

PROPERTY REASSESSMENT SURVIVAL GUIDE: WHY IS MY PROPERTY BEING REASSESSED?

Posted on June 28, 2023 by Francis X. Miller



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What is Property Reassessment?

Missouri law requires every county assessor (and the St. Louis City Assessor) to reassess the value of each property within their jurisdiction during the spring of every odd-numbered year. This process is known as reassessment. Unless you sell or significantly improve your property after that reassessment, the valuation of your property generally won't change until the next reassessment cycle, which occurs in the spring of the next odd-numbered year.

However, during an even-numbered year, the county can reassess a property that the owner has sold or significantly improved. The new assessed value (when final), multiplied by the property tax rate applicable to your parcel, results in the amount of property tax that you must pay by December 31st of each year.

What to Expect in the Assessment Process

The choice of a lawyer is an important decision and should not be based solely upon advertisements.

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The assessor makes a preliminary determination of a property's appraised value as of January 1 and sends each taxpayer a change of assessment notice. The change of assessment includes the property's previous assessment and the proposed new assessment. The taxpayer often receives a separate notice of projected tax liability sent as well.

Many jurisdictions employ a largely automated and computerized process that uses formulas and algorithms to arrive at the proposed valuation. Basically, the computer compares similar properties (based on factors such as size, age, location, etc.) to determine the value of each property.

Challenging the Valuation: How to File an Appeal

Fortunately, a system exists by which the taxpayer may claim that the county has overvalued the taxpayer's property, a system commonly referred to as a "property tax appeal." This process involves a one-on-one review of the proposed valuation. Sometimes the assessor's office staff recognizes an error and agrees with the taxpayer. In those cases, the taxpayer can obtain a simple and quick resolution. But when the assessor stands by the proposed valuation, the process can take much longer -- sometimes even years -- to resolve.

The taxpayer initiates the tax appeal process by filing an appeal. The taxpayer can obtain the required forms from the county assessor's office and often online as well. You will need to have decided what you believe to be the correct value when you file your appeal. It is not legally necessary to have an appraisal report that supports the taxpayer's opinion of the correct value. But since the assessor's team will have a licensed appraiser, the taxpayer usually benefits significantly if the taxpayer's opinion is supported by its own reputable appraiser, particularly if that appraiser is skilled in doing tax appeal work. Keep in mind that a substantial percentage increase over the prior assessment may indicate an error in the proposed assessment, but without other competent and convincing evidence to support the taxpayer's opinion of value, the percentage increase alone will often not suffice to win your appeal.

Don't Miss the Deadline

Appeals must be filed by July 10, 2023, or they will be time-barred, pursuant to Missouri law. The seasoned real estate attorneys at Capes Sokol have represented many taxpayers through the appeal process, resulting in significant tax savings.

For more information, visit our [Real Estate practice](#) group page.

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