

Colorado County Appraisal District

January 04, 2021

For Immediate Release

Updated Property Tax Information Now Available for Texas Taxpayers

New and updated property tax information has just been compiled by the Colorado County Appraisal District and is available now to assist taxpayers. This property tax information is current and covers a wide range of topics, such as taxpayer remedies, exemptions, and appraisals, and has information for select groups, such as disabled veterans and persons age 65 or older.

Whether you are a homeowner, business owner, disabled veteran or taxpayer, it is important you know your rights concerning the property tax laws. The Colorado County Appraisal District (CAD) can provide you with the most complete, accurate and up-to-date available information, and the CAD we will assist you with any property tax issues.

This includes information about the following programs.

- **Property Tax Exemptions for Disabled Veterans** – The law provides partial exemptions for any property owned by disabled veterans or surviving spouses and surviving children of deceased disabled veterans. Another partial exemption is for homesteads donated to disabled veterans by charitable organizations at no cost or not more than 50 percent of the good faith estimate of the homestead's market value to the disabled veterans and their surviving spouses. The exemption amount is determined according to percentage of service-connected disability. The law also provides a 100 percent homestead exemption for 100 percent disabled veterans and their surviving spouses and surviving spouses of U.S. armed service members killed in action.
- **Property Tax Exemptions** – Non-profit organizations that meet statutory requirements may seek property tax exemptions and must apply to their county appraisal district by a specific date. Businesses that receive tax abatements granted by taxing units; ship inventory out of Texas that may be eligible for the freeport exemption; store certain goods in transit in warehouses that are moved within 175 days; construct, install or acquire pollution control property; own and operate energy storage systems; convert landfill-generated gas; or store offshore drilling equipment while not in use may also be eligible for statutory exemptions.
- **Rendering Taxable Property** – If a business owns tangible personal property that is used to produce income, the business **MUST** file a rendition with its local county appraisal district by no later than April 15th. Personal property includes furniture, fixture, machine, equipment and inventory used by a business. Owners do not have to render exempt property such as church property or an agriculture producer's equipment used for farming. The deadline to file a rendition or report of decreased value is by no later than April 15th. If a business personal rendition is not timely filed, contains fraudulent information, or not filed at all, a 10 percent to 50 percent penalty may be imposed. Property owners who need more time to file their business personal renditions may file a written request with the Chief Appraiser prior to and no later than April 15th to receive 30-day extension to May 15th.
- **Appraisal Notices** – Normally, taxpayers receive a notice of appraised value from the appropriate local county appraisal district. The city, county, school districts and other local taxing units will use the appraisal district's value to set property taxes for the coming year. A detailed notice is sent if:
 - a) **the value of a property is higher than it was in the previous year** (The appraisal district's board can decide that it will send detailed notices only if a property's value increases by more than \$1,000.)

- b) the value of a property is higher than the value the property owner gave on a rendition
- c) the property was not on the appraisal district's records in the previous year; or
- d) an exemption or partial exemption approved for the property for the preceding year was canceled or reduced for the current year.

• **Property Taxpayer Remedies** – This Comptroller publication explains in detail how to protest a property appraisal, what issues the county appraisal review board (ARB) can consider and what to expect during a protest hearing. The publication also discusses the options of taking a taxpayer's case to district court, the State Office of Administrative Hearings or binding arbitration if the taxpayer is dissatisfied with the outcome of the ARB hearing.

• **Homestead Exemptions** – A homestead is generally defined as the home and land used as the owner's PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE ON JAN. 1 OF THE TAX YEAR. A homestead exemption reduces the appraised value of the home and, as a result, lowers property taxes. Applications are submitted to the appropriate local county appraisal district. Applications are due before May 1st.

• **Productivity Appraisal (commonly referred to by taxpayers as "Ag Exemption")** – Property owners who use land for timberland production, agricultural purposes or wildlife management can be granted property tax relief on their land. They may apply to their local county appraisal district for an agricultural appraisal which may result in a lower appraisal of the land based on production, versus market value. Applications are due before May 1st.

• **Residence Homestead Tax Deferral** - Texas homeowners may postpone paying the currently delinquent property taxes due on the appreciating value of their homes by filing a tax deferral affidavit at their local county appraisal district. This tax relief allows homeowners to pay the property taxes on 105 percent of the preceding year's appraised value of their homestead, plus the taxes on any new improvements to the homestead. The remaining taxes are postponed, but not cancelled, with interest accruing at 8 percent per year.

• **Property Tax Deferral for Persons Age 65 or Older or Disabled or Disabled Veteran Homeowners** – Texans who are age 65 or older or disabled, as defined by law, or who qualify for a disabled veteran exemption may postpone paying current and delinquent property taxes on their homes by signing a tax deferral affidavit. Once the affidavit is on file, taxes are deferred, but not cancelled, as long as the owner continues to own and live in the home. Interest continues to accrue at 5 percent per year on the unpaid taxes. You may obtain a deferral affidavit at the appraisal district.

• **Notice of Availability of Electronic Communication** – In appraisal districts located in counties with a population of more than 200,000 or that have authorized electronic communications, and that have implemented a system that allows such communications, chief appraisers and ARBs may communicate electronically through email or other media with property owners or their designated representatives. Written agreements are required for notices and other documents to be delivered electronically instead of mailing.

• **Protesting Property Appraisal Values** – Property owners who disagree with the appraisal district's appraisal of their property for local taxes or for any other action that adversely affects them may protest their property value to the appraisal district's ARB.

For more information about these programs, you may contact the Colorado County Appraisal District by mail at P.O. Box 10, in person at 106 Cardinal Lane, Columbus, TX or by phone at (979) 732-8222.

Information is also available on the Comptroller's Property Tax Assistance Division's website at comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/property-tax/.