




Property Tax Newsletter

News and developments

A publication of the Property Tax Section

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Tax Commissioner

Forms Available on Web Site


The Office of State Tax Commissioner has made many forms used by assessment officials available on the Web site www.ndtaxdepartment.com. Go to "Property Tax" and then "Forms." County recorders may access the Monthly Report of the County Recorder, Schedule A, and Schedule Bx forms. Applications for the renter's refund and other forms that are not listed on the Web site may be obtained from the Tax Commissioner's Office. 

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Omitted Mobile Home Assessment


A mobile home was assessed as real property for 2002 and the tax remains due. It should have been taxed as a mobile home according to N.D.C.C. ch. 57-55 and the tax paid at the beginning of 2002.

To correct the error, the 2002 real property value of the mobile home could be abated according to the provisions of N.D.C.C. ch. 57-23. N.D.C.C. § 57-14-01(3) requires the county auditor to add the 2002 assessment as a mobile home, valued according to the provisions of N.D.C.C. ch. 57-55. 

Educational Option For Certification Credit

In order to become certified as a county director of tax equalization or class I city assessor, individuals need to obtain a minimum of 30 hours of approved residential property appraisal education. In the past, the International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO) Course 300 "Fundamentals of Mass Appraisal" fulfilled that requirement.

That course has been rewritten and will no longer qualify for assessor certification credit. In the future, IAAO Course 311 "Residential Modeling Concept," will qualify as a residential appraisal course for certification purposes. IAAO Course 311 more closely resembles the Tax Department Course 201-A because it includes instruction in the appraisal process for determining the market value of residential properties.


Many assessment officials attended IAAO Course 300 in Bismarck Oct. 13-17, 2003. Individuals will receive education credit for the course provided they submit to the State Supervisor of Assessments a copy of either a "certificate of completion" or a "certificate of attendance," depending upon whether they completed the exam or audited the course. 



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Sales Ratio Study - Computerization and Enforcement

Some counties have filed the Sales Ratio Study information electronically for a number of years. The Property Tax Division has a template in Excel available for assessment officials to use when entering sales information. The information may then be e-mailed as an attachment to Judy Brosz. This format can be used beginning with sales taking place during 2004. Bx forms do not need to be completed but must be returned to the Property Tax Division. For more information, call Judy at (701)328-3142 or e-mail her at jbrosz@state.nd.us.


When filing deeds with the county recorder, some grantees state on the face of the deed that they sent the statement of full consideration to the State Board of Equalization (Board). When the Board does not receive the statement, a letter requesting the statement is sent to the grantees. The letter was recently reworded to include mention of a penalty for not submitting the statement. In response, grantees who received the new letter have contacted the Property Tax Division to express willingness to comply. Our goal is to have 100 percent compliance. 

Grain Elevator Seminar Scheduled

Property Tax personnel are working on arrangements for a seminar pertaining to appraisal of grain-handling facilities. The instructor will be Jeffrey Berg, a well known appraiser who specializes in agribusiness appraisals. The seminar will be held in Bismarck at the Comfort Inn February 18-19, 2004.


The instruction will include components of grain-handling facilities, transportation of the products, diversification of crops handled, factors affecting value, and analysis of the three approaches to value. The seminar also includes a tour of a grain-handling facility.

Upon finalizing arrangements, we will e-mail information about the seminar and a registration form to county directors of tax equalization and class I city assessors.

Appraisal of special-use properties is always a challenge for assessment officials. This is an excellent opportunity for assessment officials to learn from an expert in grain elevator appraisal, discuss local problems, and tour a facility. 

Updates Available Soon


The Property Tax Division is updating information in the Assessor's Manual to reflect changes made by the 2003 Legislature.

Section 1 and a few Property Tax Guidelines should be mailed to assessment officials before January 1. Work is in progress to update costs in Section 6. The format may change but only to make the information easier to identify and understand. The Property Tax Division hopes to have the updated section available to assessors by February 1. 

"The questions help to evaluate the present operations in your office . . ."

Certain Exemptions Require a Resolution

Before property can qualify for property tax exemption as a new single family residence, condominium, or townhouse according to N.D.C.C. § 57-02-08(35) (36) or for exemption of improvements to residential and commercial buildings according to N.D.C.C. ch. 57-02.2, the governing body of the city or county must pass a resolution stating it will allow the exemptions. The resolution must be in place before a city or county governing body may grant any applications for exemption.

A retroactive exemption creates a "gift" that violates Art. X, Sec. 18 of the ND Constitution. 


Self Evaluation of Assessment Practices

The International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO) has a guide available for assessment officials to use in evaluating the assessment practices in their jurisdiction. It is titled "Assessment Practices - Self-Evaluation Guide" and is available for purchase for \$35 (IAAO member), \$40 (nonmember).

The guide is set up with yes/no questions in 11 areas of assessment. The questions help to evaluate the present operations in your office and identify areas for improvement based on industry standards. Following is a sample of topics included in the guide:

- Budget based on specific objectives
- Education and experience of assessment administrators and appraisers
- Use of sales ratio studies to determine reappraisal priorities
- Physical inspection of properties
- Validation of sales information
- Depreciation schedules determined by sales analysis
- Collection of income and expense information for leased property
- Verification of exemption eligibility

Questions answered in the negative identify areas for improvement. The guide contains 90 questions pertaining to real property assessment as well as suggestions for improvement and sources for information and/or assistance. This is an excellent tool for assessment administrators to use to evaluate their assessment procedures and determine priorities for improvement.

If you want to purchase the guide, please contact Jerry Ratzlaff, secretary-treasurer of NDAAO. He will take requests and order guides on behalf of NDAAO members. 

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Homestead Credit and Renter's Refund Applications

The Property Tax Division sent a small supply of Property Tax Credit for Senior Citizens or Disabled Persons brochures to each county for distribution to new applicants. The brochure is also available on the Tax Department Web site. Homeowners' applications are available on the Web site as fill-in forms in both letter and legal size. The reduction in the Tax Department appropriation required cuts in printing expenses.

The Property Tax Division will mail applications for the renter's refund in January to individuals who received the refund in 2003. Assessment officials may request a few copies of the application for their offices. 

Electronic Newsletter

This newsletter is available free of charge on our Web site at www.ndtaxdepartment.com or in hard copy. We offer an e-mail notification service to subscribers as soon as a new issue is placed on our Web site. To join the e-mail service, simply visit our Web site and click on "Newsletter Subscription" located in the top blue bar at the right side of our home page.



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