

INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR REAL ESTATE PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENT

- **Why is my tax bill so high?**

Your tax bill depends on two factors:

1) your property's assessed valuation and 2) the amount of money your local taxing districts need to operate during the upcoming year. By law, assessments must be 1/3 of a property's fair market value. Your assessment reflects the following: the most recent sale price, the cost of replacement, or the age, location and square footage of your property. Regardless of the method used to compute your assessment, the final figure is 1/3 of your property's fair market value. As the market increases, the assessment must also increase. If the market drops, assessed value drops. However, if the assessed value does go up, this does not mean your tax bill will go up; it may remain the same or drop.

- **Why has my property assessment changed?**

The State of Illinois Department of Revenue requires that all counties ensure that all properties within each county have an equalized assessed valuation of 33.33 percent of market value. This is done so that the taxing system is fair to all citizens. Your Township Assessor and the McDonough County Supervisor of Assessments are working to meet the Department of Revenue goals and requirements.

How fair is this system?: As fair as we can make it.

- **Who does my assessment?**

For property owners, your Township Assessor is the first person to review your property. By law, all township assessors are required to view every property in their jurisdiction every four years.

- **How is my property assessed?**

The assessors have several ways to complete assessments. These methods include: 1) Cost manuals 2) Actual market value based on recent "arms length" sales 3) Location, age, and square foot as it compares to similar properties in similar locations.

- **What if I disagree with my assessment?**

Your Township Assessor completes your assessment by June 15th of each year and files it with the Supervisor of Assessments. You may want to check the assessed value of your property at the Supervisor of Assessment's office after the filing date. If you have a question about your assessment, you should speak with your Township Assessor first to determine how your property assessment was arrived at. After speaking with your Township Assessor, if you are not satisfied, then you may file an appeal of your assessment, once the assessments are published in newspaper, with the Board of Review. You may obtain an appeal form from the Supervisor of Assessment's office. Your appeal may be based on Market Value or Equity. Other evidence may be submitted to support your basis.

- **Who is on the Board of Review?**

The Board of Review consists of three members of the public who have been trained and tested in basic assessment practices. Their responsibility is to act on requests for tax exemptions and to hear and act on appeals.

- **What if I disagree with the Board of Review's decision?**

If you disagree with the decision of the Board of Review, you may file an appeal of your assessment to the State Property Tax Appeal Board (P.T.A.B.). In this case a state hearing officer acts as a judge, hears evidence from both you and the county, and issues a decision based only on the evidence presented. Check with the Supervisor of Assessments for directions in appealing your assessment.

- **What is my actual tax bill based on?**

Your tax bill is based on a five step process: 1) The township assessor determines market value and divides by three, arriving at 1/3 of fair market value:

Market value - \$55,000.00	55,000
level of assessment 1/3	<u> </u> /3
of assessed value (rounded)	18,330

2) The Supervisor of Assessment reviews the township assessor's values. If assessed values do not change the same as the market values, the Supervisor of Assessments is required to apply a township factor or multiplier to equalize values across townships:

Assessed value	18,330
township factor	<u>x 1.010</u>
Assessed value (rounded)	18,515

3) The Department of Revenue reviews county wide assessed values to see if they reflect changes in market value. If necessary, they apply a state multiplier to equalize the assessed values:

equalized value	18,515
state multiplier	<u>x 1.000</u>
Assessed value (rounded)	18,515

4) Your equalized assessed value receives any exemptions you qualify for (see Section 11 - Exemptions):

Exemptions:

Homestead Limited	-6000
Homestead General	<u>-4,000</u>
Final Taxable Value	= 8,330

5) The total TAX RATE is applied to your final taxable VALUE to equal the amount of your tax BILL:

taxable VALUE	10,330
total TAX RATE (10.63) move decimal	<u>x. 1063</u>
tax BILL	\$1,098.08

- **What can I do about my actual tax bill?**

If you miss the deadline to appeal your assessment and you receive your tax bill and believe this is too high, you may protest your actual tax bill. This tax bill appeal process requires specific procedures, and you may want to work through an attorney.

- **What is the tax rate and what can I do about it?**

For information regarding how your tax rate is calculated, or information regarding any of the taxing bodies, please see the Office of the County Clerk for this information.