

Town of West Seneca

Assessor's Office Newsletter

Fall 2008

- Office Hours are Monday -Friday, 9:00 AM –5:00 PM
- The deadline for exemption applications is March 1, 2009

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EXEMPTION APPLICATION DEADLINE MARCH 1, 2009

The Assessor's Office would like to remind property owners that all applications, for real property tax exemptions are due at the Assessor's Office by Taxable Status Day - March 1, 2009.

Please note that the due date has changed from last year as a result of changes to the Erie County Assessment Calendar (see article below for more information).

This exemption deadline applies to ALL new and

renewal exemption applications. Please make sure that all supporting documentation is included with the application, including income information if needed.

The Assessor's Office will be mailing renewal applications to all property owners who received an annually renewable real property tax exemption on the 2008 Final Assessment Roll.

The exemptions that this deadline applies to (but is

not limited to) is: STAR, Enhanced STAR, Senior Citizen, Veterans, Clergy, Disability, Agricultural Building, Business Exemption, and partial Not For Profit Exemptions. Please call our office with any questions.



ASSESSMENT CALENDAR CHANGES

The Assessment Calendar for the 25 Towns in Erie County will be changing effective September 1, 2008 to follow the calendar of most other counties in NYS. Taxable Status Day, which is the day all exemption applications are due, will now be on March 1 (formerly May 1), the filing of the Tentative Assessment Roll will now be May 1 (formerly May 24), and Grievance Day will now be the fourth Tuesday in May (formerly the first

Tuesday in June). The filing of the Final Assessment Roll will remain July 1.

- March 1 -Taxable Status Day, all exemption applications due
- May 1 -Filing of Tentative Assessment Roll
- May 26 (fourth Tuesday) - Grievance Day
- July 1 -Filing of Final Assessment Roll

The intent of these changes is to allow property owners

more time between Tentative Roll and Grievance Day to research their assessment prior to Grievance Day.

If you have any questions about these changes, please let us know.

Note: These date changes do not apply to the cities of Buffalo or Lackawanna due to their City Charter Status. The City of Tonawanda already complies to these dates.

The Assessor's Office administers all real property assessing functions, including exemptions, for the Town.

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The objective of the Assessor's Office is to produce an equitable assessment roll for the fair distribution of the real property tax burden.

STAR REBATE 2008 INFORMATION

New York State Dept. of Tax and Finance (NYS DTF) will be sending STAR Rebate checks again this year to taxpayers who qualified for a STAR exemption on the 2008 Assessment Roll.

- If you're a Basic STAR recipient who applied for the 2007 rebate, you don't have to reapply as long as your property information remains the same. NYS DTF will issue you a rebate check automatically by the end of October. The amount will be about the same as last year.
- If you didn't apply for 2007, or if your property information changed during the year, you must apply by December 31, 2008. NYS DTF will send you an application automatically by the end of October.

- If you're an Enhanced STAR recipient, generally seniors, NYS DTF will issue you a rebate check automatically by the end of October. You don't have to apply. Enhanced rebate amounts will be about 40% higher than last year.
- If you're a property owner and your income is more than \$250,000, you are not eligible for a rebate check, even if you have a basic STAR exemption.

More information about the STAR Rebate Program is available on the NYS DTF website at <http://www.nystax.gov/star/2008/>

YOUR OPINION MATTERS

My first priority when I became Assessor was to continue to provide courteous, professional and respectful service to every taxpayer. If there is anything we can do to assist you, we will.

Please take the time to fill out the questionnaire below and return it to us. This can

be done anonymously if you prefer.

Let us know if you have any suggestions on how we can improve our services.

Let us know if there was a time when we either gave exceptional service or perhaps when the service could have

been better.

Has this newsletter been helpful to you? Is there any subject you would like to see discussed?

Your input in genuinely appreciated.

- Ed Joy, Acting Assessor

Up-to-date assessments eliminate unfair assessments and the "sticker shock" that taxpayers experience when assessments are adjusted after years of neglect.

Tell us what you think.

Have you called our office, or stopped by for information in the past year? _____

Were you satisfied with the service provided? _____

Was the employee assisting you knowledgeable and helpful? _____

Are you aware that we offer STAR exemptions? _____ Veterans exemptions? _____ Disability exemptions? _____

If you have an exemption that requires a yearly renewal, do you find the instructions to complete the renewal form clear? _____ Do you normally return the renewal form by mail or in person? _____

Comments/Suggestions: _____

Please return to: Assessor's Office, Town Hall, 1250 Union Rd., West Seneca, NY 14224

Optional:

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ Please call me to discuss my comments: YES NO