



The Assessment Review



Gearing Up for a Busy Tax Bill Season



It's tax bill time again. Bills are set to arrive in most mailboxes on or around May 1st, and we at the Supervisor of Assessments Office anticipate we'll be very busy for the next few weeks.

But we're not just sitting around waiting for people to call with questions (which we're ready to answer), or complaints (which we will surely address), or cries for help (which we're always ready to give). Instead, we're working to ensure taxpayers are more knowledgeable than ever about the assessment process, making them better equipped to deal with the often challenging economic climate, and assessors have all the support they need from our office, allowing them to do their jobs even better.

For my part, I've been working closely with local township assessors, making personal visits to their offices to tour their facilities and answer questions. Together, we've been reviewing sales, current statutes, and new legislation that could affect county taxpayers. We've also been discussing ways we can help each other reach out to taxpayers and offer assistance to those who need it most.

My staff has also been very busy preparing for this time of year. You can visit them in the office, but they are also out and about, attending senior events all across the county and manning tables on the first floor of the county building, where they're assisting taxpayers as they sign up for various exemptions.

In addition, we've launched a Facebook page, adding one more way for taxpayers to stay abreast of assessment news and further establishing our presence on the Net. Taxpayers are encouraged to become a fan and receive up-to-date information on all SOA events, read press releases and news articles about the office, and leave their comments.

We realize that tax bill season is not most people's favorite time of year, but we're doing all we can to make it as painless as possible. So let us know how we can help you. We're not just waiting; we're ready.

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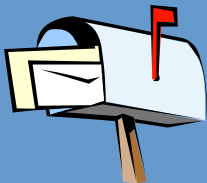
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**Check your mailbox.
Tax bills arrive
May 1st.**

**1st installment due:
June 2nd**

**2nd installment due:
September 2nd**



Production Report

Documents Processed	December 2008	December 2009	April 2010
Parcel Count	270,755	271,314	271,314
B of R Final Assessed Value	23,547,911,612	23,913,924,267	23,913,924,267
Name/Address Changes	39,949	35,540	15,413
Subdivisions/Condos	134	59	26
Divisions/Consolidations	511	374	383
Tax Parcels Added	- - -	1,558	834
Tax Parcels Deleted	- - -	1,078	332
Real Estate Transfer Declarations	9,894	8,350	1,735
Senior Freeze Exemption Applications	11,528	12,959	4,651
Certificates of Error	3,476	2,985	513
Property Tax Appeal Board Filings	181	209 for 2007/155 for 2008	218 for 2007/173 for 2008

Ask Rhonda!

Question: How do I know if I'm receiving an exemption?



Answer: You can view your exemptions by looking in the box on the right-hand side of your tax bill.

The name of the exemption will be listed as well as the amount of the exemption.

If you suspect you have not received an exemption for which you are entitled, please contact the Supervisor of Assessments Office or your local township assessor as quickly as possible. While we have the ability to correct such errors, we must do so within a certain period of time.

Please note that certain exemptions are not applied automatically and require you to apply. Some even require that you reapply every year.

Visit www.willcountysoa.com and click on "Exemptions" for a list of exemptions, application information and requirements.

If you have an assessment question, e-mail Rhonda at rnovak@willcountyillinois.com.



Become a fan!

Become a fan of the Will County Supervisor of Assessments Office on

facebook.

- Stay up to date on the latest SOA news
- View all upcoming events
- Get contact information

Get Connected!



Are You Missing Money-Saving Exemptions?



Property taxes on your mind? Wondering if there's any relief in sight? Well, there is.

Illinois offers several money-saving property tax exemptions, a reassuring fact that everyone should know about, especially in today's uncertain economic climate. Unfortunately, many people don't.

"Many times, people overlook these financially beneficial exemptions. A lot of people don't even know they exist," said Supervisor of Assessments Rhonda Novak. "My job is to make sure they do."

What is an exemption?

Essentially, exemptions deduct a certain amount from the equalized assessed value, which is calculated by applying the state equalization factor to the assessed value of a property. Tax bills are then calculated by multiplying the reduced EAV by the tax rate.

"People can get confused. The money doesn't come off your tax bill; it comes off of your equalized assessed value, which can bring your total tax bill down," said Novak.

Exemptions can shave anywhere from \$2,000 to \$70,000 off of the EAV. In addition, legislators are constantly reviewing current exemptions in response to the changing economic climate, and several exemptions have seen significant increases.

For instance, the general homestead exemption, a benefit for residential property that is owner-occupied, has increased from \$5,500 for the 2008 tax year to \$6,000 for the 2009 tax year. The senior citizens homestead exemption, available for property that is owner-

occupied by residents 65 years and older, has also seen increases as well, going from \$3,500 to \$4,000 beginning with the 2008 tax year.

"Legislators are thinking about homeowners," said Novak. "They are trying to address the economic concerns of Illinois residents, and I applaud them."

Taxpayers who are missing an exemption should contact their local township assessor or the SOA office immediately. Tax bills with errors or omissions can be corrected.

The following exemptions currently exist for Illinois taxpayers:

- General Homestead Exemption
- Disabled Persons' Homestead Exemption
- Disabled Veterans' Homestead Exemption
- Disabled Veterans' Standard Homestead Exemption
- Homestead Improvement Exemption
- Returning Veterans' Homestead Exemption
- Senior Citizens Assessment Freeze Homestead Exemption
- Senior Citizens Homestead Exemption
- Non-homestead Exemptions for Religious, Charitable, or Educational Organizations



Don't forget to look at the box on the right-hand side of your tax bill to see which exemptions you're receiving.

The SOA office has been actively engaged in getting the word out about exemptions for the past five years, offering senior events and tax forums to assist taxpayers with the application process. Currently, the office offers over 30 events a year at various locations across the county and even offers special Saturday hours to assist with exemptions.

"We'll mail you the forms, help you fill them out, and talk you through any questions you have," said Novak. "Unfortunately, about the only thing we can't help you with is paying the bill."

For more information about exemptions, stop by our office, visit our Web site at www.willcountysoa.com, or call us at (815) 740-4648.



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**Committed to serving
 Will County taxpayers with
 fairness and pride.**

Lawrence M. Walsh, County Executive
 Rhonda R. Novak, Supervisor of Assessments

Visit us on the Web!
WWW.WILLCOUNTYSOA.COM



According to state law, the Supervisor of Assessments Office provides statistical assessment performance data to the Illinois Department of Revenue. In addition, it gives technical advice and provides statistical analysis of assessment data to the township assessors and the Will County Board of Review. These statistics are derived from data gathered in the processing of approximately 25,000 Real Estate Transfer Declarations annually.

The Supervisor of Assessments Office also maintains records of total exempt properties and administers other special exemptions, such as the Senior Homestead Exemption, the Senior Assessment Freeze, the Veterans Exemption, the Veterans/Fraternal Organization Assessment Freeze, the Open Space Preferential Assessment Type, and the Model Home Exemption. In all, our office will grant over 30,000 Senior Homestead Exemptions and 13,926 Senior Assessment Freeze Exemptions for the 2009 tax year.

The Supervisor of Assessments acts as an equalization authority and, as such, works closely with the twenty-four township assessors, who are responsible for the initial assessed valuation calculation. The Supervisor of Assessments also serves as Clerk of the Board of Review

Other duties of the Supervisor of Assessments Office include: issuing parcel PIN numbers, maintaining the county's base parcel map, publishing assessment change notices and mailing notices to taxpayers.

Employee Spotlight: Mary Anne Koerner



In July, Mary Ann will have 18 years with Will County. She started working as a clerk in 1992, and she now works as a real estate transfer declaration processor.

Mary Ann and her husband, Jim, have been married for 42 years. They have a son, Craig, a daughter, Kris, and one son-in-law, Bill. They also have two grandchildren, Morgan and Colin, and a dog, Bailey.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I like to spend time with my grandchildren, read and shop.

What is your favorite restaurant? Merichka's.

What are your favorite sports teams?

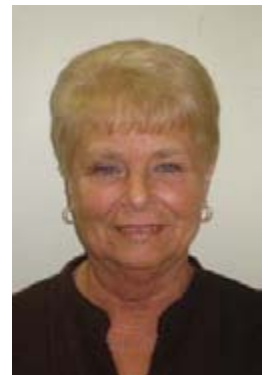
The Chicago Bears and the Chicago Cubs.

What do you like best about your job?

I like my co-workers and dealing with seniors.

What was your best vacation? Hawaii.

Who is your favorite author? Danielle Steele.



The Assessment Review is a quarterly publication of the Will County Supervisor of Assessments Office. All articles are written by Shavahn Dorris-Jefferson unless otherwise indicated. Jacquelyn Lohmar, Editorial Assistant.