

# PROPERTY TAX DEPARTMENT

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## Dear Taxpayer:

This brochure is designed to provide you, the taxpayer, with essential information on the most common questions and concerns regarding property taxes.

## General Information

Ad Valorem taxes (which means “according to the value”) are levied on real and personal property and on motor vehicles each year. Property tax revenues are used by governments for General Fund maintenance and operations. Departments such as the Police Department, Economic Development, Parks & Recreation, Planning & Zoning, Finance, and Administration operate with General Fund revenue. Real property is land and any improvements such as buildings/houses or parking lots. Personal property is inventory and fixtures used in conducting business, boats, and machinery, etc. Motor Vehicle taxes are billed and collected by Cherokee County only.

The basis for ad valorem taxation is the fair market value of the property as determined by the Tax Assessor’s Office. Georgia law says only 40% of that value is taxable which is referred to as the assessed value.

Tax Digests are prepared each year by the Tax Commissioner’s Office after values are determined by the Tax Assessor’s Office. Tax Digests provide property ownership, billing addresses and property locations for each taxing jurisdiction such as Holly Springs, Canton, and Woodstock.

## Property Tax Bills

Property tax bills are issued annually on or near October 15<sup>th</sup> for the period of January 1 – December 31 of that same year. Bills are generated as required by law (O.C.G.A. 48-5-18) to reflect the owners and values in place on January 1<sup>st</sup> of the tax year.

## When are taxes due?

Property taxes are due 60 days after the bill date. Interest at a rate of 1% of the outstanding tax amount is added on the 1<sup>st</sup> day taxes become past due and every 30 days thereafter until the balance is paid in full (O.C.G.A. 48-2-40). When taxes have become 30 days past due, a Fi Fa (tax lien) is placed on the property and a recording fee is charged (O.C.G.A. 48-3-3). If taxes become 90 days past due a penalty of 10% is added to the balance (O.C.G.A. 48-2-44).

## My taxes are paid by my mortgage company, why am I getting a bill?

If your taxes are paid in escrow, please forward your tax statement to your mortgage company for payment.

## Senior Tax Exemptions

The City provides a senior tax exemption on all eligible homestead property of \$1,000 on the land value and 100% of

the value of the improvements (structures). Resident must be 65 years of age or older on or before January 1st of the effective tax year. In addition, they must own and reside on the property on or before January 1st of the effective tax year. The deadline to file for this exemption is April 1st.

## I sold this property, why am I getting a tax bill?

If you get a tax bill for property that you sold, please forward it to the new owners as quickly as possible. You may also return the bill to us with the new owner’s name and address and we will gladly update our records and forward the bill to the new owner.

## Weren’t these taxes paid at closing?

Check with your closing attorney if you aren’t sure.

## New property owners

If you purchased after January 1, a property tax return (to declare taxable property you own) should be filed with the Tax Assessor’s Office between January 1 and April 1 of the following year. Tax bills mailed at the end of the year will reflect values and exemptions that were in place on January 1<sup>st</sup>. Some new owners are surprised when they receive their tax bill the following year and find out their taxes are not the same. Homestead exemptions disappear when ownership changes. Be sure you apply for tax exemptions with the Cherokee County Tax Assessor’s Office before April 1<sup>st</sup> so you can take advantage of all tax discounts available.

## Appeals

Taxpayers may challenge an assessment by appealing to the Cherokee County Board of Tax Assessors if they feel their property value is not reflective of the fair market value. Contact the Cherokee County Tax Assessor’s Office for more information.

## Methods of payments

In person- Cash, check, money order, Visa, Master Card, or American Express at City Hall located at 3237 Holly Springs Parkway.

Mail- check or money order referencing your map and parcel number to: PO Box 990, Holly Springs, GA 30142.

Online- [www.hollyspringsepay.com](http://www.hollyspringsepay.com)

## Contact information

City of Holly Springs Customer Service 770-345-5536