

What is the Board of Review?

The Board of Review is made up of local officials or citizens appointed by the governing body. It is the Board's duty to hear evidence by the taxpayer and the assessor and to decide if the assessment is correct.

What evidence do I need to present to the Board of Review?

State law puts the burden of proof on the property owner to show that the assessment is incorrect.

Keep in mind that the evidence must be strong enough to prove that the assessor's value is incorrect. Only relevant testimony given at the hearing will be considered by the Board. **STATING THAT PROPERTY TAXES ARE TOO HIGH IS NOT RELEVANT TESTIMONY.**

You should establish in your own mind what you think your property is worth.

The best evidence for this would be recent sale prices for properties similar to yours. The closer in proximity and similarity, the better the evidence.

What happens after the Board of Review makes its decision?

The Board will either give or mail you a notice of its decision. If you do not agree with the Board's determination, the notice will contain information on how you may appeal the Board's decision.

How will my taxes change as a result of the new assessment?

Though the value of your property affects your share of taxes, the actual amount you pay is determined by the budget needs of the schools, city, county, technical college, and state.

All of these taxing units decide what services they will provide in the coming year and how much money they will need to provide these services. Once this decision is made, a tax rate is adopted that will generate the needed dollars.

Your property taxes are then determined by multiplying the tax rate by the assessment.

Where do my tax dollars go?

Your tax dollars are distributed to governmental units such as the schools, city, county, technical college, and the state.

GLOSSARY

Assessed Value:

An estimate of value assigned to taxable property by the assessor for purposes of taxation.

Market Value:

The amount a typical, well-informed purchaser would be willing to pay for a property. For a sale to represent market value, the seller must be willing (but not under pressure) to sell, and the buyer must be willing (but not under any obligation) to buy. The property must be on the market for a reasonable amount of time, the payment must be in cash or its equivalent, and the financing must be typical for that type of property.

Revaluation:

Placing new values on all taxable property for purposes of a new assessment.

Tax Base:

The total assessed value of all assessments in the municipality.

Tax Levy:

The total amount of property tax money that a taxing unit (such as schools, city, county, etc.) needs to raise to provide services.

Tax Rate:

The tax levy divided by the tax base. It is often expressed in terms of dollars per thousand. The tax rate is multiplied by the assessed value to determine the amount of tax that each property owner must pay.

DATES TO REMEMBER

January 1st

- The assessment date - all property is assessed as it existed on this date.

March 1st

- Last day to file personal property returns.

Beginning the 2nd Monday in May

- Board of Review meets. (Check with the clerk or assessor for exact dates.)

January 31st

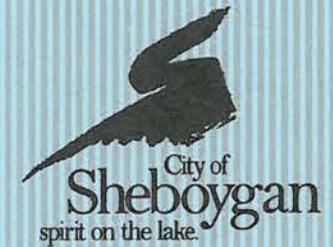
- Full payment of taxes due OR if paying installments, due date of first tax installment payment.

For additional information,
contact the Assessor's Office.
(920) 459-3388



**WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION
OF ASSESSING OFFICERS**

UNDERSTANDING your ASSESSMENT and the REVALUATION PROCESS



Office of the Assessor

***Answers To The
Most Frequently
Asked Questions***

THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

What is a revaluation?

A revaluation is a complete and thorough review of all assessments. During a revaluation, all assessments are examined and adjustments are made where necessary to guarantee that all property is assessed at market value. This is done to assure that taxes are distributed equitably and uniformly.

Wisconsin Law requires all municipalities to assess property at market value at least once every five years.

What is the assessor's role?

The assessor is a State certified individual whose duties are to discover, list, and place a value on all taxable real and personal property in the municipality, in a uniform manner. The assessor is not involved in the collection of property taxes.

How does the assessor value property?

Wisconsin Law requires that property assessments be based on fair market value. Estimating the market value of your property is a matter of determining the price a typical buyer would pay for it in its present condition. Some factors the assessor considers are: what similar properties are selling for, what it would cost to replace your property, the rent it may earn, and any other factors that affect value.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT THE ASSESSOR DOES NOT CREATE THIS VALUE, BUT RATHER INTERPRETS WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE MARKET PLACE.

What is a market value?

Market value is defined as the amount a typical, well informed purchaser would be willing to pay for a property. The seller and buyer must be unrelated, the seller must be willing, but not under pressure to sell, and the buyer must be willing, but not under any obligation to buy. The property must be on the market for a reasonable length of time, the payment must be in cash or its equivalent, and the financing must be typical for that type of property. If all of these conditions are present, this would be a market value, arm's-length sale.

Can the assessment on my property be changed even if the assessor has not been inside my property?

To make a proper assessment on a building, it is desirable for the assessor to see the inside and the outside of the property.

The law requires that property be valued from actual view or the best information available. The assessor keeps records on the physical characteristics of each property in the municipality. Even though the assessor may have been unable to go through your property, the assessment will still be reviewed, based on the existing records and the sales of similar properties.

How can my assessment change when I haven't done anything to my property?

General economic conditions such as interest rates, inflation rates, supply and demand, and changes in tax laws, will influence the value of real estate. As property values change in the market place, those changes must be reflected on the assessment roll.

I have recently built a new home. Will the construction costs be considered?

Your construction cost is a historical figure which may or may not reflect the current market value of your property. It is only one element that will be considered.

What will happen to my assessment if I improve my property?

Generally speaking, improvements that increase the market value of property will increase the assessed value. The following are typical items that will increase the assessed value of your property:

- Added rooms or garages
- Replacing older siding with aluminum or vinyl siding
- Extensive remodeling
- Substantial modernization of kitchens or baths
- Central air conditioning
- Fireplaces

Will my assessment go up if I repair my property?

Good maintenance will help retain the market value of your property. Generally, your assessment will not be increased for individual minor repairs such as those that follow; however, a combination of several of these items could result in an increased assessment.

- Repairing concrete walks and driveways
- Replacing gutters and downspouts
- Replacing water heater
- Repairing or replacing roof
- Repairing porches and steps
- Repairing original siding
- Patching or repairing interior walls and ceilings
- Exterior painting
- Replacing electrical fixtures
- Replacing furnace
- Exterior awnings and shutters
- Weatherstripping, screens, storm windows, doors
- Exterior landscaping including lawns, shrubbery, trees, flowers

Will I be penalized if I don't let the assessor in when an inspection is requested?

When an interior inspection is not allowed, the assessor will attempt to update the records by looking at the property from the outside and using any other available information. To ensure an accurate assessment, it is to your advantage to allow the assessor inside your property when an inspection is requested. By denying an inspection, you may lose the right to appeal your assessment to the Board of Review.

Do all assessments change at the same rate?

There are differences between individual properties and between neighborhoods. In one area, the sales may indicate a substantial increase in value in a given year. In another neighborhood, there may be no change in value, or even a decrease in property values.

Different types of properties within the same neighborhood may also show different value changes. For

example, one-story houses may be more in demand than two-story houses, or vice-versa. Older homes in the same area may be rising in value more slowly than newer homes.

There are numerous factors to be considered in each property which will cause the values to differ. Some of the factors which can affect value are location, condition, size, quality, number of baths, basement finish, garages, and many others.

Will I be notified if there is a change in my assessment?

Wisconsin law requires that whenever an assessment is increased by \$300 or more, the owner must be notified.

How do I know if my assessment is correct?

You should first attempt to decide for yourself what your property is worth. This can be done by looking at area sales, contacting appraisers, and comparing assessments of similar homes. Sales and assessment information are available in the Assessor's office and open to the public for review during regular office hours.

THE APPEAL PROCESS

What if I don't agree with my assessment?

Talk with the assessor. During this informal session you can learn how your assessment was made, what factors were considered, and what type of records are kept regarding your property.

After this review, if I still think the assessment is incorrect, what can I do?

You should arrange to appear at the Board of Review. The municipal clerk will provide you with an objection form that you must complete. You will then be scheduled for a hearing at the Board of Review.

When you receive your tax bill in December, it is too late to file an objection. Paying your taxes under protest does not constitute an assessment objection unless you have first filed an appeal with the Board of Review.