

TAXPAYER NEWS October 2009

Carlton R. Pape, Chief Appraiser
Tax Assessor-Collector
Phone:(512) 398-5550 FAX:(512) 398-5551

www.caldwellcad.org

Caldwell County Appraisal District
P. O. Box 900
Lockhart, Texas 78644

Our Mission

We are required by State Law to provide property tax appraisals that are equal, uniform, and at market value. The State Comptroller Tax Division monitors and conducts reviews of our appraisal standards to make sure we adhere to State Law. The most recent study from the state shows that we are in compliance with state guidelines.

What this means for the average property owner is that any increase or decrease in the valuation of a property is part of our effort to adhere to State Law.

Planning to Visit in Person? Choose A Location Near You!

- **MAIN OFFICE:** 610 San Jacinto St, Lockhart
phone 512-398-5550 office hours 8am – 5pm
- **LULING:** 505 E Fannin St, Luling
phone: 830-875-9207 office hours 8am – 4:30pm

What We Do

The Appraisal Office has the responsibility for appraising property for ad valorem tax purposes and we are contracted to collect property taxes for the majority of entities. The Caldwell County Appraisal District has no legal authority to impose a tax or set the tax rate, which will determine the amount of taxes you pay. Your locally elected officials decide your property tax burden. Your payment for taxes will be made at the Caldwell County Appraisal District or the Luling satellite office per a contract between the taxing entities and the appraisal district to collect their taxes.

Property Tax

Here's how the property tax system works:

1. **The Appraisal District** determines the value of all properties, grants exemptions and certifies values to the taxing units.
2. **The governing bodies of taxing units**, such as City Councils and School Boards, prepare budgets and then set the tax rates, which determine how much tax is due on each property.
3. **The Appraisal District** calculates how much you owe for each taxing unit, prepares and sends bills, collects monies due and disburses the funds to the appropriate taxing unit.

To receive an exemption or to protest values, you must apply to the Appraisal District. **Protests of value** must be filed by **April 30th** or **within 30 days** after you receive a notice of value. When you receive a tax bill, it is too late to protest value. **Exemptions** must be requested and filed between **January 1 and April 30.**

Did you receive this bill in error?

If you received a bill in error (for example, you no longer own the property) please contact the appraisal district immediately at (512) 398-5550.

Want to Save for Next Year's Taxes?

A plan is available that allows you to pre-pay next year's property taxes. Contracts for ESCROW PAYMENTS may be set up at our office.

Disabled and Senior Taxpayers

Disabled and over-65 exemptions reduce the taxable value of (**homestead only**) property, which in turn lowers the amount of tax you pay. Senior applicants qualify for the exemption on their 65th birthday. Disabled applicants qualify based on federal guidelines. Taxpayers must choose either the disabled or over-65 exemption. Both senior and disabled taxpayers may file a deferral to delay payment and minimize penalty. To apply for exemptions and deferrals, call the Appraisal District at (512) 398-5550. **Those who qualify for the over-65 exemption or the disabled exemption may make property tax payments (on homestead only) in four installments. Contact us before January 31 for a Letter of Intent to sign and return for this plan.**

Disabled Veterans--Residence Homestead

A disabled veteran who receives from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs or its successor 100 percent disability compensation due to a service connected disability and a rating of 100 percent disabled or of individual unemployability is entitled to an exemption from taxation of the total appraised value of the veteran's residence homestead.

Timely Payment of 2009 Taxes

Property tax payments are due between October 1, 2009 and January 31, 2010. Mailed payments with a January 31, 2010 postmark are considered timely. On February 1, 2010, all unpaid 2009 taxes become delinquent. Penalty and interest are added to the original base amount and continue to increase until taxes are paid. **Attorney fees are attached to Personal Property accounts on April 1, 2010 and on all other accounts July 1, 2010. If there is an active suit on an account, Attorney Fees will attach February 1, 2010.**

BY LAW, the Tax Assessor-Collector cannot waive penalty and interest on delinquent taxes.

Do you owe delinquent taxes from a prior year?

2009 tax bills will not include notice of delinquent taxes from prior years. If you have not contacted the office to make payment arrangements, you risk costly legal fees. When you contact this office to discuss delinquent taxes, a collection specialist may be able to set up a payment plan.

You may pay your taxes by credit card.

For more information visit our website at www.caldwellcad.org and click on Certified Payments link on home page or contact our office at (512) 398-5550. There will be a convenience fee for this service.

Our Website

Please visit our website at www.caldwellcad.org to view appraisal information, state forms, miscellaneous information, tax sale listings, contact information and employment opportunities. Tax amount information is also available on our website. Our website is updated once a month.