AN OVERVIEW OF THE ILLINOIS PROPERTY TAX CYCLE

Prepared as a public service for property owners by:

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Multi-Township District #1
Manchester and Leroy Township Assessor
Kris Hall
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Boone and Flora Township Assessor
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Belvidere Township Assessor
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Multi-Township District #2
Caledonia, Bonus, Spring and
Poplar Grove Township Assessor
Kathi Hendrickson
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To The Taxpayers of Boone County

Although no one enjoys paying property taxes, it is very important for all taxpayers to understand "the system" to avoid over assessment, missed deadlines and loss of exemptions. The Illinois Property Tax Code clearly mandates the rules, dates and duties involved in determining property taxes. It is our job to precisely and uniformly follow the statutes as we strive for a fair and equitable tax system. This information is being offered to inform the taxpayers of the rights and responsibility of real property owners according to the Illinois Property Tax Code. We hope that you find this helpful.

The First Step In The Tax Cycle Listing of Real Property

The County Clerk has the first step in the Illinois Property Tax Cycle. It is the responsibility of the County Clerk to list all real property in the county and its ownership. This list is turned over to the County Assessment Office. The Township Assessors or Multi-Township Assessors receive their "books" from the County Assessment Office.

The Role of the Township or Multi-Township Assessor

Your assessor is required by law to identify and value all property based on its status on January 1 of the assessment year. Township Assessors attempt to arrive at an assessed value that is one-third of the market value by comparing your property to similar properties that have sold in your neighborhood and by analyzing that information relative to the replacement cost for your land and the improvements on the land.

The only exception to this is farmland which is valued based on soil productivity, and farm buildings which are valued according to their contributory value to the farm operation. However, the farm home and homesite are assessed at one-third of market value.

Although the assessor does not directly determine the following year's tax bill amount, the equalized assessed value of your property does determine your share of the tax burden. Therefore, it is very important that you feel your assessed value is fair and accurate and know the property complaint procedures if you feel your assessment is incorrect.

The Role of the County Assessment Office

When the township assessing officials have completed their January 1st valuations, the assessment books for their jurisdictions are turned over to the Boone County Assessment Office (Supervisor of Assessments). The workbooks are checked for completion and accurate calculations and any changes are entered into the county property records system

from the Assessor. Both Boone County Township Assessors and the Boone County Assessment Office have listings of all real property for their jurisdictions.

The Supervisor of Assessments is required by law to equalize all townships to 33.33% of market value. Although the Township Assessors attempt to achieve this percentage on individual assessments, the county must calculate township medians using an adjusted 3 year average median level of assessments. The ratios are calculated by dividing the sale price of property by the assessed value of the preceding year. Using a complicated calculation process, an equalization factor is determined for each township. The Supervisor of Assessments sends current year "Notice of Assessment Change" (for taxes payable the following year) to each taxpayer experiencing an assessment change and / or equalization factor other than 1.00. This notice should be read very carefully because it contains valuable and necessary information for taxpayers and, if necessary, complaint procedures. At this time the Supervisor of Assessments also publishes the changes made in assessments by the Township Assessors and a list of the township equalization factors applied to all non-farm assessments.

The farmland assessments are based on land use and soil type. The soil types are given a "productivity index" and the Illinois Department of Revenue then determines values per acre per soil type. The land use then determines the actual assessment. Crop acres are at 100% of the value, permanent pasture is at one-third of value and other farm (timber, farm building site, waterways, etc.) is valued at one-sixth of the soil type value.

The Role of the Board of Review

Within 30 days after the publication of assessment changes or by September 10, whichever is later, taxpayers may file an assessment complaint with the Boone County Board of Review. Complaint forms are available at the Board of Review in the Boone County Assessment Office.

A complaint form must be filed with the Board of Review, but the property owners should contact their Assessor to review the property and discuss their concerns.

The complete rules of the Boone County Board of Review are available in the County Assessment Office or on the website at BooneCountyIL.org. All complaints must be in writing on the prescribed form. If you are protesting the valuation of your property, your complaint must include your opinion of market value as of January 1 of the assessment year. Evidence must also be provided to support your opinion.

Evidence can include :

- A copy of the closing statement if the property was recently purchased.
- Sales of comparable properties within one year of the assessment date. (There should be a minimum of three sales).
- A recent appraisal report, if available.
- Income and expense statements for the past several years on investment property.

On complaints of unequal treatment in the assessment process, you must furnish the address, property code numbers and assessed value of three or more properties that are to be used as the basis for comparison.

The Board of Review will review all evidence from the property owners and recommendations from the Assessors. Tentative notices of assessment change will be sent to the property owners. If the property owners do not agree with the assessment value, the property owner will have the opportunity to appear before the Board of Review at a hearing. The property owner will have to contact the County Assessment Office within the amount of time stated on the notice to schedule a hearing. A final notice will be sent to all properties with an assessment change or an appeal.

The Role of the Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board

If you are dissatisfied with the Board of Review's decision, you have 30 days after that decision to file an appeal with the Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board in Springfield. Forms for the appeal and the rules of the Property Tax Appeal Board are available at the Boone County Assessment Office or on the website. Hearings by the PTAB are conducted locally by a hearing officer. Further administrative review procedures in the Circuit Court are available if property owners are not satisfied with PTAB rulings.

The Role of the County Clerk

When the Board of Review has completed its work, the assessment books are turned over to the Tax Extension Department of the County Clerk's Office. Tax rates are calculated for each taxing district by dividing the amount of money a local government unit, school, etc. decides to raise from property taxes by the tax base for that jurisdiction, subject to legal limits. Each property lies within boundaries of several taxing bodies. The tax rate for each of those districts are added together to become the tax rate used for your actual tax bill computation.

The Role of the County Collector (Treasurer)

Tax bills are mailed out by the Boone County Treasurer the year following the assessment year. Property taxes are paid in two equal installments, hopefully in June and September. The County Collector collects and distributes the tax dollars to the appropriate taxing bodies.