



Common Misconceptions

Why did my taxes go up when my value went down?

There is an inverse relationship between values and tax rates. When one goes up the other goes down.

I didn't vote for the last tax levy. Why should I have to pay for it?

This is another instance of majority rule. By Ohio law, taxes must be levied uniformly throughout a taxing district.

For more information, please contact:

Mahoning County Auditor's Office

Michael V. Sciortino, Auditor

120 Market St.

Youngstown, OH 44503

Phone: 330-740-2010

Fax: 330-480-7571

www.mahoningcountyauditor.org



Taxation

Taxpayers demand services.

Taxing authorities require money to provide those services.

Taxing authorities such as school districts, park districts, and city councils, then set tax rates and levy taxes.

If you believe the estimated value of your property is incorrect, you will want to know:

- ✓ How the Auditor's Office valued the properties
- ✓ How to gather information about your property and similar properties
- ✓ How the appeals process works and what the deadlines are



Valuation

Buyers and sellers in the market
CREATE VALUE

The Auditor's Office studies the market and collects information about properties to
ESTIMATE VALUE.

The Auditor's Office has
no control over tax rates.



Your Home. Your Value.

Understanding Your Property Valuation



Michael V. Sciortino
Mahoning County Auditor



What is the purpose of the Mahoning County revaluation program?

The primary purpose of any revaluation program is to provide equalization between all property owners as well as between all classes of property. Ohio law requires revaluation to be completed every six years for all real property in Mahoning County. The program is not intended to increase revenue, but only to equalize values as each property is compared to others.

Why should properties be equalized?

Since ad valorem taxes are based on value, it is imperative to have all property valued periodically on a uniform basis, using a modern system of valuation. Market value appraisals become the foundation for assessments, and equalized values create equalized and uniform taxes. This process also assures the taxpayers in Mahoning County that each is paying only his or her fair share.

What causes property values to change?

A property's valuation can change for many reasons, including industries moving in or out of a community, a shortage of detached housing in a desirable neighborhood, or recession. Of course, when a property itself changes, through the addition of a room, garage, or in-ground swimming pool, for example, or through destruction by flood, fire, or demolition, its value will be affected accordingly.

How is my property value determined?

An inventory of all property is contained in the county property data file. These data characteristics (size, age, story height, style, etc.) are verified by professional appraisers during a physical inspection of new construction properties and an external physical inspection of all properties every six years for the revaluation. The professional appraisers then analyze the updated data along with market conditions and establish the estimated fair market value.

What is fair market value?

Fair market value is the price a willing seller would receive from a willing buyer. Please understand that appraisers do not "set" value; they simply research the values being set by buyers and sellers in the local

market. The appraisers then apply their experience and knowledge of the local real estate market using proven methods and procedures for analyzing comparable properties and the many factors affecting value. Your property should appraise at the price of comparable properties on the market, plus or minus adjustments for differing factors.

What will happen to tax bills?

Once new values are established as a result of the revaluation, the effective tax rates, which are set by the **Ohio Department of Taxation**, are applied. As a result, depending on the tax rates applied, your tax bill may increase or decrease. In Ohio, by law, assessed valuations are determined by taking 35% of the market value appraisals, then local tax rates are applied to each tax bill. Typically, many of these rates are adjusted after a revaluation to prevent a community-wide inflation of values from causing a large-scale inflation in tax bills.

Is tax relief available? YES!

Rollbacks. There are several property tax reductions that real property owners receive. For instance, there is a 10% rollback for all agricultural and residential properties, and a 2.5% rollback for all owner-occupied agricultural and residential properties. No application is required for the 10% rollback. However, property owners must apply for the 2.5 % rollback if they are not currently receiving it.

House Bill 920. Passed in 1976, the Ohio legislature enacted property reform known as House Bill 920. Its purpose was to keep inflation from increasing voted taxes. When property values increase due to inflation, a reappraisal, or an update, House Bill 920 goes into effect. The voted, or full millage, is lowered by the Ohio Department of Taxation resulting in a lower effective tax rate. The opposite is also true when property values decrease due to a reappraisal or an update. House Bill 920 again goes into effect. The voted, or full millage, is increased by the Ohio Department of Taxation resulting in a higher effective tax rate. The only increased revenue taxing districts receive from voted levies is from the added value of new construction.

Homestead Exemption. To be eligible, a homeowner must own and occupy the homestead as of January 1 in the year of application and they must be at least 65 years old or will reach age 65 during the current tax year; or be certified totally and permanently disabled as of January 1 of the current tax year, regardless of age. Applications may be filed after the first Monday in January through the first Monday in June at the Mahoning County Auditor's office.

Current Agricultural Use Value. To be eligible for this relief, agricultural properties must be 10 acres or more or have produced an average annual gross income of \$2,500. Applications for CAUV are accepted after the first Monday in January and prior to the first Monday in March.

Forestry. The Ohio Forest Tax Law reduces the value by 50% on any forest tract of 10 acres or more, excluding the home site, which has been certified as forest land by the State. Forestry certificates received by the Auditor's Office by October 1 will receive credit for the current tax year.

If I believe my property has been unfairly or inaccurately valued, can I appeal?

You may appeal when you can prove at least one of two things: 1.) Major items that affect value are incorrect on your property record (i.e. you have one bathroom not two, or you have a carport, not a garage); or 2.) The estimated market value is too high (i.e. you have evidence that similar properties in your neighborhood have sold for less than the estimated market value of your home).

Remember: you will not be successful in your appeal simply because you think your taxes are too high. You must prove that your property has not been properly valued. However, you may be eligible for tax relief or exemption as described previously.

Taxpayers will be given the opportunity to discuss their new valuations with appropriate officials at a time to be established by the County Auditor. If, after these informal meetings, you are still not satisfied that your property is valued correctly, a more formal appeal process is available to you. At that time, you can contact the Auditor's Office for a Board of Revision Complaint Form.