



PROPERTY TAX STATE OF CALIFORNIA

THE BASICS

Property taxes are governed by California State law and collected by the county. The County Assessor determines the assessed value of the property. This amount is generally the cash or market value at the time of purchase. This value increases not more than 2% per year until the property is sold or new construction is completed. The Auditor-Controller applies the appropriate tax rates which include the general tax levy, locally voted special taxes, and any city or district direct assessments. The Tax Collector prepares and sends property tax bills and collects payment.

NEW HOMEOWNERS

Although escrow prorates taxes and gives appropriate credit between buyer and seller, the actual taxes may not have been paid and you are responsible for any unpaid taxes at the close of escrow. Review your escrow instructions, closing statement and/or title report to determine if any portion of the annual taxes were paid by the previous owner before the close of escrow.

The Tax Collector will not send a bill for the remainder of the year in which you acquired the property unless requested. If any taxes remain unpaid, call the Tax Collector and request a bill. When you call, give the Assessor's Identification Number (consisting of map book, page, and parcel number) from the previous tax bill (if available to you).

STATE LAW STIPULATES THAT FAILURE TO RECEIVE A BILL DOES NOT PERMIT THE TAX COLLECTOR TO EXCUSE PENALTIES ON LATE PAYMENTS.

IMPOUND ACCOUNTS

If your taxes are paid through an impound account (included in your mortgage payment), your lender will receive your annual tax bill, and you will receive an informational copy.

PARTIAL PAYMENTS

You may pay as much as you can afford by the installment delinquency date and avoid the penalty on the amount paid. The unpaid portion will still be subject to the 10% penalty. Any unpaid taxes as of June 30 will cause the property to become tax defaulted and further penalties and costs will accrue.

THE TAX YEAR

JANUARY 1

Taxes become a lien at 12:01 a.m. not yet due and payable for the Fiscal Tax year starting July 1 and ending June 30. Title evidence will show taxes as a lien for the coming Fiscal Tax Year.

APRIL 15

Last day to file for 100% Veterans or Homeowner's Exemption (Senior Citizens & Disabled filing period May 15-August 31). You must own and occupy the property on January 1 to be eligible for applicable exemptions.

JULY 1

Current Fiscal Tax Year begins.

NOVEMBER 1

First Installment due covering the period from July 1 to December 31.

DECEMBER 1

Last day to file for 80% of applicable exemptions.

JANUARY 1

Taxes become a lien at 12:01 a.m. not yet due and payable for the Fiscal Tax year starting July 1 and ending June 30. Title evidence will show taxes as a lien for the coming Fiscal Tax Year.

DECEMBER 10

First Installment becomes delinquent at 5 p.m., at which time a 10% penalty is added to taxes due. If December 10 falls on a weekend or holiday, taxes are not delinquent until the next business day.

FEBRUARY 1

Second installment due, covers the tax period from January 1 to June 30.

APRIL 10

Second installment becomes delinquent at 5 p.m. 10% penalty plus administrative charge attaches. If April 10 falls on a weekend or holiday, taxes are not delinquent until 5 p.m. the next business day.

JUNE 30

If you fail to pay either or both installments by 5 p.m. property tax becomes defaulted and additional costs and penalties accrue. If June 30 falls on a weekend or holiday, taxes must be paid by 5 p.m. of the preceding business day.

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General Information

GENERAL TAX LEVY

The 1% General County Tax (ad valorem) was established with the passage of Proposition 13. The general levy of 1% is distributed among agencies in the County on a county-wide basis; and its distribution changes each year based on increases or decreases in assessed value.

VOTED INDEBTEDNESS

Any jurisdiction may levy a tax rate in excess of the General Tax Levy (1%) in order to produce revenues in an amount needed to make annual payments for the interest and principal on any bonded indebtedness which was approved by the voters.

DIRECT ASSESSMENTS

Benefit assessments such as weed removal, landscape, flood control, refuse, sewer, sidewalk repair, and lighting assessments are examples of direct assessments. Direct Assessments are shown separately on the secured tax bill and are added to ad valorem taxes for total taxes billed. The Auditor- Controller acts as an agent for each agency by placing the direct assessment on the tax bill and distributing the tax collected to the agency. For information regarding the direct assessment calculation, contact the agency or city responsible for the assessment.

TAX RATE AREAS

Properties are subject to taxation by a number of taxing agencies, such as the County, cities school districts and various special districts. The Auditor-Controller groups properties into Tax Rate Areas (TRAs). The TRAs are numbered and appear on both secured and unsecured tax bills. the Board of Supervisors sets the tax rates that are calculated in accordance with Article 13(a) of the Constitution of the State of California.

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PARTIAL PAYMENTS

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*** This material is general information only and is not legal advice or investment information. The information herein may not represent your situation and should not be relied upon. Every transaction and tax bill is unique. Consult your attorney or tax planner for further advice.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more detailed information on your tax bill, visit your County Auditor-Controller's website:

LOS ANGELES COUNTY :	auditor.co.la.ca.us/
ORANGE COUNTY :	www.ac.ocgov.com/
RIVERSIDE COUNTY :	www.auditorcontroller.org/
SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY :	http://www.sbcounty.gov/acr/controller.htm
VENTURA COUNTY :	auditor.countyofventura.org/