

Property tax bills often generate QUESTIONS for County staff

Property tax bills are mailed out in early August each year and taxes are due on September 30. Invariably, Kent County employees are asked by relatives, neighbors, and/or strangers why their “County taxes” went up. Please note that due to the influx of taxpayers visiting the Administrative Complex to pay their bill in person, employees should refrain from parking near the entrance – please park vehicles in the designated employee parking area only.



When asked a question about taxes, you should listen, be patient, and share this valuable information with the old or new friend about the tax structure in Delaware. State law requires the County to bill and collect school taxes, but the County does not set the property tax rate for schools or control education spending. Typically, the school tax will be the highest figure on the bill.

The actual County tax rate used to fund paramedics, 911 dispatch, County parks and recreation, County Library, land use planning, and assorted supportive services did not increase this year or the 12 previous years. Much of the credit for the stable tax rate goes to the hard work of County staff doing their best to control operating costs. It is much appreciated.

There is one change to the 2022-23 billing statements that the County does control, or the marketplace controls technically -- the garbage collection rates for residential properties within County garbage districts have changed due to contract rebid. The annual rate for trash removal including recycle service increased from \$300.50 to \$310.50. The rate for trash removal including recycle service and yard waste pick-up increased from \$329.00 to \$339.00 annually. The current rates are only valid for the 2022 billing cycle, due to ongoing economic and pandemic pressure.

The Tax Office regularly sends courtesy reminder letters to recipients of the Senior Tax Credit encouraging them to pay their balance in full by May 31, to ensure that the credit remains on their accounts. Some may still need to be reminded that taxpayers must pay their property tax bill in full by the end of each tax year in order to qualify for this credit for the subsequent property tax year. Under the program, property owners age 65 and older who meet the 10-year residency requirement and apply by April 30 qualify for up to 50% or a max of \$500, whichever is less, off the regular school tax portion of their annual property tax bill on their primary residence.

Here are a few of the changes you may see reflected on your 2022-23 tax bill: Lake Forest School District saw the largest tax rate increase (+11.58 cents per \$100 assessed value), Capital School District had the second highest increase (+10.5 cents per \$100 assessed value), and Smyrna School District saw the third largest tax rate increase (+5.08 cents per \$100 assessed value). While Caesar Rodney School District had an increase of +2 cents per \$100 assessed value, Milford School District had a decrease of -3.8 cents of \$100 assessed value. Woodbridge School District's tax rate remained the same. The PolyTech vocational school tax rate decreased ever so slightly by 0.0002 cents of \$100 assessed value for the entire County. Three school districts serving students in the County continue to charge a capitation tax for adult members of each household.

Some taxpayers may see an increase in their annual bill due to the above mentioned changes, it is important to note that the basic Kent County tax rate remains unchanged. Also note that many taxpayers never see actually their County/School District property tax bill, since it is often mailed directly to the mortgage company – which pays the bill from funds collected from the monthly mortgage payment.

If you or a relative still have questions, they can get answers by calling the Tax office at (302) 744-2341.

(posted 08/16/22; updated 08/25/22)



*Kent County
Tax Office*

2022 - 2023
TAX RATE CHART

SCHOOL DISTRICT	COUNTY TAX	LIBRARY TAX **	VO-TECH TAX	SCHOOL TAX	SCHOOL CAPS	TOTAL RATE
#14 SMYRNA	.30	.033	.1569	2.0766	-0-	2.5665
#18 CAPITAL	.30	.033	.1569	2.3891	-0-	2.8790
#20 CAESAR RODNEY	.30	.033	.1569	1.895	12.00	2.3849
#22 LAKE FOREST	.30	.033	.1569	1.6122	15.00	2.1021
#26 WOODBIDGE	.30	.033	.1569	1.6800	8.82	2.1699
#40 MILFORD	.30	.0775	.1569	1.6615	-0-	2.1959

**THE COUNTY LIBRARY TAX IS CHARGED TO ALL AREAS OF THE COUNTY WITH THE EXCEPTION OF MILFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT AND THE INCORPORATED AREAS OF SMYRNA, DOVER AND HARRINGTON