



CHARLOTTE COUNTY PROPERTY APPRAISER
Frank Desguin, CFA, CAE

Dear Charlotte County Property Owner,

Each year, on behalf of county taxing authorities, the Property Appraiser mails a "Notice of Proposed Property Taxes and Proposed or Adopted Non-Ad Valorem Assessments" (TRIM notice), **which is not a bill**, to each property owner. Examples of taxing authorities levying ad valorem property taxes within the county are the Board of County Commissioners, School Board, and Punta Gorda City Council.

The Property Appraiser's role is limited to annual determination of each property's "just value", its classified use value when required, and administration of ad valorem exemptions, in accordance with Florida's Constitution and applicable law. Florida's Supreme Court has determined that "just value" is legally synonymous to 100% of fair market value.

January 1 is the valuation date in Florida. Therefore, this year's just (market) value listed on the enclosed TRIM notice, reflects an estimate of your property's market value on January 1, 2009, based on market data from the preceding (2008) calendar year. Consequently, 2009 Tax Roll values are by now, almost eight (8) months old. Sales during the current calendar year, 2009, will be part of the market data analyzed when determining values for next year's 2010 Tax Roll.

Although "just value" reflects an estimate of fair market value determined according to Florida law, a property's "assessed value" can be lower due to statutory requirements governing "classified use" values, the Save Our Homes (SOH) limitation applicable to properties granted homestead exemption, and the 10% limitation, applicable for the first time this year, to non-homestead properties. **Surprisingly though, SOH legislation requires that assessed value be increased by the annual "limitation", even when a property's market value decreases, as long as assessed value does not exceed market value.**

Consequently, the assessed value of many homestead properties in Charlotte County had to be increased by 0.1%, the 2009 Tax Roll SOH limitation, even though their market value decreased. Exemptions granted pursuant to Florida law are then deducted from assessed value to determine a property's taxable value. Accordingly, due to the SOH "recapture rule", even though their market value decreased, school taxable value increased for over 22,000 homestead properties and non-school taxable value increased for about 18,000.

You may be wondering, what's this about school and non-school taxable values? As you know, Florida voters approved Amendment 1 to the state constitution in January 2008. One of the provisions created an additional homestead exemption of up to \$25,000. However, the additional amount applies only to assessed value in excess of \$50,000 and does not apply to school taxes. Thus, there can now be two different taxable values for homestead properties, school and non-school. In addition, beginning this year, there can also be two different taxable values for non-homestead properties since the 10% limitation mentioned earlier applies only to "non-school" values.

(CONTINUED ON REVERSE SIDE)

Mailing address changes:

Please notify us of any change in your mailing address. Provide only one address that is valid throughout the year. Remember to include your parcel identification or account number. If you wish, you may clip this form and mail it to us.

Mail to: Frank Desguin, CFA, CAE
Charlotte County Property Appraiser, 18500 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte, FL 33948

Parcel Identification (I.D.)/Account Number(s): _____

Name (as it appears on notice): _____

New Address: _____

Reason For Change: _____

Is this a permanent change? Yes No Effective Date of Change: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____ Phone Number: _____

Another Amendment 1 change effective last year is an exemption, up to \$25,000, on tangible personal property (TPP). Individuals and businesses timely filing the annual tangible personal property tax return qualify for the exemption. If the enclosed notice concerns TPP, the account number begins with a three-letter prefix (CNT, PUG, etc.).

Once the taxable value of all property is determined, local taxing authorities (Board of County Commissioners, School Board, Punta Gorda City Council, etc.) utilize the amount within their jurisdiction, to determine the level of property taxes necessary to fund their budgets. For example, if a taxing authority determines \$1,000,000 is required from property taxes to fund its budget and the taxable value of all property within its jurisdiction is \$100,000,000, dividing the revenue requirement, \$1,000,000, by the taxable value, \$100,000,000, indicates that 10 mills, or \$10 for each \$1,000 of taxable value, is the required property tax levy. If the taxable value of all property were just \$50,000,000, a property tax rate of 20 mills would be required to generate the same \$1,000,000 needed.

Columns in the “2009 Proposed Ad Valorem Taxes” section are explained on the back of the TRIM Notice, as is the process for petitioning the property appraiser’s determination of market value. Non-ad valorem assessments, listed at the bottom of the notice, are “flat rate” fees levied by the Board of County Commissioners and other taxing authorities, independent of a property’s value. Non-ad valorem fees are levied in addition to property taxes. **Please take time to review the notice’s important information and direct questions concerning taxes and non ad-valorem assessments to the appropriate taxing authority shown.**

Information on your property’s market, assessed, and taxable values, for both this year (2009) and last (2008), is located about mid-way down the left side of the TRIM Notice. **Due to market conditions during 2008, the 2009 Tax Roll reflects lower market values for 93% of Charlotte County properties.** If you have questions concerning your property’s market value or exemptions, contact this office at the address or telephone numbers listed on the notice, or via the Internet at www.ccappraiser.com. **Please keep in mind, values are determined as of this past January 1, 2009, almost eight (8) months ago and reflect market activity during 2008. Property sales occurring this calendar year, 2009, will be analyzed when determining 2010 Tax Roll values, but are not relevant to this year’s valuation date, January 1, 2009.**

Over 235,000 notices were mailed, so I ask for your patience if it is difficult to contact the office during the next several weeks. If concerns relate to the proposed level of property taxes, citizens should make an effort to become involved by attending taxing authority budget hearings at times and places listed on the TRIM notice.

In closing, if you own vacant property adjoining your homestead parcel, you may wish to combine them for tax roll purposes, so SOH protection extends to the additional lot(s). Additionally, if you purchased a new home during 2009 and believe you may qualify for homestead exemption, application must be made by March 1, 2010.



V. Frank Desguin, CFA, CAE

Property Appraiser