

City of Oconomowoc Property Tax General Information

Assessment

The property tax process begins with assessment. The assessment represents the value of the property as of January 1 of a given year. If a property's assessment changes, property owners are sent a notice of assessment around March. **After receiving this notice, property owners have a limited period of time to discuss the assessment with the assessor and appeal to the City's Board of Review.** This is important because the property tax is calculated based on this assessment. After the period for appeal is passed, it would normally be too late for the property owner to appeal the amount of property tax.

The City of Oconomowoc contracts this service with Grota Appraisals (262-253-1142).

Budget

The City's budget process begins in August and ends in early November. The budget includes the tax levy to be assessed on City taxpayers. Prior to the adoption of the City's budget and tax levy, there is a public hearing which provides citizens an opportunity to be heard by the Council.

Tax Rate

All overlying jurisdictions complete a budget and submit their levy amounts to the City for use in calculating the overall tax rate. The following overlying jurisdictions are in the City of Oconomowoc:

- State of Wisconsin
- Waukesha County
- City of Oconomowoc
- Oconomowoc Area School District
- Waukesha County Technical College
- Lake District: either #1 (Lac La Belle) or #2 (Fowler)

The tax levies for each jurisdiction are used to calculate the overall tax rate. In the City there are two rates – one for properties located in Lake District #1 and one for properties located in Lake District #2. The only difference between the two rates is the difference in the tax levy for the respective Lake District. All other components are the same.

Tax Bill

A property's tax amount is calculated by multiplying the overall tax rate and the property's total assessed value. **Tax bills are usually received by the taxpayer in mid-December.** Tax and assessment information by parcel is also available on the County's website at www.waukeshacounty.gov and click on Property Tax Information.

Because property tax is generally deductible on the owner's federal income taxes, many property owners pay the entire bill by December 31st. However, all that is required is that the **first installment be paid by January 31st.**

Installment Payments

For real estate taxes (not personal property), the City provides the option of paying in full or paying in three installments.

	Payment in full due on or before	Installment payment due on or before
Real estate taxes	January 31 st	1 st – January 31 st 2 nd – April 30 th 3 rd – July 31 st
Personal property taxes	January 31 st	Installment Plan Not Available

All installments before July 31 should be made payable to the City of Oconomowoc and can be paid:

- By mail to:

City of Oconomowoc Treasurer
174 E. Wisconsin Ave.
PO Box 27
Oconomowoc, WI 53066

The City accepts a timely postmark (postmarked on or before the due date) affixed by the US Postal Service for 5 business days after the due date.

- In person, during normal business hours, at the counter located in City Hall
- Using the 24-hour drop-box located at the main Police Department entrance on the east side of City Hall (checks only – avoid using on due dates)

After July 31, all delinquent payments should be paid to:

Waukesha County Treasurer
Room 148
1320 Pewaukee Rd
Waukesha, WI 53188

Delinquent Payments

The following process is used in determining delinquent payments:

Delinquent 1st installment: If a property owner is late with the first installment, he or she loses the ability to pay in installments. The full amount becomes due immediately. In addition, an interest charge of 1% per month and a penalty of ½% per month will be assessed. The 1.5% per month charge is accrued on the first of each month until the full amount of the bill is paid.

Delinquent 2nd installment: If a property owner is late with the second installment, he or she loses the ability to pay in installments. The outstanding balance comes due immediately and is **considered delinquent as of February 1st**. In addition, an interest charge on the remaining balance of 1% per month and a penalty of ½% per month will be assessed. The 1.5% per month charge is accrued on

the first of each month, beginning in February, until the full amount of the bill is paid. This means that if the full amount is paid in May, interest and penalty will be assessed for 4 months ($4 * 1.5\% = 6\%$).

Delinquent 3rd installment: If a property owner is late with the third installment, he or she loses the ability to pay in installments. The outstanding balance comes due immediately and is **considered delinquent as of February 1st even if the second installment was made timely.** In addition, an interest charge on the remaining balance of 1% per month and a penalty of ½% per month will be assessed. The 1.5% per month charge is accrued on the first of each month, beginning in February, until the full amount of the bill is paid. This means that if the 3rd installment is made in August, interest and penalty will be assessed for 7 months ($7 * 1.5\% = 10.5\%$). All tax payments made after July 31st should be sent to Waukesha County.

Lottery Credit

The lottery credit was given to those taxpayers who have verified with the County Treasurer that the property was their primary residence as of January 1 of the tax year (i.e. January 1, 2007 for the 2007 tax bills).

If you believe that you qualify for the lottery credit, but it does not appear on your tax bill, you may file a claim form, which is available at City Hall. The form is also available on the Department of Revenue website (<http://www.revenue.wi.gov/forms/lottery/index.html>). The deadline for filing a claim with the City is January 31 of the following year (i.e. January 31, 2008 for the 2007 tax bills). A late claim can be filed directly with the Department of Revenue from February 1 until October 1 of the year following the issuance of the tax bill. Additional information on the lottery credit program is also available on the Department of Revenue website (<http://www.revenue.wi.gov/faqs/slf/lottcr.html>).

First Dollar Credit

New on the 2008 tax bills is a First Dollar Property Tax Credit from the State. The presentation and calculation of this credit mirrors the lottery credit, though there are a few differences in who is eligible for the credit. The credit is applicable to every parcel of real property with improvements.

- 1) Vacant parcels are NOT eligible
- 2) Personal Property is NOT eligible
- 3) Applies to all classes of property (residential, commercial, mfg, etc)
- 4) Does NOT have to be a primary residence

The credit will be automatically applied to the appropriate tax bills; therefore, no action by the taxpayer is necessary. A separate line appears on the tax bill to show the credit, right above the lottery credit.

Additional Information

Additional information on property taxes is available in the Department of Revenue's "Guide for Property Owners" (<http://www.dor.state.wi.us/pubs/slf/pb060.pdf>).

Questions can also be directed to the City's Treasurer's Office at (262) 569-2170.