

Regarding your 2024 Proposed Taxes – December 11, 2023

The Houston County Assessor's Office has received quite a few calls over the last couple weeks, regarding the 2024 Proposed Tax Statements that came out recently. A common misconception is that the assessor's office determines taxes and tax amounts. In fact, the assessor's office only determines the class (or use) along with the estimated market value of your home or property. The classification and value of your property only works to set the percentage of the overall tax burden your property is responsible for. The amount of total taxes required to run your county, city, township, fire department, and school comes from board-approved budgets/levies, and voter-approved referendums. These budget/levy amounts are set by the county, city, township, fire department, and school board members. The amounts set by each of these entities, when combined, becomes the tax amount or tax rate.

Each fall, between the end of November and the beginning of December, proposed tax statements are mailed out. These statements show the proposed tax amount, by parcel, for the following year's taxes. These amounts are based on the proposed levies set by your county, city, township, and school boards. Listed on this notice will be any changes to the budget/levy being proposed, compared to the prior year's budget/levy. Also listed are the meeting dates and times for each entity's discussion of their proposed changes. These meetings are the public's chance to ask questions and voice concerns about the changes proposed. After the meetings, each will set their final budget/levy. Once set, these amounts will be used to determine the total amount of money needed, also known as Taxes. Increases in budgets/levies typically result in higher taxes for all property owners in that district. **If you wish to voice your questions or concerns regarding tax increases, please attend these meetings.**

As noted above, the role of the Assessor's office is to determine your property's class as well as your property's estimated market value. There were two changes this year that may have resulted in an increase in the 2024 proposed taxes for some properties.

First, if your property is enrolled in the Green Acres program, the 13% tax deferral that was applied to tillable land for taxes payable 2023 has been removed for taxes payable 2024. Your land has **not** been removed from Green Acres; however, the deferral no longer applies. As a result, the taxes owed on your **tillable land** will be 13% higher than they were last year.

Second, if your house was built prior to 1940, a one-time **value increase of roughly 25%** was applied to the total value of your house. The reason this increase was applied is directly related to the recent sale prices of homes built prior to 1940. Prior to this year, older homes were not fetching the higher-than-usual sale prices we have been seeing in recent years, but the most recent sales study conducted by the Assessor's office shows that older homes are now being purchased for higher amounts. Older homes are now selling for prices closer to those of the newer homes with comparable features. As a result of the 25% value increase on homes built prior to 1940, owners of older homes are taking some of the tax burden away from owners of newer homes.

If you have questions regarding changes to your property's classification, estimated market value, or land programs, please contact the Assessor's office: 507-725-5801. If you have questions or concerns regarding increases to budgets or levies, please attend the meetings listed on the front of your 2024 Proposed Property Taxes.