



Understanding Your Assessment

*Are you concerned about rising
property taxes?*

To express your concern
effectively, you must
understand the two parts of
the property tax system:

TAXATION
And
VALUATION



Developed by the Jo Daviess County Assessment Office
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TAXATION

Taxing authorities such as school districts, park districts, and city councils set tax rates and Levy TAXES.

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OTES:

Taxpayers DEMAND SERVICES

ROADS

LIBRARIES

CITY PARKS

SCHOOLS

ETC.



Taxing authorities REQUIRE MONEY to provide those services.

If you are concerned about rising taxes

- Attend budget hearings
- Call or write the taxing authorities
- Decide whether you are willing to do without services to keep taxes low





OTES:



ALUATION

Buyers and sellers in the market CREATE
VALUE.

Your local township assessor studies the market and collects
information about properties to ESTIMATE VALUE.

The township assessor or the county assessment office has no
control over tax rates.





WHAT CAUSES PROPERTY VALUES TO CHANGE?

A property's value can change for many reasons. The most obvious is that there are property changes. An addition to the house is added; an addition, a garage, a wood deck or a swimming pool. Or it could be once a non-finished basement is now finished into living space.

Or just the opposite can occur; a wood deck, shed or a bathroom was removed by the homeowner, destroyed by fire or some other cause.

The most frequent cause of a change in value is a change in the market.



FORMAL APPEAL/COMPLAINT

Appeals/Complaints are often settled at the local level. If you are not satisfied with the results of your informal review with your local township assessor, you have more avenues to pursue. Your next step is to file an appeal/complaint with your County Board of Review. You may only file an appeal 30 days after publication of the assessment notice (no earlier, and not past the deadline). Your appeal is more likely to be successful if you present evidence that comparable properties in the same neighborhood are assessed for less than yours. Copies of property record cards on your comparable properties and photos are highly recommended for your defense. Note any difference between your property and the comparable(s) and point out these differences. A recent appraisal, used for assessment purposes only (not bank use), on your property may also be good evidence. The Board of Review will be interested only in the fairness and accuracy of the value placed on your property, not in whether you can afford to pay your taxes or whether taxes are too high. See complete rules on our website, www.jodaviess.org/Assessment/Boardofreview, or call the county office (815.777.1016) and we will gladly mail one out to you.

If you disagree with the local board's decision, additional remedies may be sought by going to PTAB. PTAB can be reached at <http://www.ptab.illinois.gov/> or by calling 217.782.6076.



Your local township assessor conducting the meeting may not commit to a change in value at this meeting, even though you may have uncovered an error or the assessment appears to be inequitable. The decision about a value change may have to be made by someone else and communicated to you in writing. If this is the case, find out when you may expect to hear from the office.

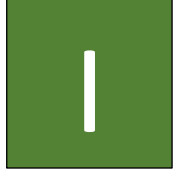
View your township assessor or the county assessor's office as an ally, not an adversary. Employees of the office should be able to answer your concerns in a professional and helpful manner. Being shouted at or threatening in any form will get you no-where; try to remain calm and polite. It's a complicated process and assessors will do their best to answer all your questions, whether you like the outcome or not.



If a town's major industry leaves, property values can collapse. As decaying neighborhoods with good housing stock are discovered by new homebuyers, prices gradually rise, and then may soar as the neighborhood becomes fashionable and in demand. A shortage of 1 story single family houses in a desirable city neighborhood can send prices to ridiculous levels. In a recession, larger homes may stay on the market for a longer period of time, but more affordable homes are in demand, so their prices rise.

In a stable neighborhood, with no extraordinary pressure from the market, inflation may increase property value; it's all based on what the consumer pays.





IF ASSESSED VALUE RISE, DO TAXES INCREASE? ***NO, not necessarily***

IF ASSESSED VALUE DECLINE, DO TAXES DECREASE? ***NO, not necessarily***

Taxing authorities (listed on your tax bill) decide how much money the property tax has to raise each year, say \$1 million – this is known as the levy.

Assessor(s) estimate the total assessed value of all taxable property....totaling \$100 million.

A tax rate is calculated by dividing the amount of tax to be raised (levy) by the total assessed value:

$$\frac{\$ 1 \text{ million (levy)}}{\$100 \text{ million (total assessed property value)}} = 1 \text{ percent}$$

If total assessed property increase to \$200 million, and the amount to be raised (levy) stays the same, the tax rate will be:

$$\frac{\$ 1 \text{ million (levy)}}{\$200 \text{ million (total assessed property value)}} = 1/2 \text{ percent}$$

The Meeting

The purpose of contacting your local township assessor first – which is not yet a complaint – should be (1) to verify the information on your property record is accurately reported, (2) to make sure you understand how your value was estimated, (3) to discover if the value is fair compared with the values of similar properties in your neighborhood, (4) to find out if you qualify for any exemptions, and (5) to be sure you understand how to file a formal complaint with the Board of Review, if you so choose.

A lot of times issues can be resolved before proceeding to filing a formal complaint.



Preparation

Prepare to speak with your local township assessor. Find your property identification number (PIN) on your assessment notice. Use this number to view or obtain a copy of your property record card from the county's assessment office – 815.777.1016 or email countyassessor@jodaviess.org.

Review the facts on the property record card. Is the style correctly stated (1 story vs. 2 story)? Check the living area of your home (measurements are taken from the exterior), the size of your lot, the number of bathrooms, the presence or absence of a garage, shed, finished basement, wood deck, and so on.

Next call your local township assessor (name and number can be found on your assessment notice). Set up a meeting or review on the phone.



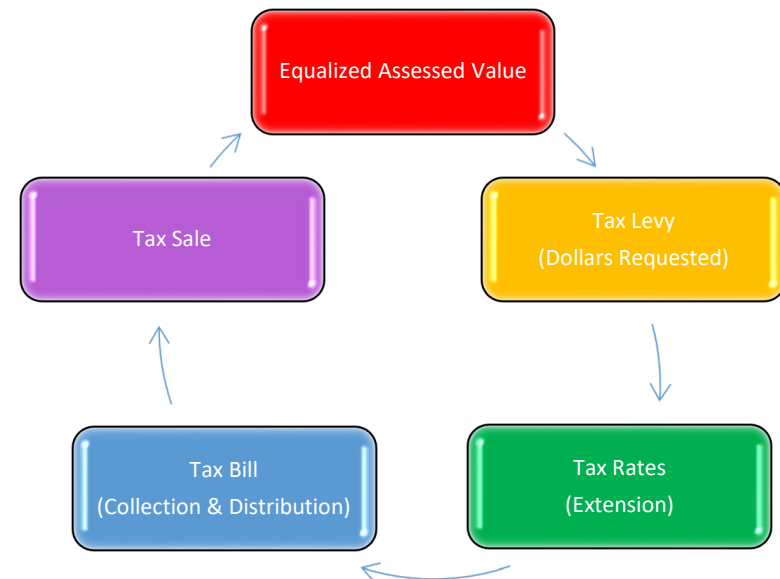
Tax Bill on a home assessed at 100,000 with prior samples with 1 million dollar levy

$$.01 \times \$100,000 = \$1,000$$

Tax Bill if assessed value on home would increase to 200,000, but taxing bodies didn't ask for more funding, still at 1 million dollar levy:

$$.005 \times \$200,000 = \$1,000$$

Tax Bills would remain the same



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HAT ARE THE GROUNDS FOR AN APPEAL (COMPLAINT)?

An assessment appeal is not a complaint about higher taxes. It is an attempt to prove that your property's estimated market value is either inaccurate or unfair.

You may appeal when you can prove at least one of three things:

1. Items that affect value are incorrect on your property record card. You only have one full bath, not two. You have a carport, not a detached garage. Your home has 1,600 square feet, not 2,000 square feet.
2. The estimated market value is too high. You have evidence that similar properties have sold for less than the estimated market value of your property. Must be using a recent sale from the *previous* three years.
3. The estimated market value of your property is accurate but inequitable because it is higher than the estimate value of similar properties.

NOTE: You will not win an appeal because you think your taxes are too high. This is an issue you must take up with officials who determine budgets (schools, parks, cities, roads, etc.). You may always attend a budget meeting which taxing bodies are required to hold and ask questions and voice your concerns.

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HE APPEAL (COMPLAINT) PROCESS STEP – BY – STEP

Procedures and Deadlines

When you receive your assessment notice, or see the publication in the local paper, read it for instructions about deadlines and filing procedures. If they are not clear, call your local assessor (located on notice). Be sure you understand and follow all instructions – READ the Board of Review Rules and Complaint Form in its entirety. A missed deadline or incorrect & incomplete filing can cause an appeal to be dismissed. It's your responsibility to complete the form yourself. The assessment office (both local and county) will not complete this form for you.

Informal Review

The first step when filing or thinking about filing a complaint is to contact your local township assessor to review and discuss your issue.

DON'T MISS
THE DEADLINE!