That CAD Girl

How can I access and use my old Civil 3d, Land Desktop, Eagle Point or Terra Model data?

September 30, 2015
The simple answer is "use LandXML".

From my [Picks and Clicks: LandXML Data](#) article in Professional Surveyor

What Is LandXML?

LandXML refers to a file format (.xml) containing data that has been generated from a civil engineering or land surveying software program.

If you're hearing about it for the first time and want to learn more about the uses and acceptance of the LandXML initiative, visit www.landxml.org. According to their page LandXML.org in a Nutshell, "… LandXML.org is committed to

That CAD Girl

providing a non-proprietary data standard (LandXML), driven by an industry consortium of partners."

Simply put, the easiest way to convert, transfer, and archive data between Civil 3D, Carlson Software, Land Desktop, Eagle Point, TerraModel, and many other programs is to use the Import from LandXML and Export to LandXML functions available in these programs. Additionally, many machine control systems allow you to import LandXML files. I am most familiar with the Carlson and Autodesk families of civil/survey programs, so most examples in this article refer to them.

For a little more current look at where LandXML is today, you don't want to miss this archived webinar from September 2015: [If You're Not Using LandXML, You Should Be… Yes, All of You!](#)

The very best advice I can give to anyone who has years of archived Land Desktop, Terra Model or Eagle Point data and is still able to get into and run those programs is to start exporting all of it to LandXML files — starting yesterday! Many of these programs will be (or already are) impossible to re-install on new Windows computers so take

That CAD Girl

advantage of it while you can.

Since LandXML is the industry standard, having all that data in the generic XML format virtually guarantees that you will be able to convert and work with it in any new software package you use in the future.

In addition to LandXML, Carlson gives you a bunch of different ways to import, export and convert data to and from other desktop, field and machine control software. For instance, here's the menu for *Import/Export Surface Data* that's in Construction, Civil & Survey:

Convert LDT/Civil3D Surface Drawing
Import National Elevation Dataset
Import Google Earth Surface
Import Topcon TN3 File
Import Trimble TTM File

Export Trimble TTM File
Export Topcon TN3 File

That CAD Girl

Civil 3d data is, by far, the most difficult data to share…
In some cases it's literally impossible to save data such as
points and surfaces and be able to use it in any previous
version of Civil 3d!

However, you can use the EXPORTTOAUTOCAD commands in Civil 3d
to basically explode all the custom entities so they can be
opened and used in other programs or in earlier versions of
Civil 3d. Of course, by exploding everything, you essentially
lose any perceived benefit of working on the drawing in Civil
3d.

That CAD Girl

That CAD Girl

If you find the material on this website helpful, please consider supporting That CAD Girl by requesting a custom proposal or emailing us at ContactUs@ThatCADGirl.com the next time you need to renew your maintenance, upgrade or purchase new software.