting errors.

**Create Data Link Table** runs on a modeless dialog, so the user can interact with the rest of the Civil 3D application while the command is active.

The **Create Data Link Table** command is developed and provided by WisDOT.

# COMPANION DOCUMENTATION

YouTube Video Link: https://youtu.be/ezq4yRfOphE?si=vmzPCYYw77LjAyCX

## USING THE COMMAND

**Prerequisite:** The Excel File must have a named range defined for each source Excel table that will become an AutoCAD table.

1. Type **MDTCreateDataLinksAndTables** at the command line or press the **Create Data Link Table** ribbon button.
2. The Create Data Links and Tables dialog box will appear.

Data Links tab

1. Add named range(s) from an Excel file.
    a. Use the open file button to select an Excel file.
2. The Select Named Ranges list will populate with all named ranges within the selected Excel file.
    a. Use the Filter box to filter the list, if desired.
3. Select a named range to be made into a data link. More than one data link can be created at a time. (Use *ctrl-select, shift-select*, or the buttons provided to select multiple.)
4. Path Type
    a. Choose Relative Path if the Excel file is stored within the Civil 3D project. **(Recommended)**
    b. Absolute path can be chosen, if necessary.

5. Settings
    a. Allow writing to source file: This allows the source Excel file to be directly edited from Civil 3D. **(Recommended)**
    b. Use Excel Formatting: All formatting established in the Excel file will be displayed in the Civil 3D AutoCAD table. **(Recommended)**
6. Click “OK” to create the Data Links
    a. Once finished, a “Process Complete.” message will show at the bottom of the dialog box.
7. Repeat steps 1-6 to create more data links, if desired.
8. Switch to the Tables tab to create AutoCAD tables.

<u>Tables tab</u>

1. If data links are in the drawing, the Select Data Links list will populate with all data links that are available.
    a. Use the Filter box to filter the list, if desired.
2. Select data links from the list to create tables in model space. One data link represents a single table to be created. More than one table can be created at a time. (Use *ctrl-select, shift-select*, or the buttons provided to select multiple.)
    a. The process of creating tables from data links is resource intensive. **While it is possible to create tables from every single data link at once, it could take considerable time to do so.**
3. Table Style
    a. Select an AutoCAD table style. (The desired table style(s) must already be in the drawing.)
4. Click “OK” to create the tables.
    a. When the tables have finished processing, a “Process Complete.” message will show at the bottom of the dialog box.
5. Select a location in model space to place the table(s).
    a. If multiple data links were selected, all of the tables will be placed in a single row.
    b. The location of tables already placed can be adjusted while the modeless dialog box remains open.
6. Repeat steps 1-5 to create more tables or press “Close” to exit.

Once the tables are created, they can be updated to reflect any changes made to the source named range in the linked Excel file. If a source named range expands in rows/columns, the table in the drawing will also expand.