

Q: How is the millage rate (tax rate) determined?

A: After the assessors' staff has completed their review of current appraisals, we then turn the data over to the Tax Commissioners Office to add other taxable property to the tax digest. The Tax Commissioner and Assessors Office then balance all assessment and exemptions. After a thorough review of the digest valuations and exemptions has been completed, we then hand the tax digest totals over to the "Governing Authorities". The "Governing Authorities" in turn determine the tax rate (millage rate) for each of their respective entities.

See the following example:

Total Budget ÷ Net Tax Digest = Mill Rate

\$4,250,000 ÷ \$536,874,984 = 7.92 mills

In this example, \$7.92 is the amount that will be levied on every \$1,000 of assessed value.

Governing Authorities: The City of Saint Marys, The City of Kingsland, The City of Woodbine, Camden County Commissioners, and the Camden County School Board.

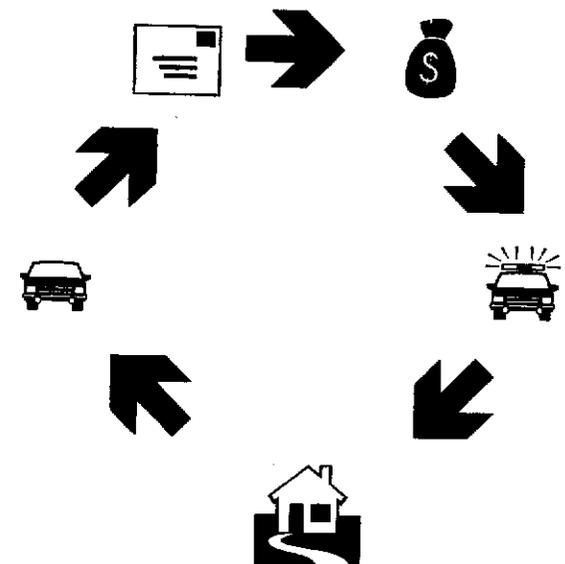
Q: How are my taxes figured?

A:

- Appraised Value (determined by Assessors) x 40% (assessment rate in GA) = Assessed Value
- Assessed Value – Applicable Local or State Exemptions – Governors Homestead Credit (if applicable) = Net Assessment
- Net Assessment x Millage Rate = Tax

CAMDEN COUNTY
TAX ASSESSORS OFFICE

Understanding Your Property Assessment



**Camden County
Tax Assessors Office**

Camden County Tax Assessors Office

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www.caassessors.com

Camden County Board of Tax Assessors

Before you get your tax bill, you will receive an "Assessment Notice" from the Tax Assessors Office if you have recently purchased property, have made improvements to your property, or if our office has made changes to your property appraisal. This notice will show the appraised value of your property, which also will be used to calculate the amount of your tax bill.

The Board of Tax Assessors and their staff are required by law to investigate and determine the location and fair market value of all taxable property. (48-5-9) Failure to comply with this state law could result in costly penalties to the county and consequently passed on to the taxpayer.

Many Property owners have questions about their property appraisal. Some typical concerns are addressed in the following questions and answers:

Q: Why must my property be appraised?

A: State law governs everything the Assessors do. Therefore, if the Board of Assessors (B.O.A.) do not comply with state law (48-5-343) the county governing authority will be assessed costly penalties (48-5-345, 346) if assessments do not meet state regulations (560-11-2-.56) or fair market value.

Q: What is Fair Market Value?

A: Georgia law defined fair market value as the amount a knowledgeable and serious buyer would pay, and a willing seller would accept for a property to complete a bona fide sale. Fair Market Value is the appraised value of your property by the Camden County Board of Assessors.

Q: How is Fair Market Value determined?

A: The Board of Assessors are required by law to consider those factors a buyer and seller would consider in arriving at a selling price. These include but are not limited to replacement costs, recent sales of similar properties in the neighborhood, the properties income producing capability, the properties zoning and use, and

any legal restrictions, which would affect the potential use of the property.

Q: What is "Assessed Value"?

A: By Georgia Law, a property's assessed value is set at 40% of fair market value, as determined by the Board of Assessors.

Example: \$100,000: Fair Market Value
 \$ 40,000: Assessed Value

The amount of tax you pay is based on the assessed value of your property.

Q: What if I do not agree with the value placed on my property—can I appeal it?

A: Yes. Georgia Law provides the following 3 areas for your appeal:

- 1) Taxability: is the property taxable to begin with, or should it be exempt?
- 2) Uniformity: how does your property value compare with the value of other similar properties in your area or neighborhood?
- 3) Value: is the value that the assessors placed on your property correct? (The amount of tax is not a valid reason for appeal).

Q: How do I appeal my property valuation?

A: If you wish to appeal, you have 45 days from the date of the assessment notice in which to file a written appeal with the Board of Assessors. Otherwise, the assessed value on the notice will be used for taxation purposes. See the following steps on how the appeal process works:

- A) First, you must write a letter of appeal stating your property I.D. number, reason for appeal and phone number. If you just wish to inquire about your appraisal, you may do so simply calling or coming by our office and we will set up an appointment for you to speak with an appraiser.
- B) The appraisal staff will then review your written appeal and if necessary, contact you to make an appointment to review your property.

C) If the Board of Assessors agrees that your value should be adjusted, you will be notified. If they do not, your appeal is automatically sent to the next level of appeal: the Board of Equalization, or if you choose to do so in your initial appeal letter, Arbitration. If either you or the assessor disagrees with the Board of Equalization or Arbitrator's decision, either may appeal to the final level: the Camden County Superior Court.

Q: What if I fail to appeal within the 45 days?

A: If you do not appeal your valuation within the appeal period, you forfeit your right to appeal for that year. However, you can request a review of your appraisal the next January 1st – April 1st of the following year with a real property return.

Q: What is the "Board of Equalization"?

A: The Board of Equalization is an independent three-person board of Camden county property owners appointed by the Camden county Grand Jury to hear appeals at no cost to the property owner.

Q: What is "Arbitration"?

A: If Arbitration is desired it must be specified in the initial appeal letter. The property owner and the board of assessors must agree upon arbitrators and or a referee. Each party must pay for his/her own arbitrator and or share the cost of the referee. Only registered real estate appraisers as classified by the GA Real Estate Appraiser Board can serve as an arbitrator.

Q: Does an increase in my property value mean an increase in my tax?

A: That depends on how much your valuation increases and how much the millage rate is adjusted for the current tax year. The millage rate is determined by the combined budgets of each of the governing authorities. The governing authorities set a millage rate, when this rate is applied to your assessed value this will determine your share of the tax revenue that is needed for the operation of the governing authorities.