



WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PROPERTY TAXES IN BLACK & WHITE

(AND A COUPLE OTHER COLORS...)

THE BASICS

What role do property taxes play?

Nearly 7,000 units of local government in Illinois (e.g. municipalities, schools, townships, park districts, counties) use the revenue from property taxes to finance the majority of services that they provide to their citizens.

The largest share of property taxes (approx. 60 to 65%) goes to school districts for elementary and secondary education. Property owners pay taxes in two installments each year.



What is a Property Tax Levy?

- Following the budget hearing process by a local government, the unit formally requests the amount of revenue to be generated by the property tax.
- Is your local government spending more than last year? Illinois law requires a local government to notify taxpayers and hold a hearing if the plan to adopt a levy that exceeds the property taxes collected for the previous year by more than 5%.

- The County Clerk calculates the rates(per taxing district) to be applied to the assessed value of your home to determine the total tax bill.
- Each type of taxing district must certify its levy to the county clerk by the last Tuesday in December.

SO, HOW IS YOUR SHARE OF PROPERTY TAX DETERMINED?

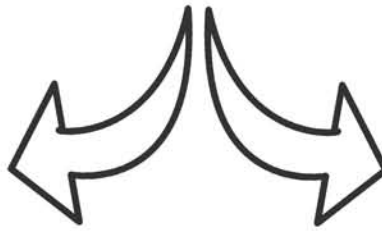




Fair Market Value

The amount for which your property would sell...

How is real property assessed?
Every parcel of real property has two values:



Assessed Value

The amount used to determine your property tax...

In Illinois...

The Assessed Value of a single-family home or condo is 33 1/3% of the property's Fair Market Value. In Cook County, the ordinance amount of the Assessed Value is 10% of the Fair Market Value for residential, up to 6 units. The Fair Market Value is determined by the County Assessor.

Every four years, your property will be reassessed (every three years in Cook County). At the time of reassessment, you'll receive a Notice of Proposed Assessed Valuation from the County Assessor. This will show the new Fair Market Value and the new Assessed Value.

How do you know if your assessment is accurate and you're being taxed fairly?

- Check the Assessed Value of your property with similar properties in your neighborhood. That information may be found in your County Assessor's office. Many assessors show this information on their websites.



- Be sure the description of your home that appears on your Assessment notice is accurate for things like the size and square footage of the property.

TIP: IF YOU THINK THERE'S AN ERROR IN YOUR ASSESSMENT, CALL YOUR COUNTY ASSESSOR'S OFFICE WITHIN 30 DAYS OF RECEIVING YOUR VALUATION NOTICE. SOMETIMES THE MISTAKES ARE SIMPLE, AND CAN BE CORRECTED RIGHT AWAY.



What if it's not a simple mistake, and you have to make an appeal?

If you choose to make an appeal to your County Board of Review, timing is also critical. You should contact that office to learn of deadlines in the appeal process. Instructions and documents for an appeal are usually found at the Assessor's website, or the County Board of Review's website. For more information on appeals, visit the website of your local county Assessor, or the Illinois Department of Revenue's website:

WWW.REVENUE.STATE.IL.US/LOCALGOVERNMENT/PROPERTYTAX/APPEALS.HTM

Additional information can be found at the website of the Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board:

WWW.STATE.IL.US/AGENCY/PTAB

Property Tax Relief

Always check your property tax bill (which you receive twice a year) to make sure you are getting any tax relief that you are entitled to, AND that you're not getting any relief or exemptions you shouldn't be.



Some Exemptions May Include:

- General Homestead Exemption - If you own and live in your home as a primary residence, this exemption may reduce the assessed value of your home up to a maximum of \$6000, and up to \$7000 in Cook County.
- Senior Assessment Freeze - This exemption "freezes" the property's equalized assessed value the year that the owner qualifies: 1) Must be at least 65 years old. 2) Household income \$55,000/year or less. 3) Property must be principle residence. 4) Must apply and qualify every year to maintain.

Other Exemptions You May Qualify For:

- Home Improvement Exemption
- Returning Veterans Exemption
- Disabled Veterans Homeowners Exemption

Call your County Assessor's Office to see if you qualify for any of these.

TIP: WHEN PURCHASING A PROPERTY, IT'S IMPORTANT THAT YOU KNOW THE PROPERTY TAX AMOUNT THAT HAS MOST RECENTLY BEEN PAID ON THE PROPERTY. YOU SHOULD ALSO BE AWARE OF WHETHER OR NOT THE SELLER'S TAX BILL INCLUDES THESE EXEMPTIONS. SOME OF THE EXEMPTIONS, PARTICULARLY THE SENIOR CITIZEN AND SENIOR FREEZE EXEMPTION, MAY OR MAY NOT APPLY TO YOU AS THE NEW OWNER.



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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

<http://tax.illinois.gov/localgovernment../propertytax>

ILLINOIS PROPERTY TAX APPEAL BOARD

<http://www.ptab.illinois.gov>

COOK COUNTY ASSESSORS OFFICE

www.cookcountyassessor.com

COOK COUNTY BOARD OF REVIEW

<http://www.cookcountyboardofreview.com/>

SAMPLE REAL ESTATE TAX BILL (DEKALB COUNTY)

<http://dekalbcounty.org/treasurer/PDFS/TAXBILL.PDF>

SAMPLE REAL ESTATE TAX BILL (MADISON COUNTY)

<http://www.madcotreasurer.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Understanding-your-tax-bill-2014.pdf>

KANE COUNTY ASSESSMENT OFFICE

<http://www.kanecountyassessments.org/quickguide.pdf>

CITIZENS) GUIDE TO PROPERTY TAXES (COOK COUNTY)

<http://james46.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/Citizens-Guide-to-Property-Tax-Bills1.pdf>

