



CLARENDON COUNTY ASSESSOR

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HELPFUL INFORMATION WHEN YOU ARE CONTEMPLATING AN APPEAL OF YOUR 2016 PROPERTY VALUE

SC Statute 12-43-217(A) - Directs assessors to reappraise all the real estate and mobile homes in their counties once every five (5) years. Your 2016 tax bill is based on the market value of your property on 12/31/2015– the most recent reappraisal in Clarendon County.

The market value of your property may have decreased or increased since the 2010 reappraisal: However, the Assessor is prohibited from changing a value between reappraisals. Clarendon County Assessor's Office is required by current law to use the appraisal date of 12/31/2015.

The SC State Attorney General has also given the following opinion on this specific issue:

Attorney General Opinion 06/09/2010: Valuation based on Assessment Date

In determining fair market value, the only information the assessor may consider until the county completes the next reassessment program is the sales information that was available at the date of the last reassessment.

In relevant part, S. C. Code 12-43-215 explains the following:

When a property owner or an agent for a property owner appeals the value of a property assessment, the assessor shall consider the appeal and make any adjustments, if warranted, based on the market values of real property as they existed in the year that the equalization and reassessment program was conducted and on which the assessment is based.

Your tax bill may have increased or decreased since 2015 because the County's millage (the amount of tax per dollar of assessed value) has changed.

ASSESSABLE TRANSFERS OF INTEREST

In 2006, the SC Legislature passed the "SOUTH CAROLINA REAL PROPERTY TAX REFORM ACT". It created an exception to the rule above for what is called an "Assessable Transfer of Interest" (ATI) in real property. This provision is popularly known as the "Point-of-Sale" valuation rule. If your property was sold / transferred after 12/31/2014 it is considered an ATI, and its value for tax purposes must be determined using a market value appraisal as of 12/31/2015, the year the sale/transfer took place.

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Market value defined:

“Market value is the most probable price in cash that a property would bring in a competitive and open market, assuming that the buyer and seller are acting knowledgeably, sufficient time is allowed for the sale, and price is not affected by special influences.” [Property Appraisal and Assessment Administration, IAAO, 1990]

The assessor’s appraisal of your property is developed using recent sale prices of other properties similar to yours. These sales have been analyzed and tested to be sure they meet the definition above. Such sales are generally called “Arms’ Length Transactions”.

Transactions between relatives, close friends, business associates; short sales, foreclosure sales, transfers in-lieu of foreclosure, auctions; and other transactions that fail to meet the definition are not considered when conducting a market value appraisal.

Comparative Assessments:

There are many combinations of “taxable values” dictated by state law. Each of these “taxable values” will lead to a different assessed value; therefore, a different tax amount. One of the assessor’s primary jobs is to classify all the properties and mobile homes in the county. Because of differences in classification, your neighbors’ assessments/tax bills may be significantly higher/lower than your own. Because of the multitude of “taxable values” and the resulting multitude of tax amounts, comparison of tax amounts or assessments is not a valid basis for an appeal.

Your participation in the Appeals Process in Clarendon County is appreciated. The purpose of this information sheet is to familiarize you with the rules that govern an appeal. Though you are not required to fill out the Appeal Form accompanying this fact sheet, its use will aid both you and the assessor’s office in processing your appeal. Please fill out the form as completely as possible. If you are picking it up in the assessor’s office, do not hesitate to ask for assistance filling it out from the office staff.