## Welcome to WESTARM!

The Westchester County Archives and Records Center's Archives and Records Management System

Through a combination of written instructions and screen-shots, this User's Manual will assist Records Coordinators and other authorized departmental Records Center users in learning the WESTARM system, and will serve as a reference manual in the future as new record transfers are made to the Records Center.

During the initial introduction period, any questions or comments about WESTARM should be directed to: Stephanie Chavarri
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## SIGNING ON TO WESTARM AND SELECTING A RECORD TYPE

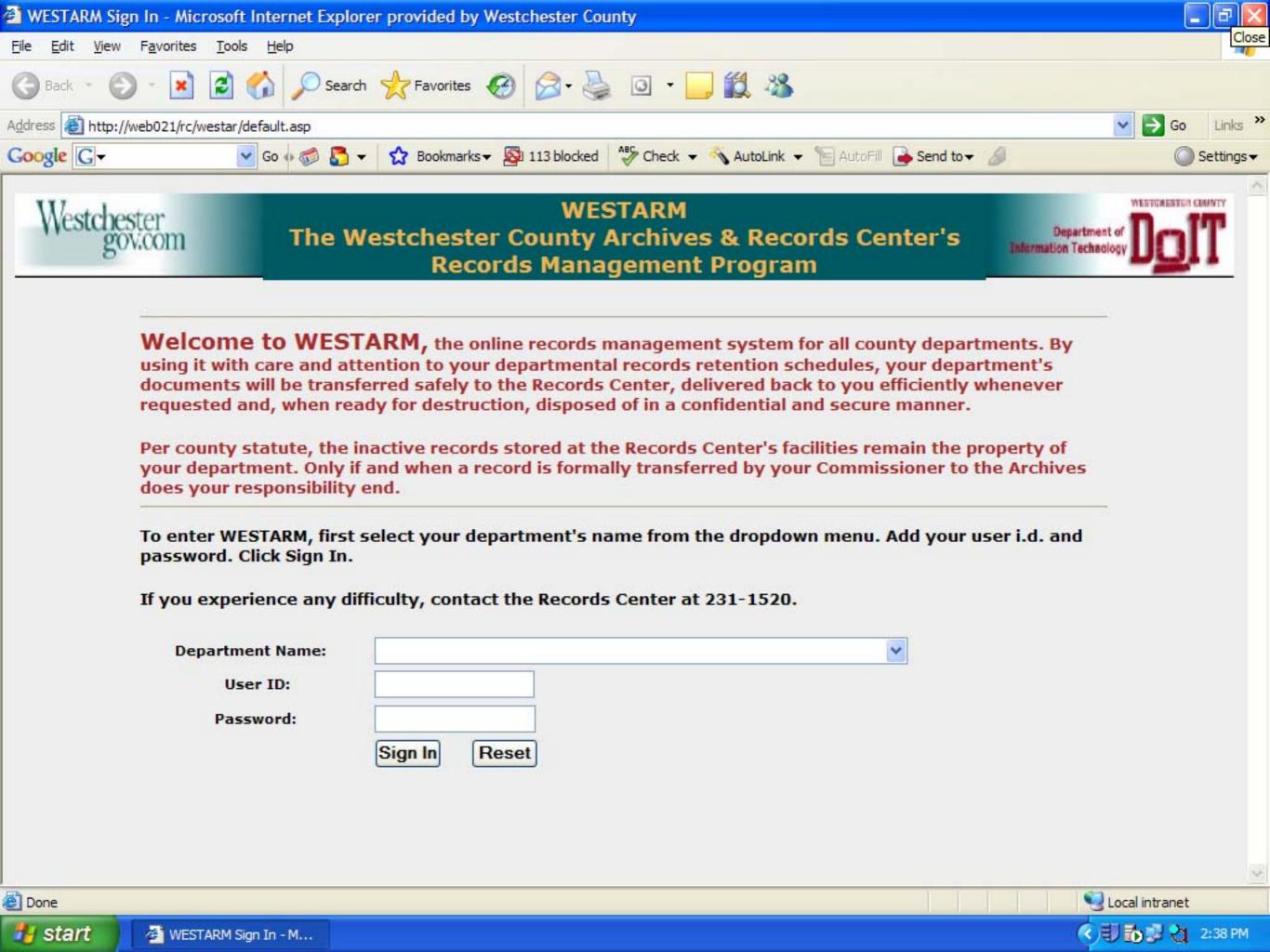
The web address for WESTARM is: http://wgapps/Westar/Default.asp

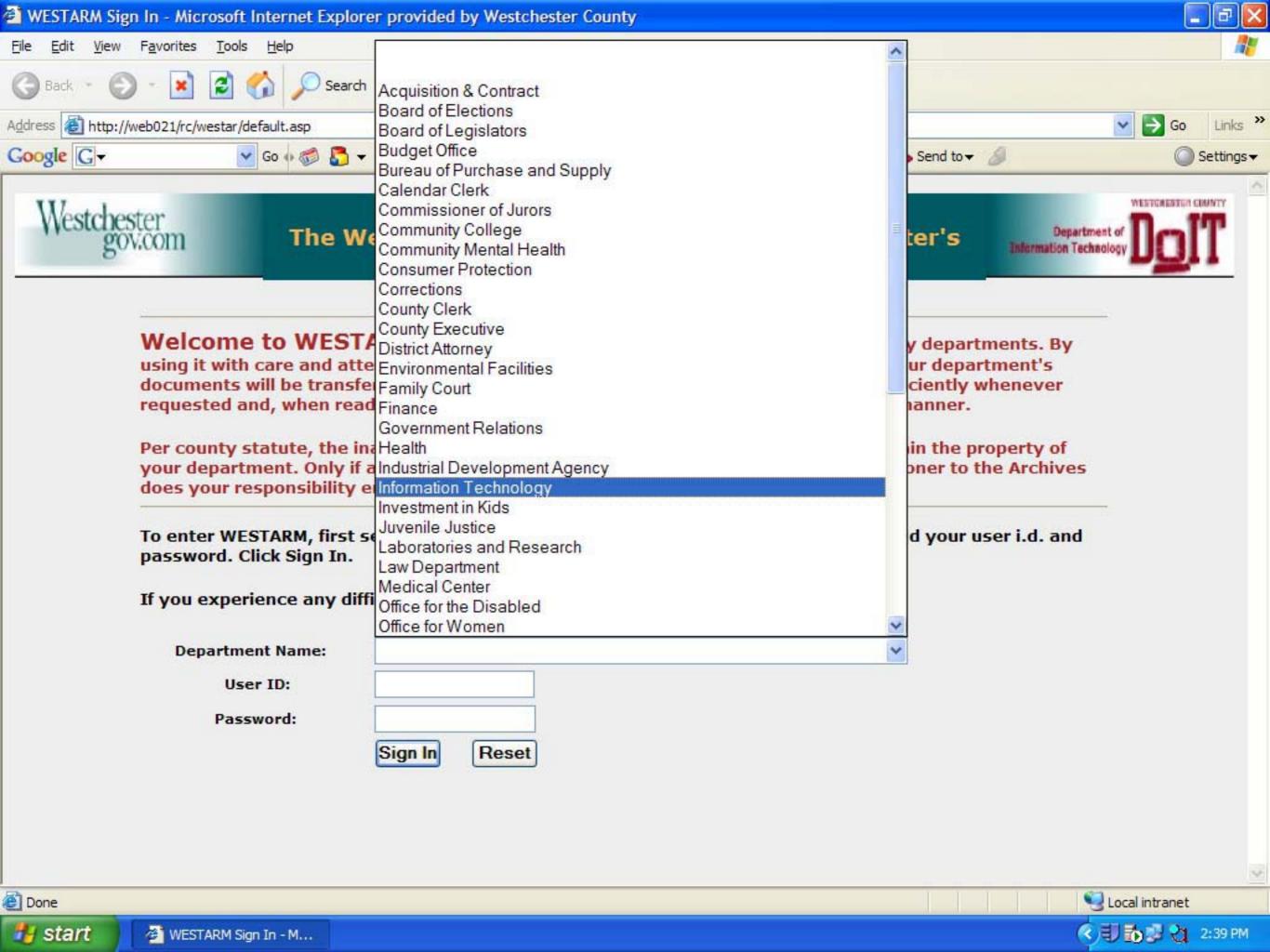
If you think that you will be using WESTARM frequently, you may want to make this a permanent shortcut on your computer's desktop. Otherwise, you can simply type in the URL each time you need to access WESTARM, or access WESTARM through the Records Center's page on the County's intranet. Please note that WESTARM can only be accessed from a County computer.

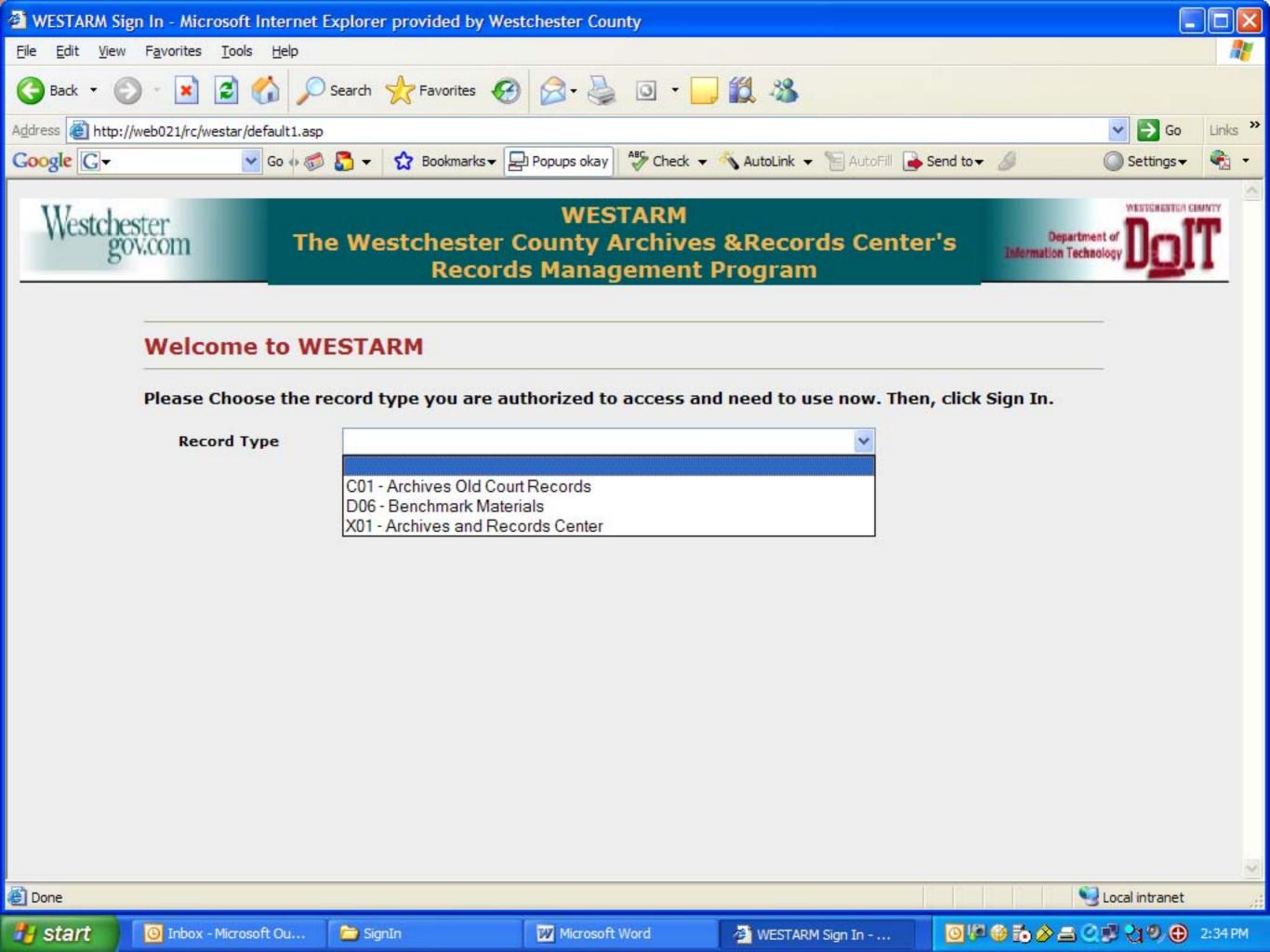
The three screen shots in this section of the user's manual show the first and second screens that you will see when you first enter the WESTARM program.

Use the drop-down menu on the "Department Name" line to find your department name. You will have been informed by the Records Center staff what your user ID and password are. In most instances, your user id will be the same as your County user id. Your password for WESTARM is unique to the WESTARM program and **is not** the same password you use to sign onto your computer. If you forget what your password is, contact the Records Center staff.

After entering the correct user ID and password, and clicking the "Sign In" button, you will progress to the second screen. Select the correct Record Type from the drop-down menu. Some users may have only one Record Type to choose from, while others may have more than one. *Note:* If you have more than one record type to choose from, please make sure that you are selecting the correct record type for the records you wish to work with. Failure to do so will result in the rejection of transfer sheets, the inability to locate previously stored records, and other confusion. If you have any question about what record type you should be using for a given group of records, please contact the Records Center staff.







## **CREATING NEW TRANSFER LISTS**

Once you have signed on to WESTARM and selected the correct Record Type for the records that you wish to create a Transfer List for, to begin the Transfer List process, select the "New" option, under the "Transfer" option on the left-hand side of the main welcome page.

The next page that will appear is informational, displaying departmental information. If you discover any errors in the information shown, please contact the Records Center so that the information can be corrected. Simply click "Continue" on this page.

The second page displays the "Transfer List #". Note down the number in an easy to remember place. You will need that number in the event that you need to go back and edit the Transfer List once you have submitted it to the Records Center, or if you otherwise need to refer to it in the future.

The third page displayed is the main data entry page. The Transfer List # will automatically be displayed. The other fields on the Transfer List are: Box #, Box Description, From Date, To Date, and Retention Code. <u>All</u> of these fields <u>must</u> be filled in for each and every box included on the Transfer List. The WESTARM system will not allow a box to be saved if any of these fields are left blank.

The following rules / suggestions apply for the fields to be completed for each box:

#### **Box #**:

In the past, the Record Center has assigned box numbers consecutively <u>within each</u>
 <u>department</u> as boxes were sent to the Records Center. With the WESTARM system, this will
 no longer be the case. Boxes will be assigned consecutive "Inventory Control" numbers as they

## **CREATING NEW TRANSFER LISTS**

are received by the Records Center, regardless of what department they are received from. However, when creating Transfer Lists, the numbering system within each department is being retained. The next starting box number (which is different from the "Inventory Control" number which will later be assigned by the Records Center) will be displayed at the top of the main data entry screen. Use this number in the "Box #" field, and increase it by one for each consecutive box entered.

- Note: If there are outstanding Transfer Lists that have not yet been approved by the Records Center, the box number shown will not be the correct "next" box number to use. The likelihood of this happening without your knowledge increases if you work in a department that has multiple users creating transfer sheets for the same record type at the same time. In that situation, be sure to <u>always</u> check the "Pending/Draft" transfer sheet listing before creating a new Transfer List to make sure you are using the correct Box number for your Transfer List.
- Each Transfer List can have up to 60 boxes included in it.
- All Box #s must be three digits.

#### **Box Description**:

- The Box Description field can be up to 200 characters long.
- It is recommended that if the records being entered are the same type, that the same description be used for them. There is a search function available within the WESTARM system [see the "Search" heading on the left-hand side of the page]. If the same description is

## **CREATING NEW TRANSFER LISTS**

used for similar records, in the event that all similar records need to be retrieved from the Records Center, or otherwise located, using the same description for them will make this task much easier.

- The use of abbreviations, unless space is an issue, is discouraged. As noted above, there is a search function available within the WESTARM system, and unless everyone knows, and uses, the same abbreviations, locating records that have been described using abbreviations may not easily be found when needed.
- All Box Descriptions must include the date(s) of the records. This will make it much easier to identify the records that are in the boxes. Transfer lists submitted without date information in the Box Descriptions will be rejected. If it is not possible to determine the exact date of the records (or would be confusing to include them in the Box Description), then the Box Description should conclude with information on when the records were sent to the Records Center. For example "Various closed legal cases, sent to the Records Center April 2008". Although this is not ideal, at least it gives some information about when the records were last looked at / dealt with. (See additional comments below under "From Date" and "To Date")
- No formatting should be attempted on the text in the Box Description field (such as using the "Enter" key to try to set up paragraphs). The Box Description field is part of a larger database and it is not possible to format fields in a database. If you wish to set off information in the Box Description field, use keyboard characters such as dashes (--), hyphens (-), colons (:); semicolons (;), etc.

## **CREATING NEW TRANSFER LISTS**

#### From Date:

- The "From Date" is the earliest date of the records in the box. The format is MM/DD/YYYY.
- If the date of the records in the box is only given as a year (or years), for example, 2000, then the "From Date" should be January 1 of that year in this example: 01/01/2000. Similarly, if only a month is given as the date of the records, the "From Date" should be the first of the month. For example March 2000 should be entered as 03/01/2000.
- If the date of the records is unknown and it is <u>strongly discouraged</u> by the Records Center to send records with unknown dates as a last resort the date that the records are being sent to the Records Center can be used. In that case, a note to that effect <u>should be included</u> in the Box Description. For example: (Sent to Records Center October 23, 2007) and then the "From Date" and "To Date" will both be 10/23/2007.

#### To Date:

- The "To Date" is the latest date of the records in the box. The format is MM/DD/YYYY. It is from this date that the Disposition Date of the records is determined, based on the retention period assigned by the appropriate New York State Disposition and Retention Schedule. Therefore, it is extremely important that this date be as accurate as possible.
- If the date of the records in the box is only a year (or years), for example, 2000, then the "To Date" should be December 31 of that year in this example: 12/31/2000. Similarly, if only a

## **CREATING NEW TRANSFER LISTS**

month is given as the date of the records, the "To Date" should be the last of the month. For example March 2000 should be entered as 03/31/2000. (Remember "30 days have September, April, May, and November, all the rest have 31, excepting February which alone has 28, and one day more we add to it each year in four." © ©)

• If the date of the records is unknown – and it is <u>strongly discouraged</u> by the Records Center to send records with unknown dates – as a last resort the date that the records are being sent to the Records Center can be used. In that case, a note to that effect <u>should be included</u> in the Box Description. For example: (Sent to Records Center October 23, 2007) and then the "From Date" and "To Date" will both be 10/23/2007. **Please note that using this method will extend the retention period of the records and increase the cost of storage of these records.** 

#### **Retention Code**:

- There is a drop-down menu to use to select the appropriate retention code for the records in the box. Only one retention code can be assigned for each box. It has always been the policy of the Records Center that only records with the same retention code should be stored in the same box. This prevents records from being stored longer than necessary when half of them in the box are ready for disposition, but the others need to be retained for a longer period. This now becomes imperative because only one retention code can be assigned per box.
- All boxes must have a retention code assigned to them in order to be sent to the Records
   <u>Center</u>. It is not sufficient to simply assign a disposition date.

## **CREATING NEW TRANSFER LISTS**

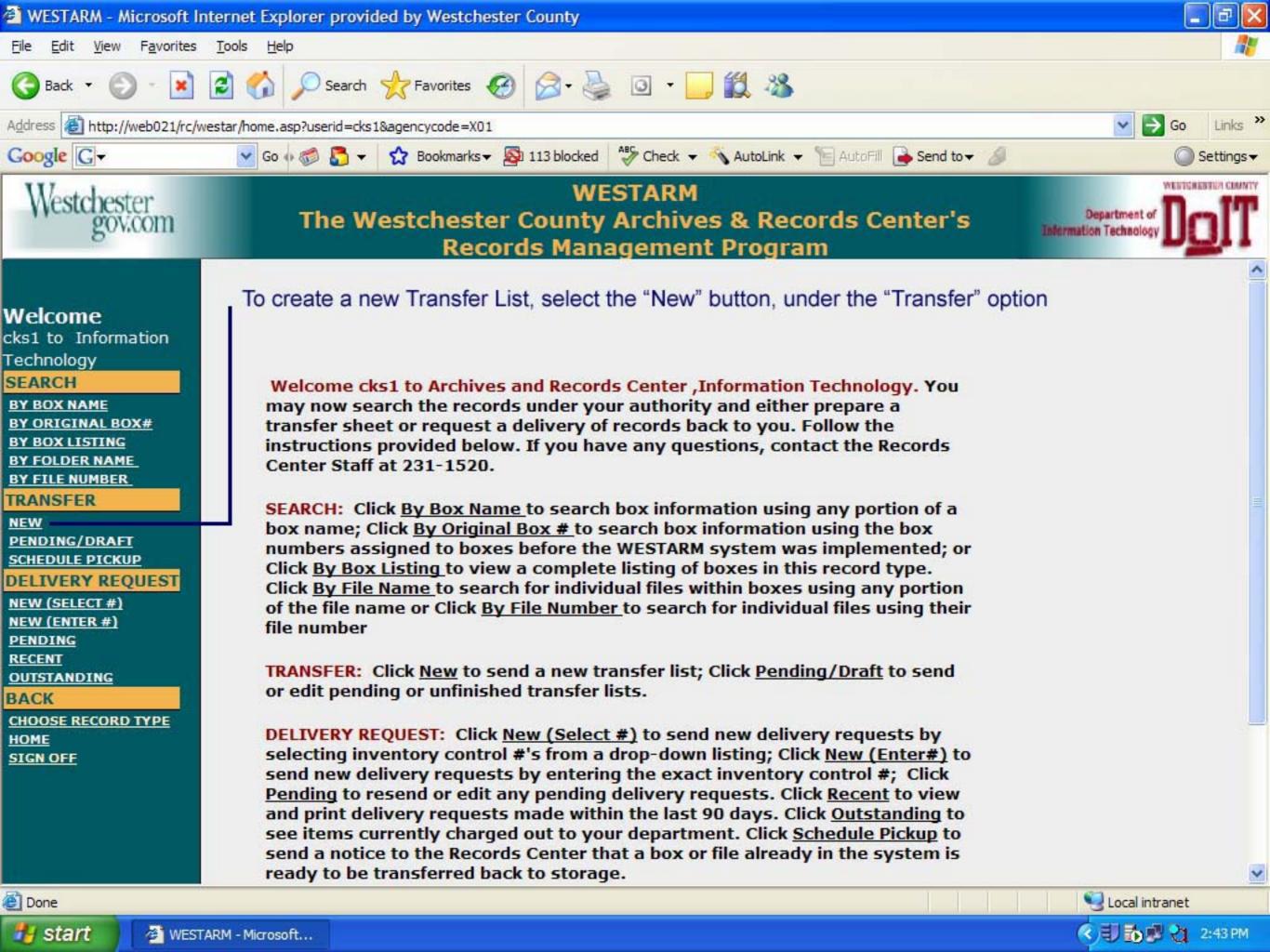
- If you are unsure of the appropriate retention code for the records in the box, please contact the Records Center staff.
- If you are unable to locate the appropriate retention code in the list of retention codes, please contact the Records Center staff.
- Once you have assigned a retention code and saved the box, the projected disposition date will appear in the "Boxes View" portion of the "Box Information" screen. If you have any questions about the assigned "Disposition Date" (which is based on the time periods in the State Disposition and Retention Schedule), please contact the Records Center staff.
- Note: The CO-2 Records Retention and Disposition Schedule has been adopted by the Westchester County Board of Legislators as the retention policy to be followed by all Westchester County departments. Deviations from this schedule should not be made without written explanation as to why by the head of the department making the departure from the CO-2.

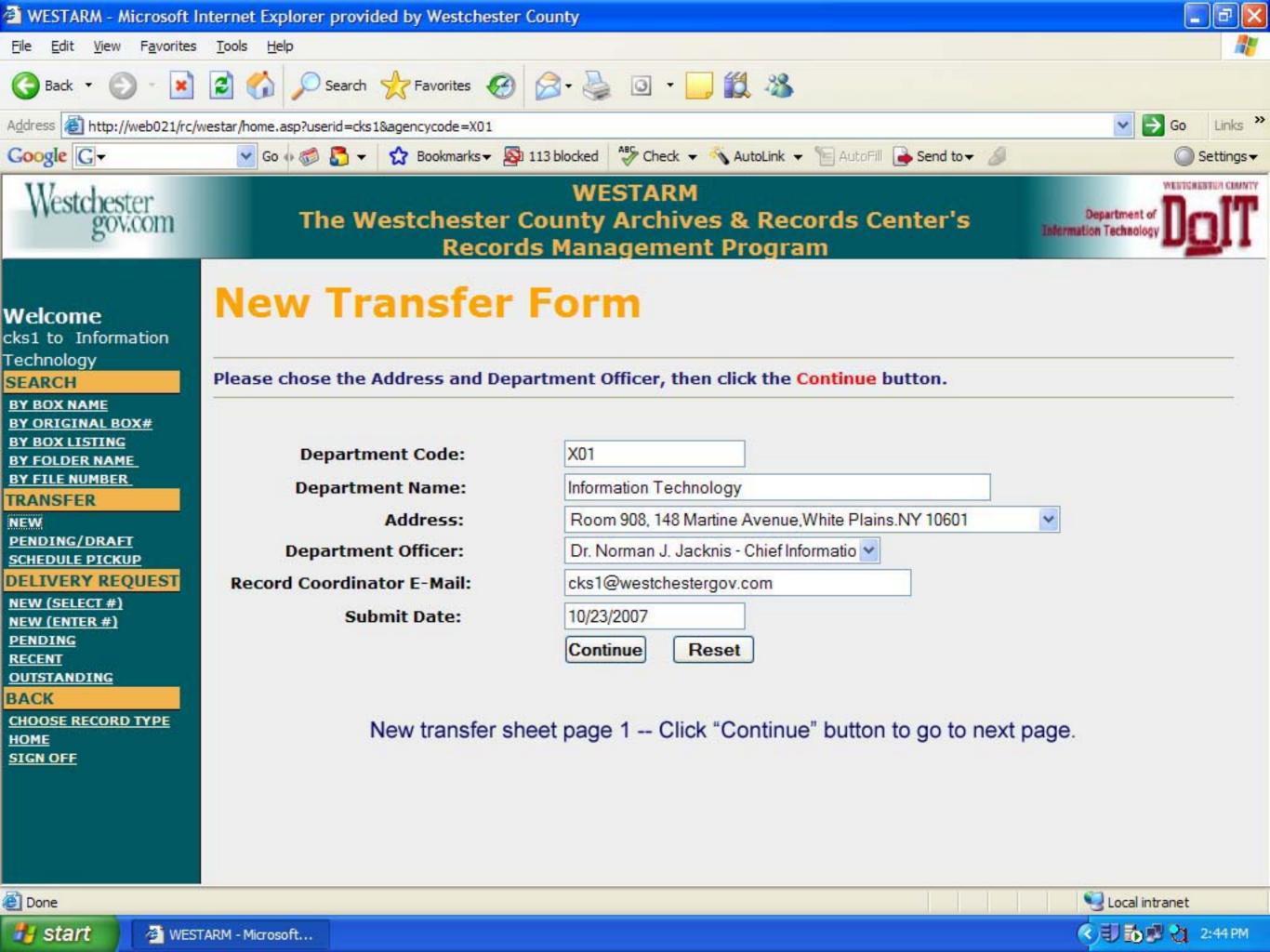
Once all boxes have been added to a Transfer List, all folders added (if necessary – see separate section), and all necessary edits made (see separate section), the Transfer List is ready to be submitted to the Records Center for approval. To do this, select the "Send Finished Transfer List to Records Center" button at the top of the main data entry page.

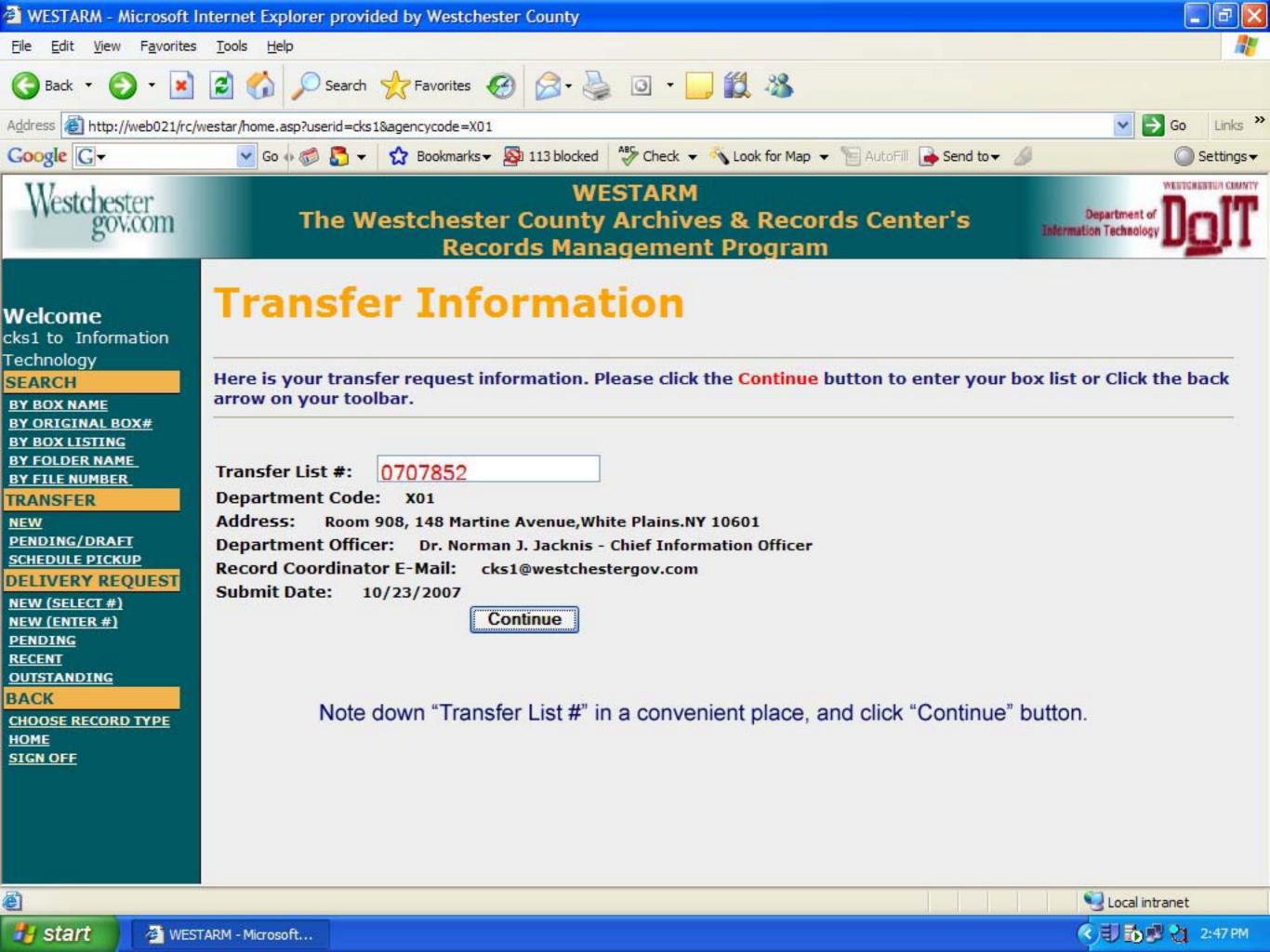
## **CREATING NEW TRANSFER LISTS**

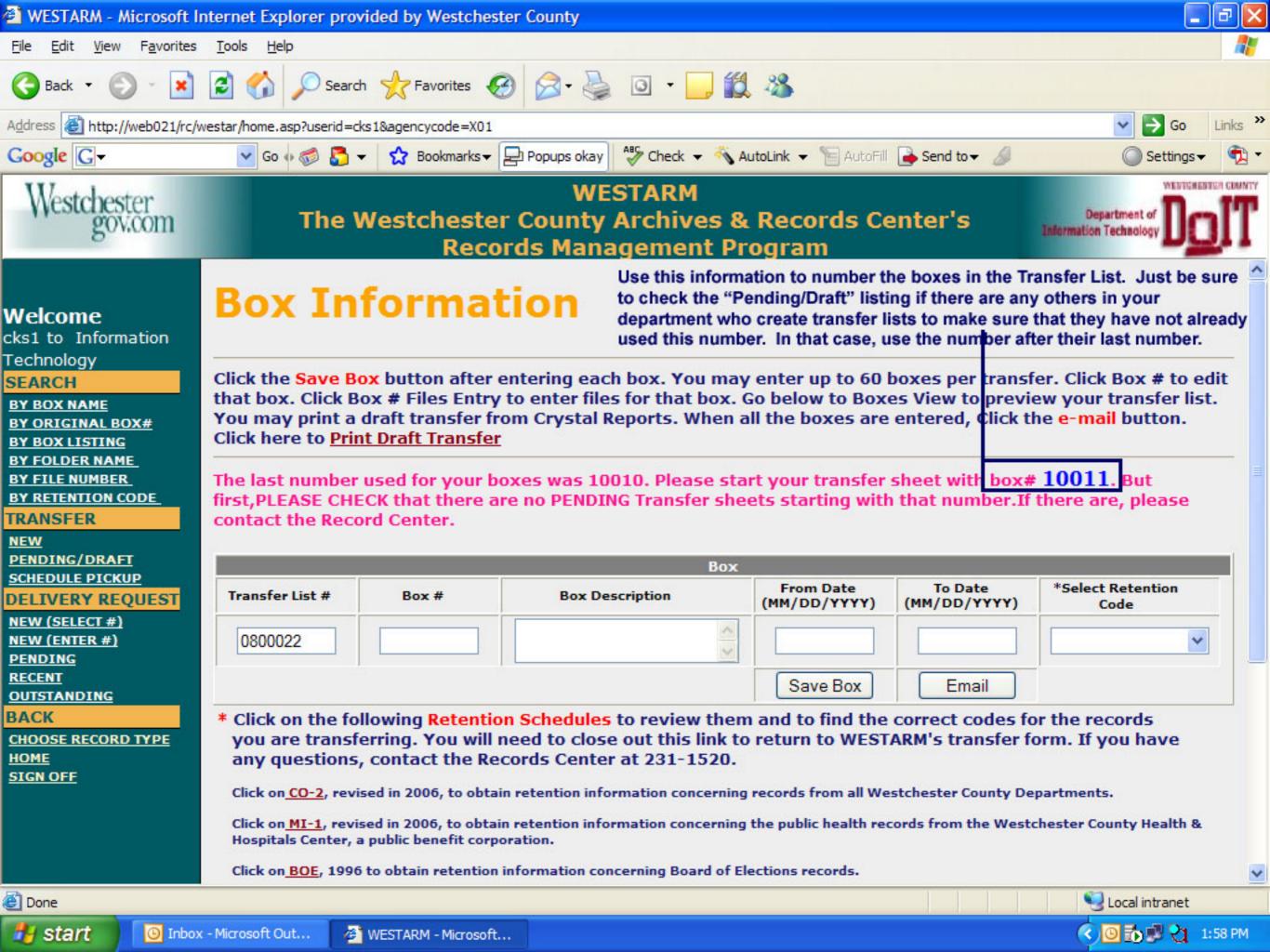
After receiving notification that new Transfer Lists have been received from a department, the Records Center staff will review them, approve or reject them (usually reserved for instances when there are problems with the retention code(s) or the dates of the records), assign final box numbers to the boxes, print out and provide box labels to the department, and provide final copies of the Transfer Lists with the final box numbers.

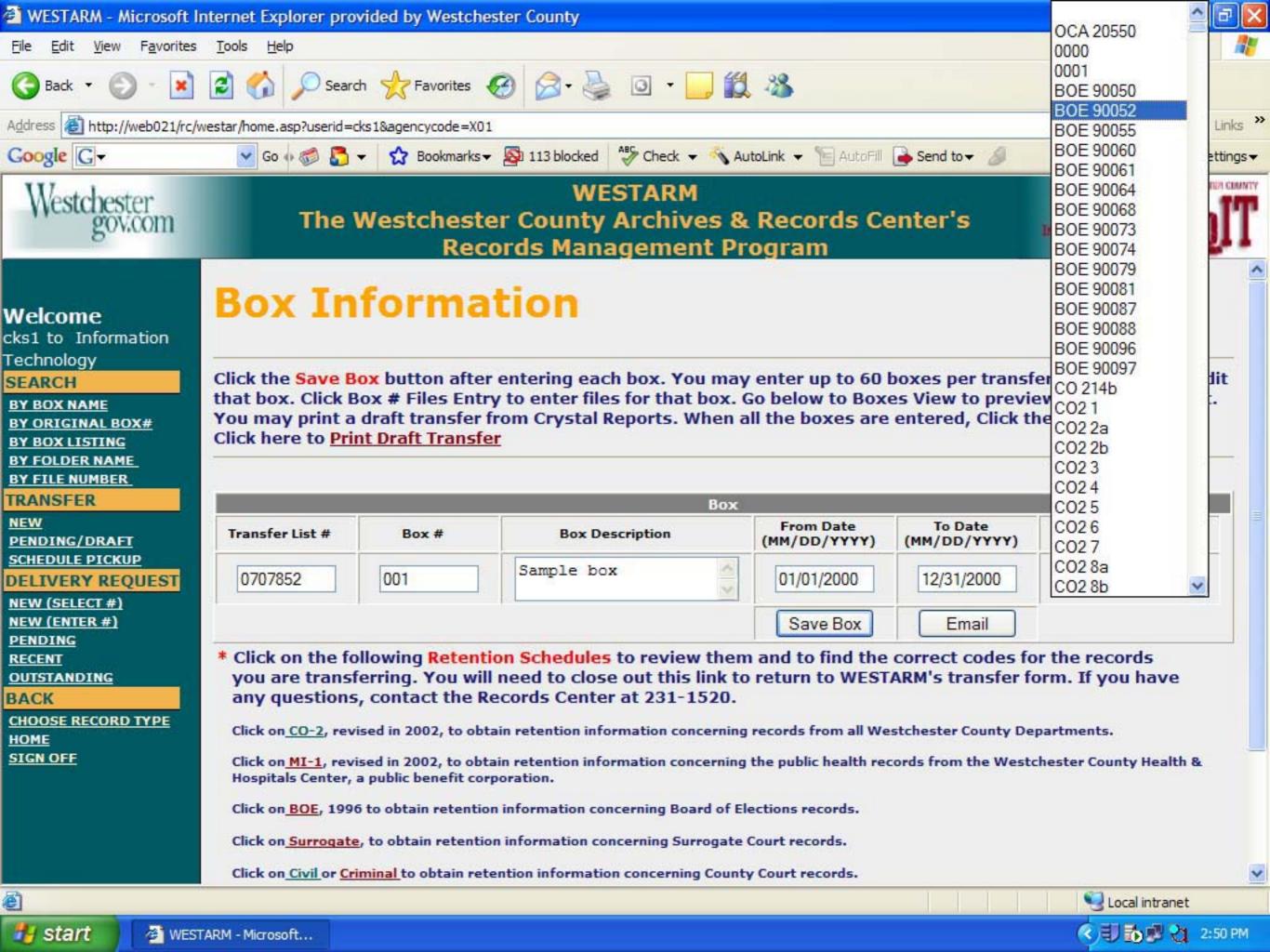
Once the department receives the labels, pick-up of the boxes for transfer to the Records Center can be scheduled.

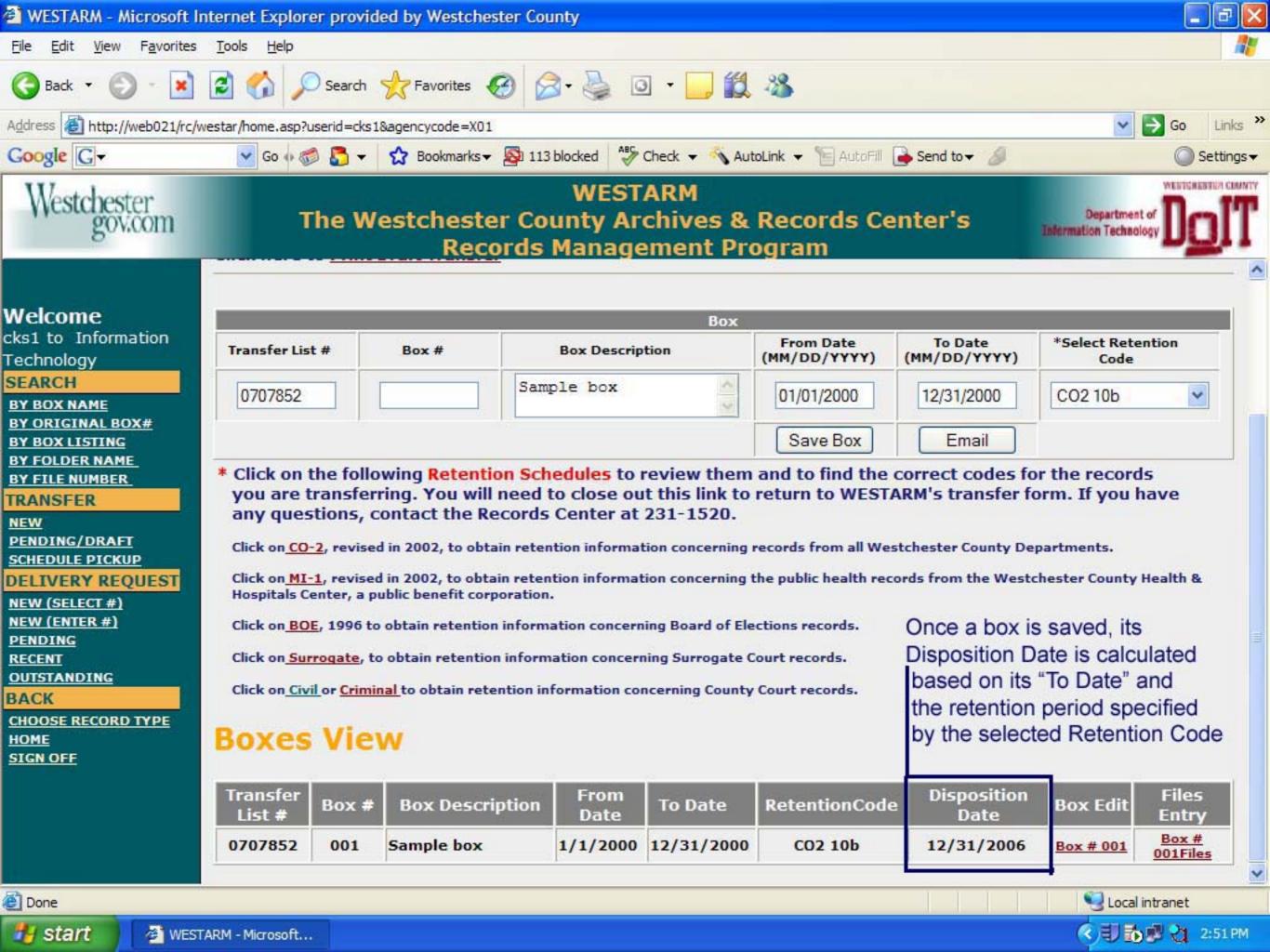


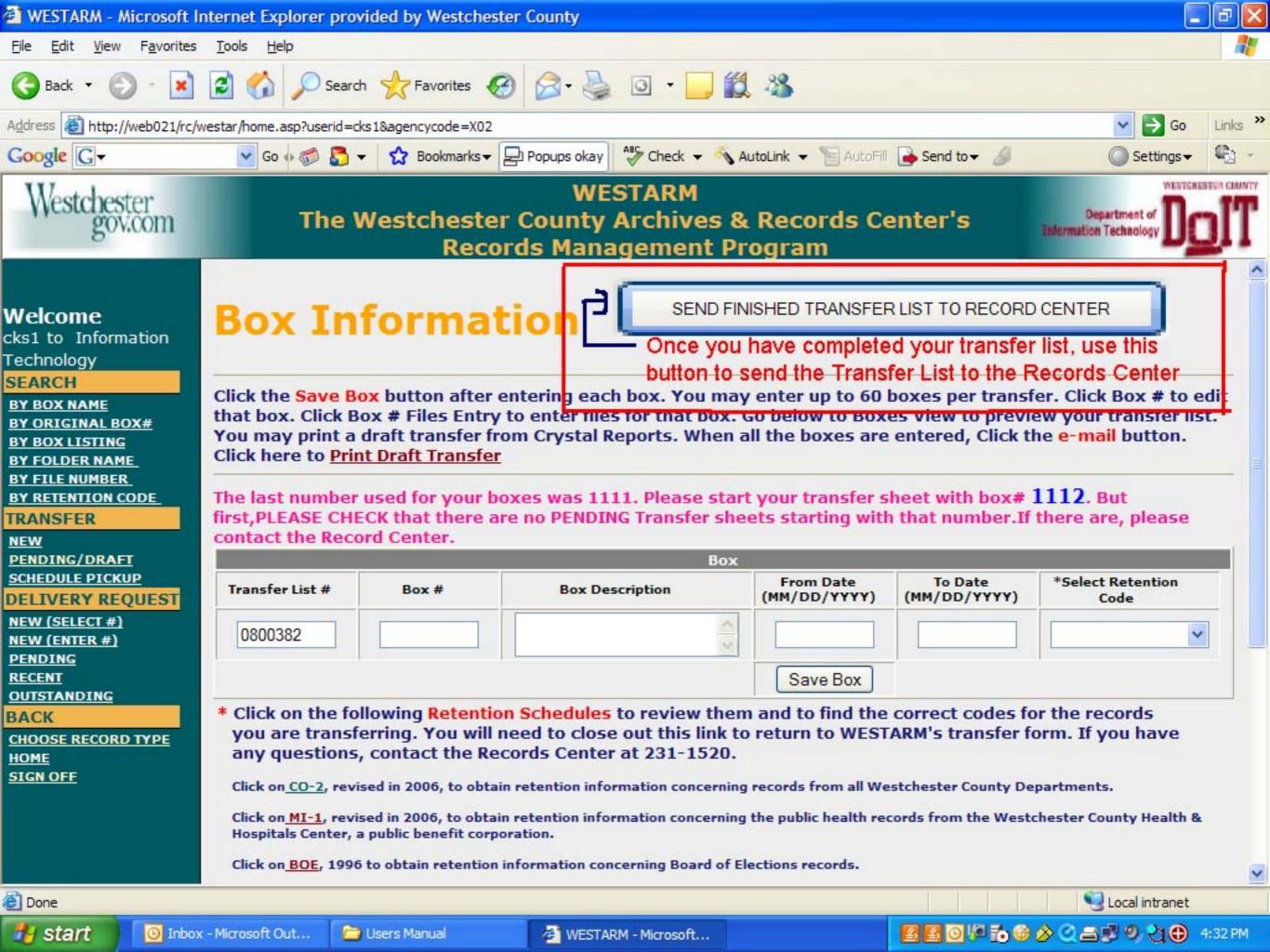


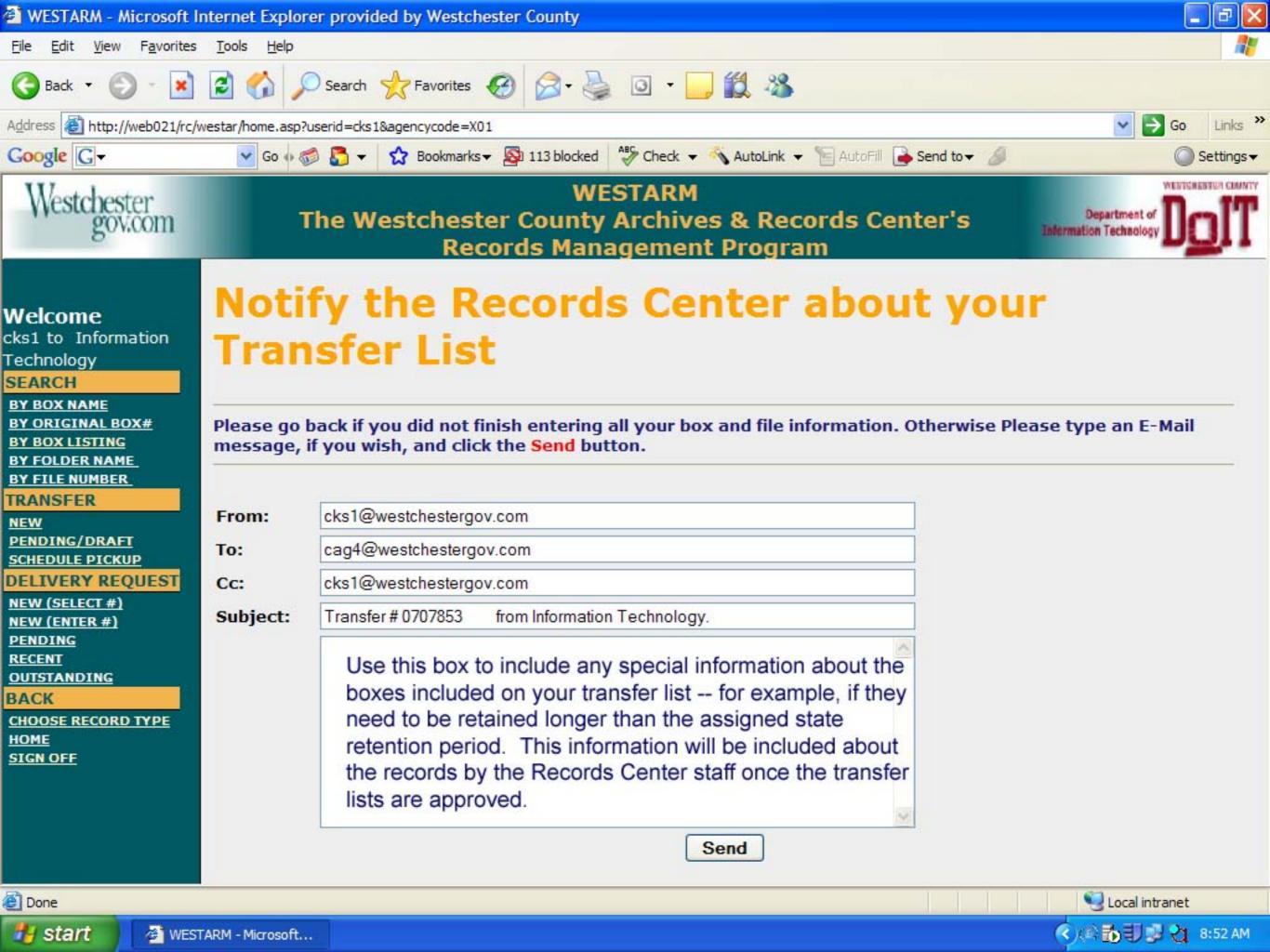










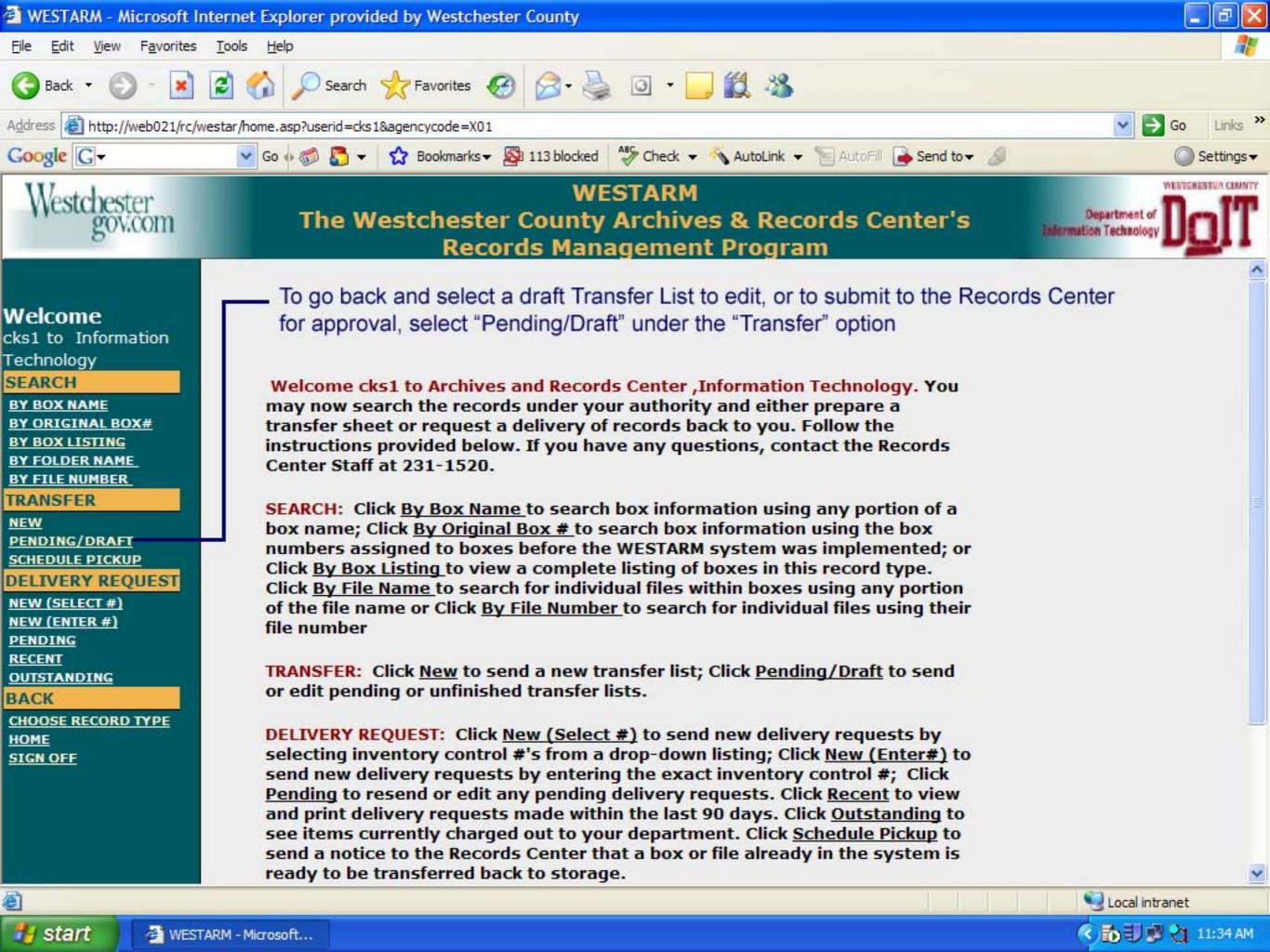


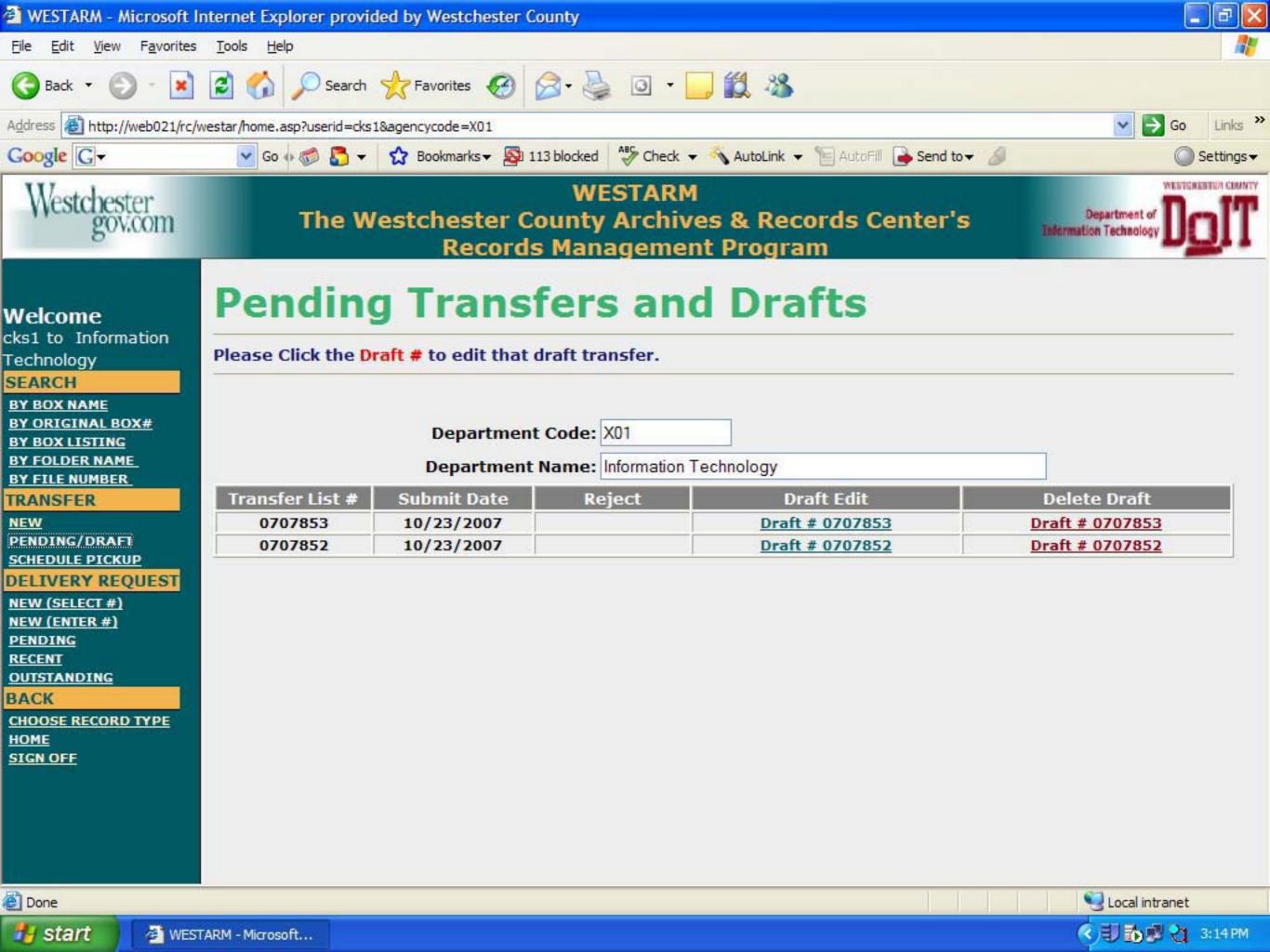
## **EDITING TRANSFER LISTS**

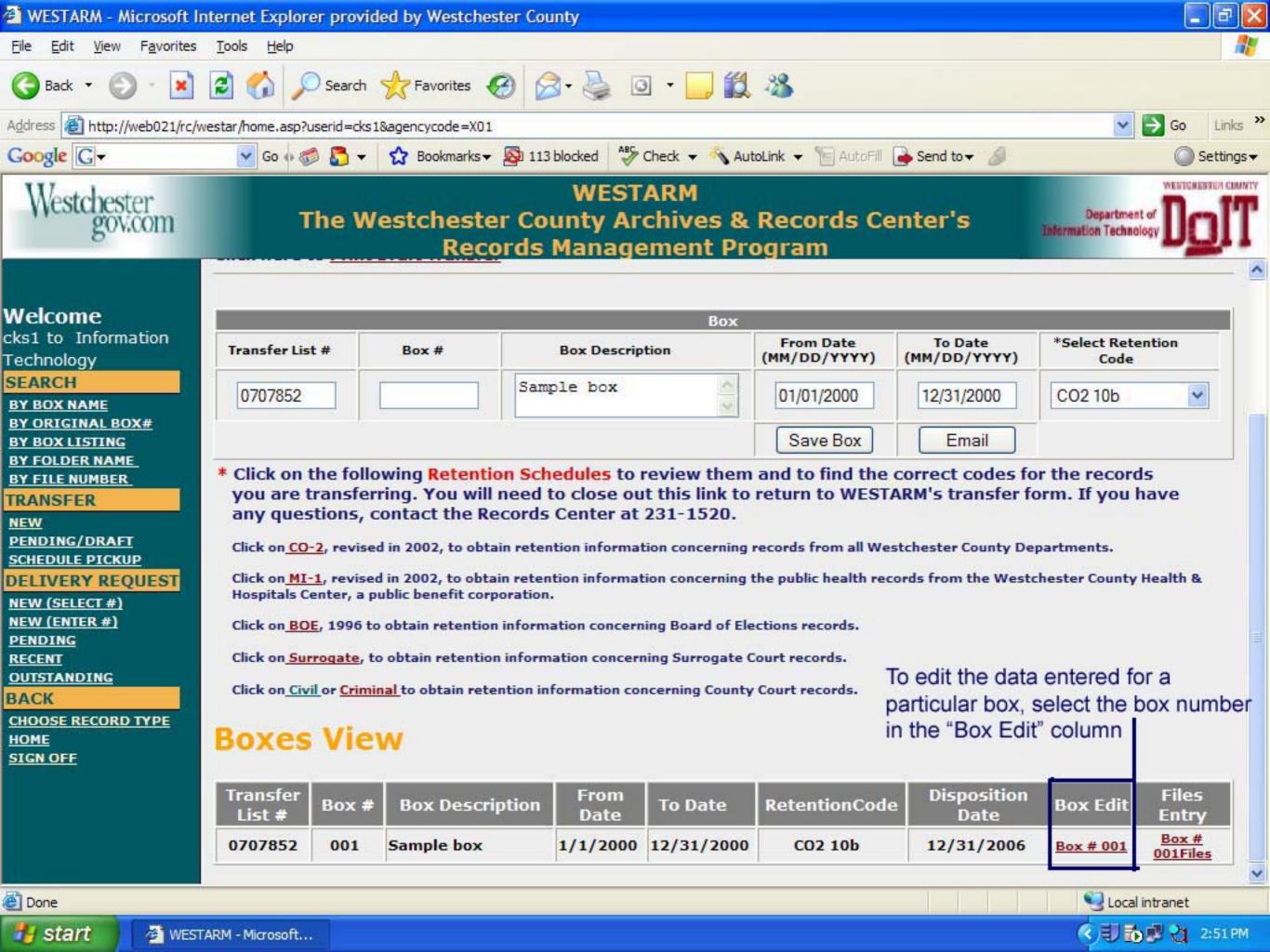
Whenever data entry is being done, some typographical errors are inevitable. With the WESTARM system, however, correcting them is an easy task. To do this, as you are reviewing the list of boxes in the "Boxes View" in the Transfer List on the screen, simply select the box number to be edited from the "Box Edit" column. [If the draft Transfer List has been printed out to be reviewed and you are no longer in the WESTARM system, you can return to the appropriate Transfer List through the list of "Pending/Draft" transfer lists from the main welcome page. Simply select the appropriate Transfer List # from the list that appears and then proceed to select the necessary box number that needs to be edited.]

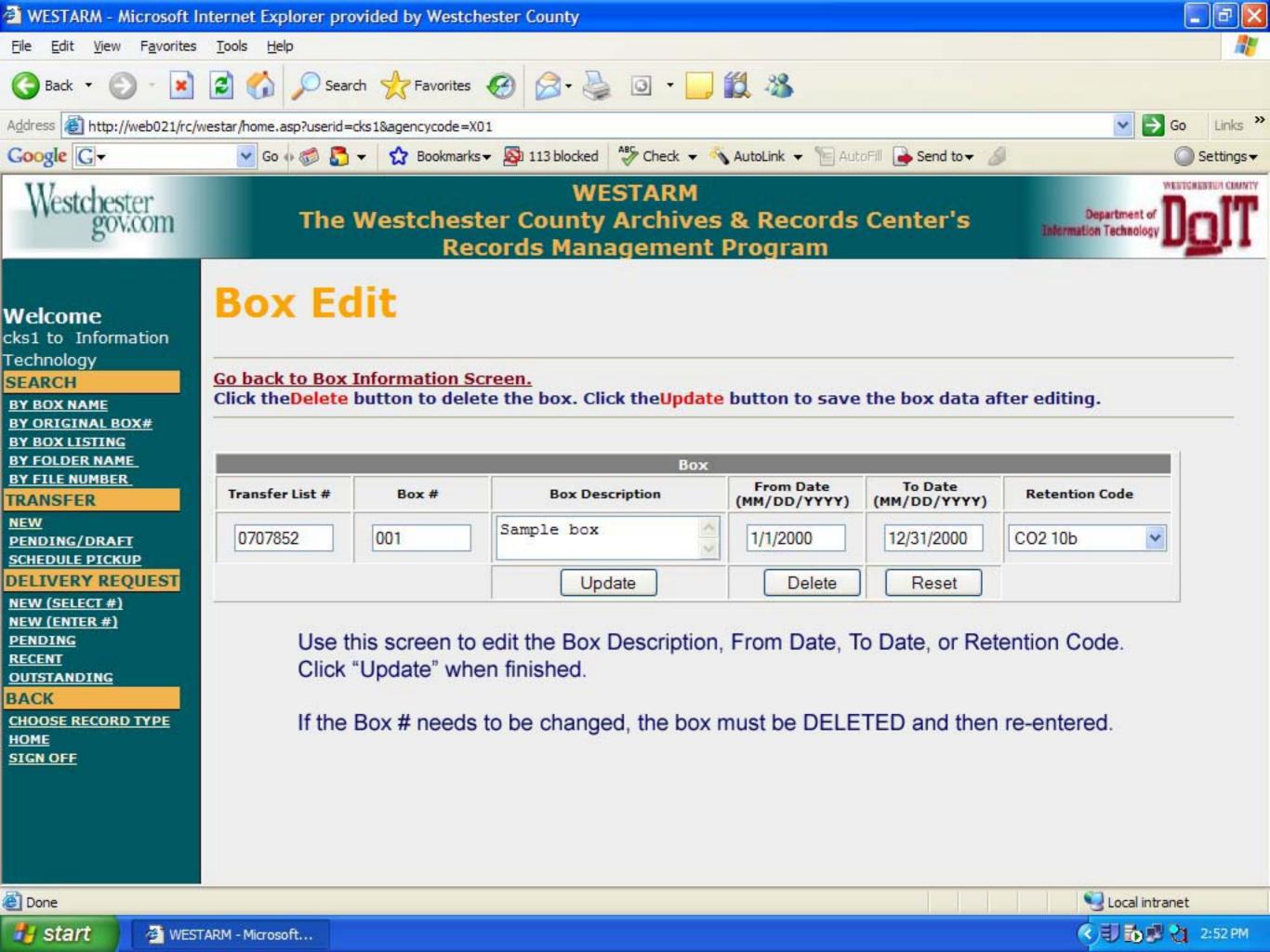
The Box Edit screen will allow changes to the Box Description, the From Date, To Date, and Retention Code. If for some reason an error was made in the Box #, the entire box needs to be deleted and the entire record re-entered.

If any errors are discovered in box information after a Transfer List has been submitted to the Records Center and the Transfer List has been approved, then the Records Center staff must make the changes to the box information. Please contact the Records Center if such a situation occurs.









## **ADDING FOLDER INFORMATION FOR INDIVIDUAL BOXES**

One of the main advantages of the WESTARM system is that it allows for searching folder level information about records stored at the Records Center. It is <u>strongly encouraged</u> that departments that regularly request folders to be retrieved from their stored boxes use this feature when creating new transfer lists. Other departments are also encouraged to use this feature as an easy way to know exactly what records they have in storage, and in order to be able to make more informed decisions when they are asked about the final disposition of their records. However, entering folder information into WESTARM is not a requirement.

To enter file information for any box, select the "Files Entry" link for that box at the far right-hand side of the main data entry screen.<sup>1</sup>

File information can be entered in one of two ways: (1) individually, file by file, or (2) as a range of files. This latter function is particularly useful for departments that have boxes that contain ranges of case files. In order to enter individual files, simply enter in the single file number, then the file name and save the file. File numbers, unlike box numbers, can be single digits, and in fact should not have zeros at the beginning of them. Please note that only numbers can be entered in the "Single File #" field. If you have a file numbering system that uses alphabetical characters, please contact the Records Center to discuss your options for entering file information into WESTARM.

To enter a range of file numbers, enter the first file number, the last file number and the file name that should appear for each file in that range. The file numbers will appear at the end of each of the file names. For example, case files 20-30 of 1995 should be entered as First File # 20, Last File # 30 and

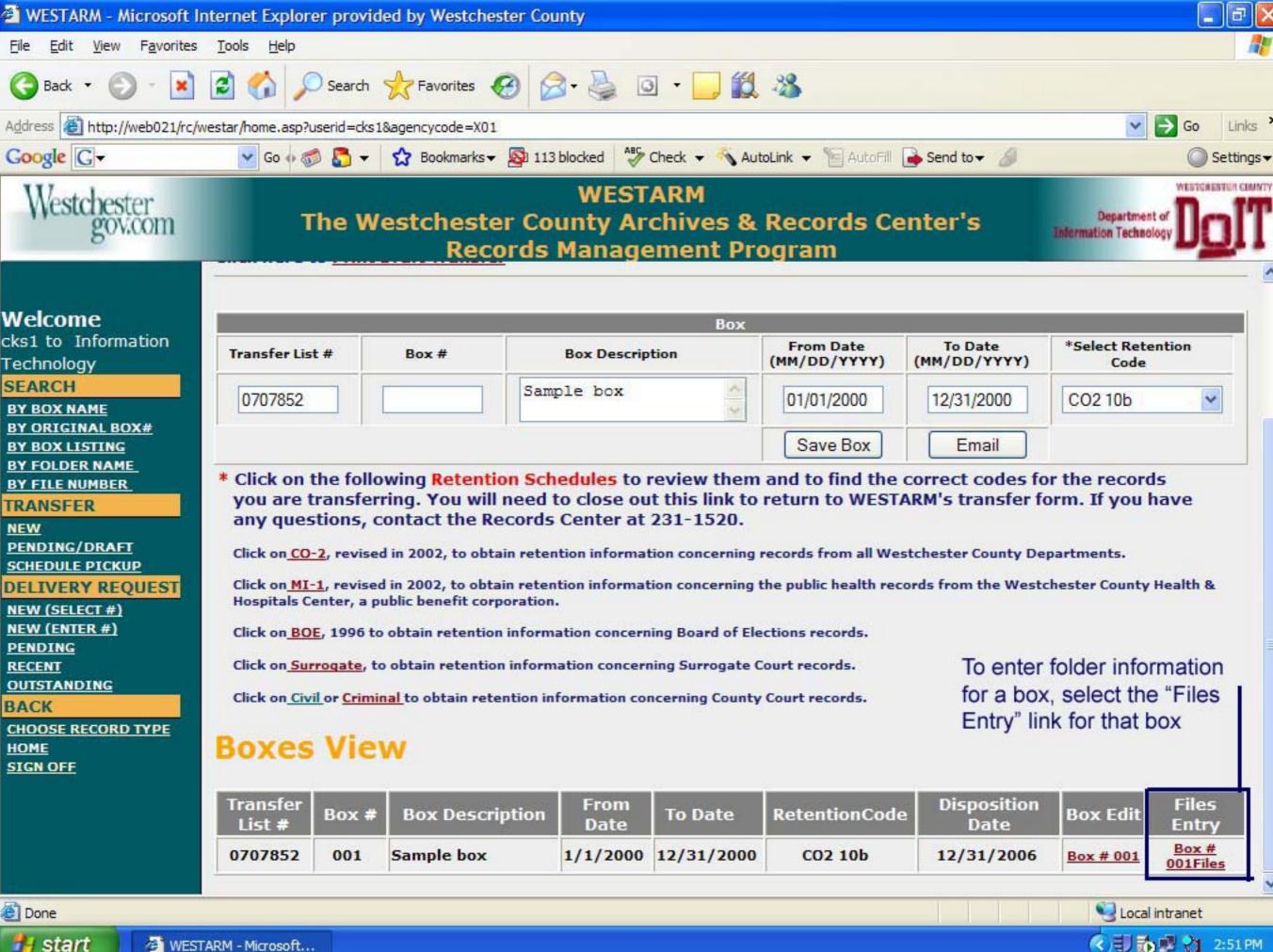
Because WESTARM repeats the information from each previous box whenever a box record is saved (in order to aid in data entry when similar records are being entered on the same Transfer List) it is recommended that the file information not be entered until all boxes are entered into the Transfer List. Entering in file information after each box is entered will interrupt with the automatic repetition process for the box data entry fields.

## **ADDING FOLDER INFORMATION FOR INDIVIDUAL BOXES**

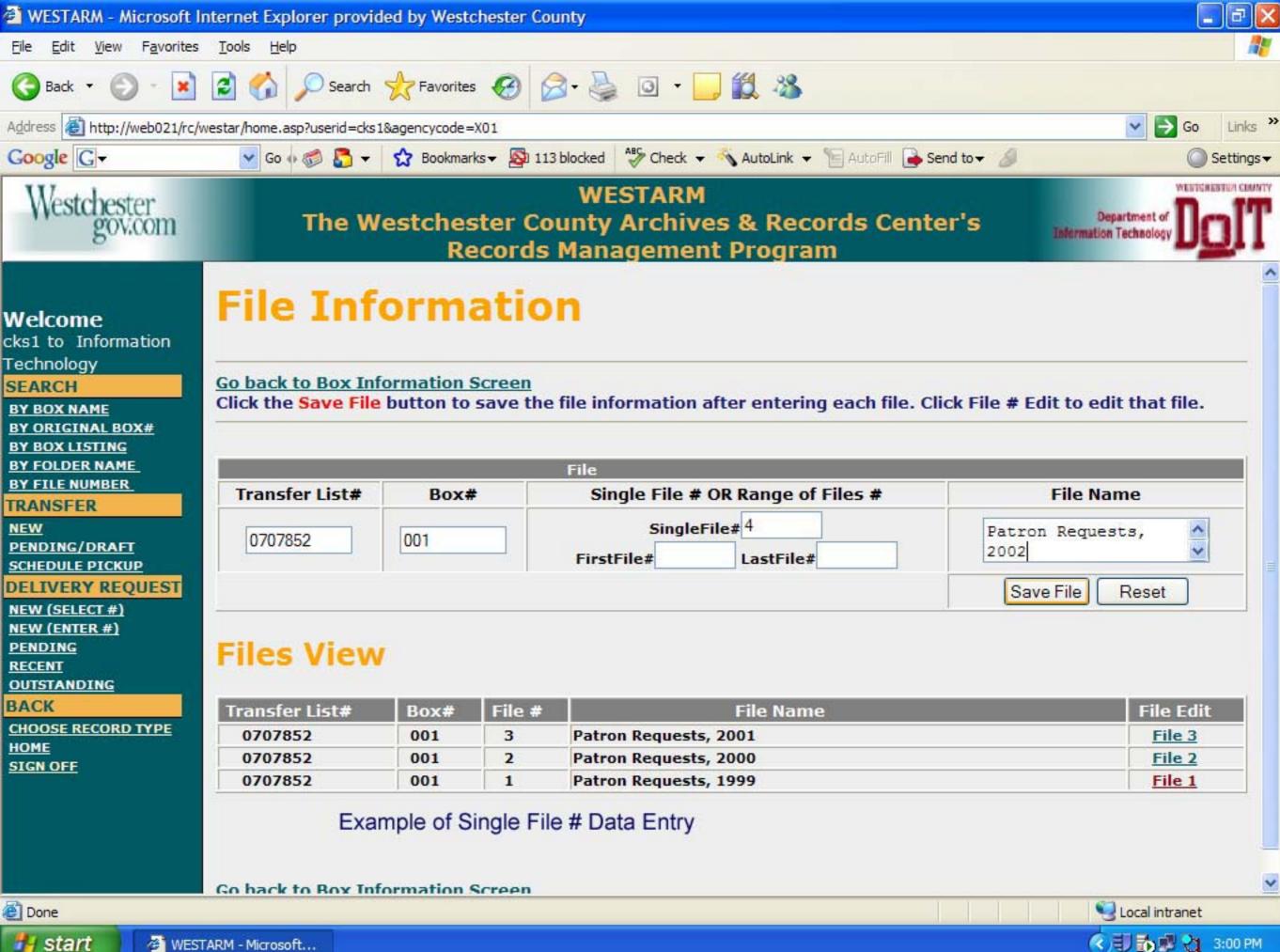
File Name Case Files 1995- The resulting file names will be: Case Files 1995-20, Case Files 1995-21, Case Files 1995-22, etc.

File information is edited in the same manner as box information. There is a "File Edit" column that can be clicked for the appropriate file that needs to be edited. Only the file name information can be edited. If a file number needs to be changed, the entire file must be deleted and re-entered.

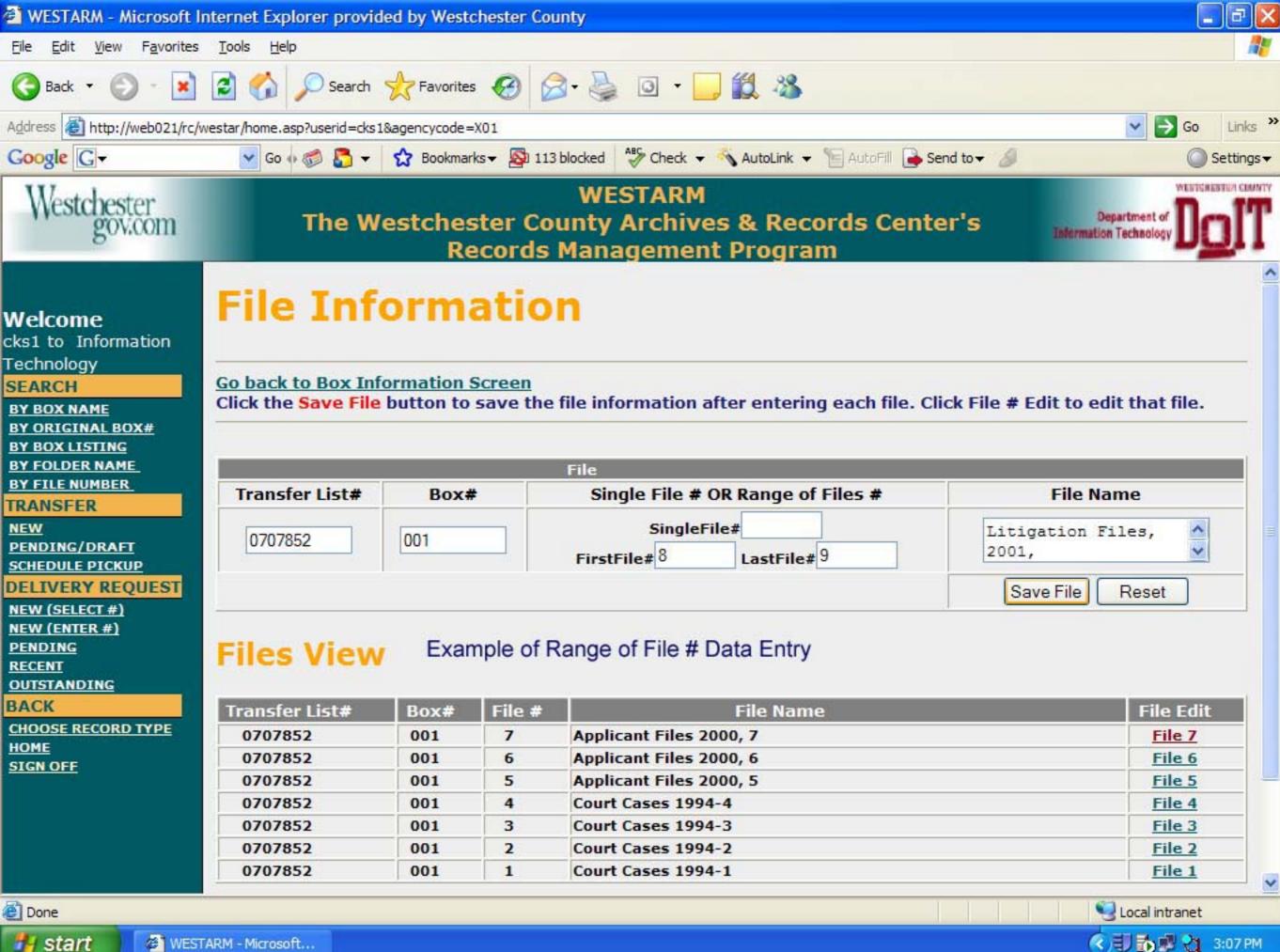
It has been the experience of the Records Center during retroactive data entry, that on occasion when using the file range method of entering files, that on occasion date entry errors led to the accidental entry of hundreds (and sometimes thousands) of incorrect file numbers for a box. If this occurs during file entry, it is not necessary for the departmental user to delete each individual record – and often this is not even possible because an error message will be displayed. In such an event, please contact the Records Center with the Transfer List # and Box # and we will be happy to correct this error for you on the database side of the program.



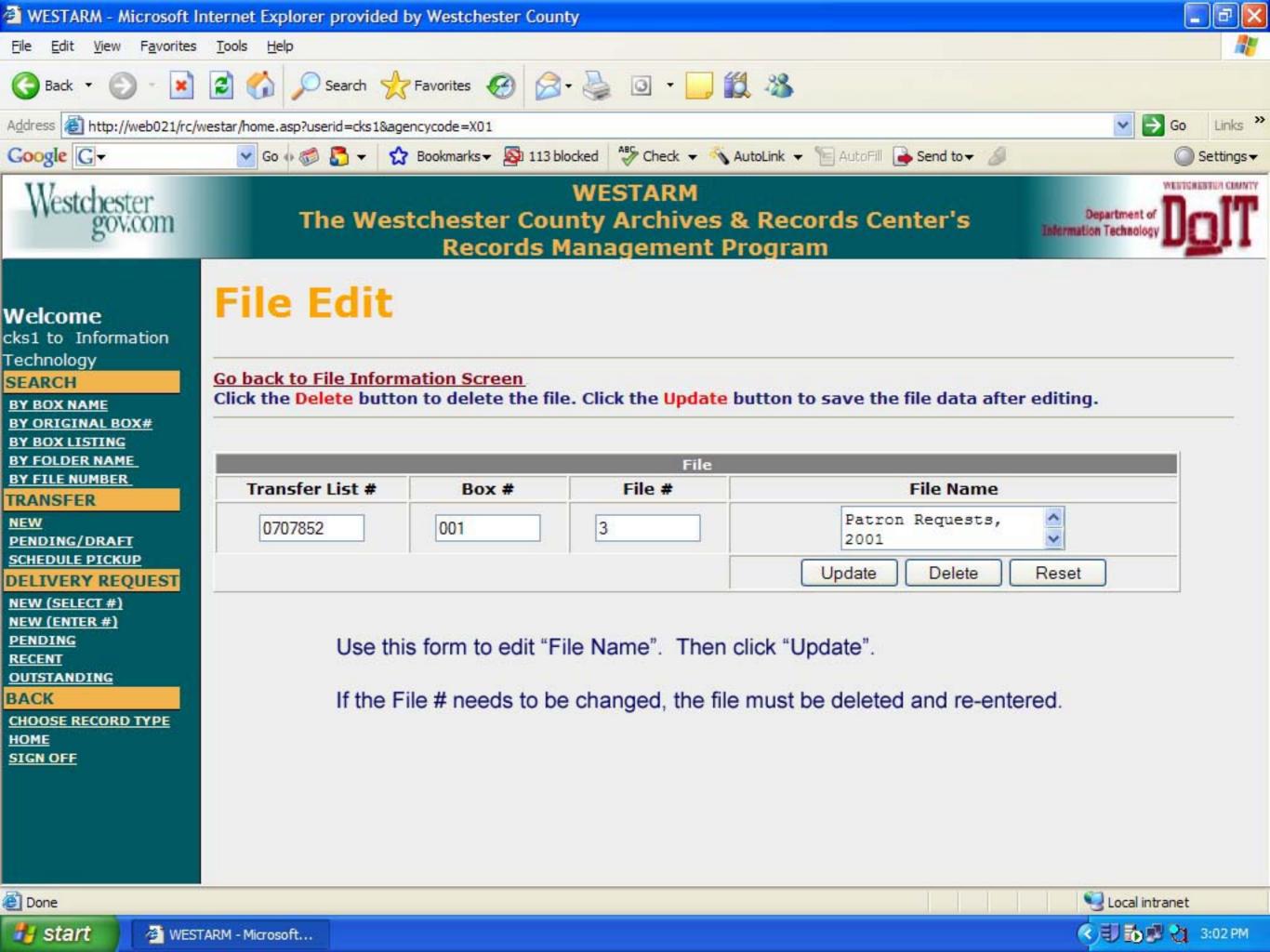
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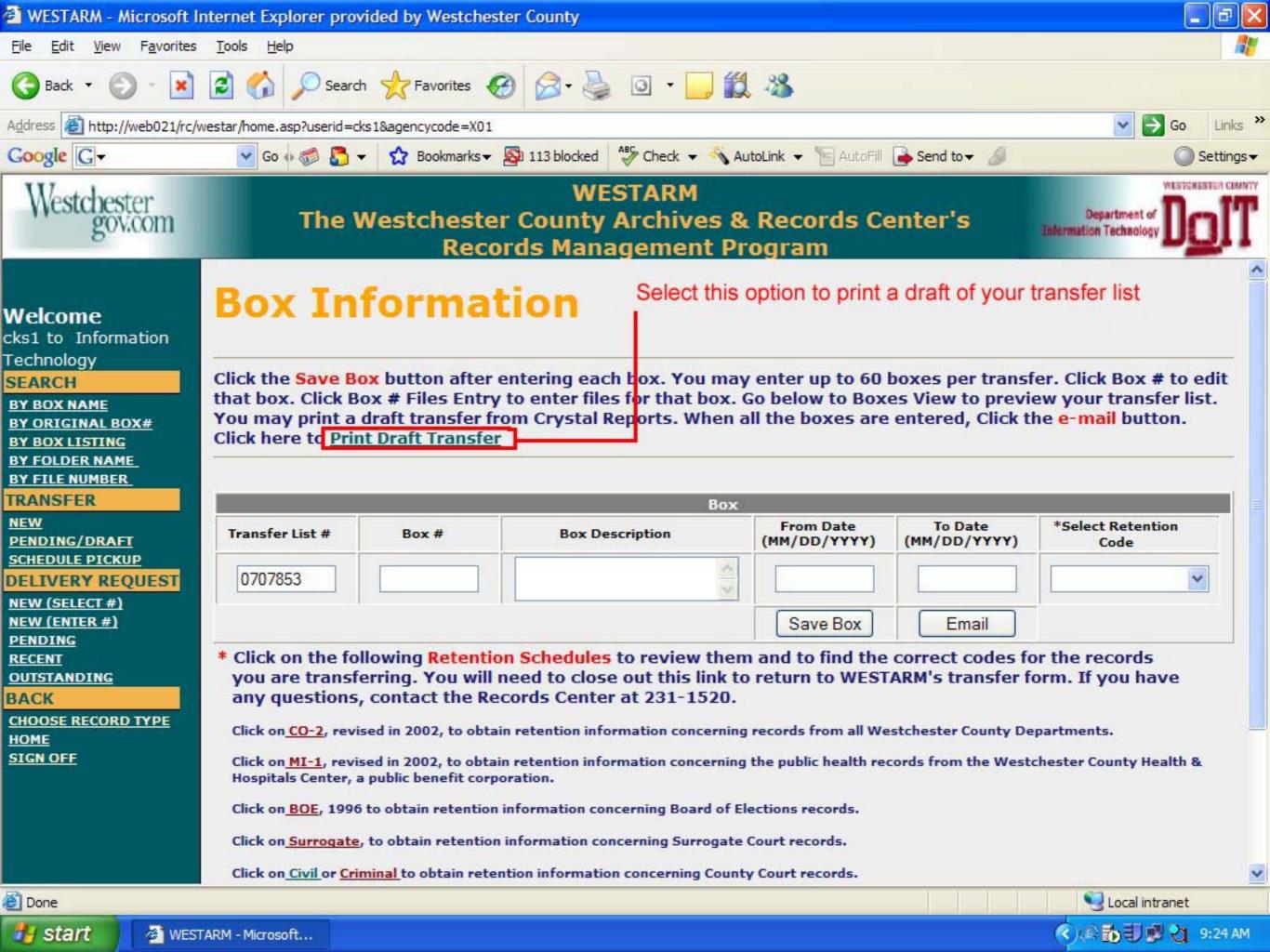
## **PRINTING DRAFT TRANSFER LISTS**

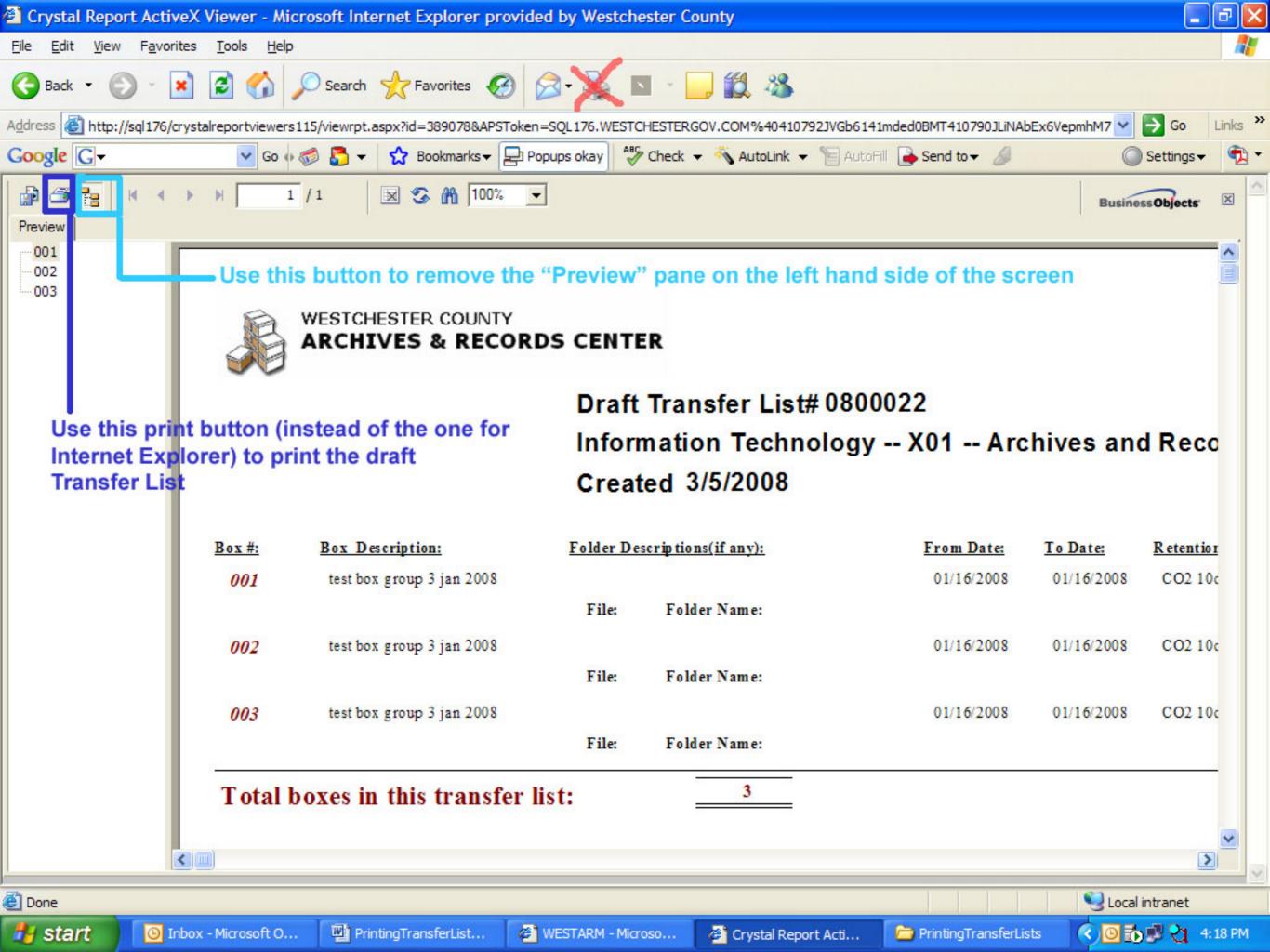
Although the data entered into a transfer list can be viewed on the screen to be proofread and then edited, for some people it is often easier to print out the transfer list for proofreading purposes before submitting the transfer list to the Records Center. Printing out the transfer list also will list all of the folder information entered for each box. Finally, printing out each draft transfer list will allow you to keep a record of the information that has been submitted to the Records Center. [Note: Once a Transfer List has been approved by the Records Center, and the final Records Center box numbers assigned, you will receive a final copy of it for your records.]

To print a draft of any transfer list, select the "Print Draft Transfer" option on the Box Information Screen. The Transfer List itself will appear in a separate window, using a program called "Crystal Reports".

The first time you use the "Print Draft Transfer" option on your computer, you may encounter a dialog box asking if you want to install the Active X control for viewing Crystal Reports documents on your computer. This is something automatically triggered on County computers when you try to open a Crystal Reports document when you don't have the Crystal Reports program installed on your computer. Simply click "Yes" and the appropriate software will be installed on your computer. If you have any problems with this step, **contact the Help Desk at 5-5513**.

To print the Transfer List, use the "Print" button on the Crystal Reports viewer, rather than the Internet Explorer print button (see the second page of screen shots in this section).





# SCHEDULING A PICKUP OF RECORDS TO BE TRANSFERRED TO THE RECORDS CENTER

Once you have received confirmation that your transfer sheet(s) have been approved, and have received the labels for the record boxes – and all the labels have been put on the boxes and the boxes are ready to be picked up – use the "Schedule Pickup" link under the "Transfer" option on the left hand side of the main screen to schedule the pick-up of your boxes.

The e-mail that is created when you select the "Schedule Pickup" option will include the number of boxes in your transfer list. Please also include your address and telephone number. All of this information will assist the Records Center staff in scheduling pick-ups in the most efficient manner possible.

