



County of Fairfax, Virginia

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County

NEWS RELEASE 2-23-2009

2009 REAL ESTATE ASSESSMENT CHANGE NOTICES MAILED

The Fairfax County Department of Tax Administration (DTA) begins mailing 352,526 real estate assessment notices to County taxpayers today. The notices will be sent to all property owners of taxable parcels in the County. Of the 352,526 taxable parcels in the County, 335,342 had some value change. The remaining taxable parcels have no change in their 2009 real estate assessment.

The assessed value of properties may change for a variety of reasons. Among these are appreciation and value declines (i.e., equalization changes); and, structural changes (additions, remodeling), rezonings, and land divisions (i.e., growth). A combination of these factors can apply to the same property.

More than 95% of residential properties experienced an assessment decrease for 2009. The overall equalization change for residential properties is -12.55%. Commercial properties show an overall equalization decline of -4.51%. The commercial decrease is primarily the net result of value decreases in hotels of -7.06%, office elevator properties of -6.62%, and multi-family apartments of -6.96%. The percentage of the real estate assessment base attributable to commercial and industrial property in FY 2010 increased to 22.67% (in addition, multi-family rental apartments contribute another 4.21% of the County's real estate tax base).

Overall, of the 335,342 properties that have a 2009 assessment change, 9,896 are due to growth (i.e., new construction, rezoning, etc.), and 325,446 properties changed due to equalization. The allocation of land value to total property value remained relatively constant in 2009.

**DEPARTMENT OF TAX ADMINISTRATION (DTA)
REAL ESTATE DIVISION**
12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 357
Fairfax, VA 22035
Phone: 703-222-8234
Fax: 703-324-4935, TTY 703-222-7594
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dta/re

Main Book Assessments of taxable real estate in Fairfax County for 2009 total approximately \$206.8 billion. This is a decrease of approximately \$22.86 billion, or -9.95% from the 2008 assessment base, and is made up of the following components:

	<u>Equalization</u>		<u>Growth</u>		<u>Total</u>	
Residential Properties	-\$21.56 B	-12.55%	\$ 0.88 B	0.51 %	-\$20.68B	-12.03%
Non-Residential Properties	<u>-\$ 2.61 B</u>	<u>- 4.51%</u>	<u>\$ 0.43 B</u>	<u>0.74 %</u>	<u>-\$ 2.18 B</u>	<u>- 3.77%</u>
Total	-\$ 24.17 B	-10.52%	\$ 1.31 B	0.57 %	-\$22.86 B	-9.95%

It is important to note that these percentages represent the cumulative amount to the overall tax base and are not necessarily indicative of specific change to any particular, individual properties. Individual assessment changes may vary considerably. For residential property, for example, a key factor in determining the need to change is the relationship of assessments to the selling prices within neighborhoods.

Based on equalization changes, the mean assessed value (i.e., on average, County-wide) of most single family-detached homes for 2009 is \$551,521, down -11.34%. This group of properties makes up greater than 72% of the residential equalization property value in the County.

Additionally, based on equalization changes, townhouse/duplex properties have a 2009 County-wide assessment average of \$324,456, a decrease from 2008 of approximately -16.06%; and, the mean assessed value for condominiums is down -19.51% to \$227,514.

As noted in the FY 2010 Advertised Budget Plan, the mean assessed value for 2009 of all improved residential property is approximately \$459,228. For added reference, the attached map shows varying pockets of equalization for residential property (vacant land as well as improved properties) throughout the County. Again, averages are not necessarily indicative of individual properties and neighborhoods.

Inquiries concerning any assessment should be directed to the Department of Tax Administration (DTA) at **703-222-8234**; or, citizens may contact the Tax Department through DTA's homepage: *www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dta*. Again this year, citizens can obtain a list of residential sales within each assessment neighborhood from the DTA website. This is a continuing customer service initiative intended to help citizens review their assessment for 2009. Citizens are encouraged to call DTA at 703-222-8234 to discuss their assessment questions with appraisal staff.

Property owners are encouraged to review their assessment notice upon receipt. Administrative appeals can be filed with DTA if citizens believe their assessment is not equitable in comparison with similar properties or if they believe their assessment exceeds fair market value. Appeals may be made in writing to the Real Estate Division of DTA. Appeal applications can be obtained by calling DTA; or, can be downloaded directly from DTA's homepage. DTA requests that appeal applications be filed by April 3, 2009.

Real Estate appeals can also be filed with the Board of Equalization (BOE). Under State law, the BOE is separate from the Department of Tax Administration and consists of nine taxpayers appointed by the Board of Supervisors. The BOE conducts formal hearings and takes sworn testimony. By law, all appeals to the BOE must be filed and postmarked by June 1, 2009. BOE appeal forms are also available on the BOE website at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/boe/>, or by calling the BOE office at 703-324-4891.

Property owners are encouraged to contact DTA concerning assessment disputes; however, property owners may appeal directly to the BOE or to the Circuit Court of Fairfax County.