

Snohomish County Assessor's Office

For Immediate Release: June 2nd, 2008

Contacts:

Cindy Portmann, Assessor, Phone: 425-388-3678

Linda Hjelle, Chief Deputy Assessor, Phone: 425-388-3446

2008 Assessment Notices Mailed

(Click on a link below to jump to that section)

[Measuring Real Property Appraisal Performance](#)

[2008 Mass Appraisal Reports](#)

[Current Assessed Values by Property Type and School District](#)

[Petitions to Appeal the New 2008 Assessed Value to the Board of Equalization](#)

[Researching Sales and Assessment Information](#)

[2009 Property Tax Information](#)

[Taxing Districts Levy Rate Calculations](#)

[Property Tax Relief Programs:](#)

[Answer to a Frequently Asked Question Regarding "Frozen" Values](#)

[Senior/Disabled Property Tax Deferral Program](#)

[New Limited Income Property Tax Deferral Program](#)

[Program Requirements](#)

[Application Forms and Other Programs](#)

EVERETT – New assessment notices will be mailed to residential property owners this week and to commercially zoned property owners the week of June 16th. The new assessed values reflect any change in assessed value of property and should reflect the market value of each property as of Jan. 1st 2008. If the assessed value did not change, no "change of value" notice will be sent. The new proposed values [are now available on the assessor's website](#). The 2008 assessments will be used to determine each property owner's share of property taxes due in 2009.

County Assessor Cindy Portmann wants to assure property owners that she and her staff will do everything they can to respond quickly to property owners' questions and concerns. If you have questions about your new assessment or disagree with the new assessed value, she recommends contacting her office to talk to an appraiser before filing an appeal with the Board of Equalization. Contact Residential Appraisal at: 425-388-6555 or Commercial Appraisal at 425-388-3706 or 425-388-3390.

In Washington State, the assessment date is set at Jan.1st of the year prior to the year taxes are due by state law. Changes that occur in the real estate market from Jan. 1st, 2008 through Dec. 31st, 2008 will be reflected in the Jan. 1, 2009 assessments and will be used to calculate property taxes payable in 2010.

Assessors are required by state law to assess property at 100 percent of its true and fair market value according to the highest and best use of the property. Property characteristics such as size, quality, condition, age and location influence property values. Appraisers analyze the market annually to ensure property values are equitable and fair. Portmann said, "I am pleased to report that Snohomish County has been recognized as among the top in the state for providing fair and equitable assessments."

**Measuring Real Property Appraisal Performance
In Washington's Property Tax System 2007**

The report by the Washington House of Representatives Office of Program Research on [Measuring Real Property Appraisal Performance in Washington's Property Tax System 2007](#) (2007 assessment for taxes payable in 2008) is an evaluation of the performance of the property tax appraisal system in Washington, including measuring whether assessments are fair and equitable. It is fairly technical in nature. It uses statistics related to assessed values and market values. The report uses charts of these statistics to illustrate how well the appraisal system is working in Washington. This report answers some general questions related to property taxes, assessed values, and appraisal performance. The report on the 2008 assessment for taxes payable in 2009 will not be available from the Office of Program Research until next year.

2008 Mass Appraisal Reports

Mass appraisal reports produced by the Assessor's office for the 2007 and 2008 assessments, which include performance measures and statistics as well as sales information, will be available by neighborhood for residential zoned property on the assessor's website in the near future.

Current Assessed Values by Property Type and School District

Over 272,000 real property parcels were reviewed as the county conducted the annual updates. The following charts show the overall value changes to date. Individual properties' percentage of change in value may be higher or lower.

Property Type	2007 Value	2008 Value	Total Change	% Change
Residential	\$79,508,723,781	\$77,981,489,346	-\$1,527,234,435	-1.92%
Commercial	\$27,798,728,125	\$30,848,604,706	\$3,049,876,581	10.97%
Total	\$107,307,451,906	\$108,830,094,052	\$1,522,642,146	1.42%

2008 Real Property Assessed Values by School District*

School District	2007 Value	2008 Value	Total Change	% **Change
002 - Everett	\$19,032,550,675	\$19,520,648,822	\$488,098,147	2.56%
004 - Lake Stevens	\$4,755,845,800	\$4,841,005,000	\$85,159,200	1.79%
006 - Mukilteo	\$14,015,110,425	\$14,476,303,306	\$461,192,881	3.29%
015 - Edmonds	\$25,048,679,487	\$25,333,704,187	\$285,024,700	1.14%
016 - Arlington	\$4,545,130,682	\$4,553,675,200	\$8,544,518	0.19%
025 - Marysville	\$8,332,759,500	\$8,506,234,400	\$173,474,900	2.08%
063 - Index	\$166,472,800	\$167,065,000	\$592,200	0.36%
103 - Monroe	\$5,821,414,537	\$5,770,192,537	-\$51,222,000	-0.88%
201 - Snohomish	\$8,411,914,700	\$8,350,262,200	-\$61,652,500	-0.73%

306 - Lakewood	\$2,245,392,400	\$2,290,262,900	\$44,870,500	2.00%
311 - Sultan	\$1,657,743,300	\$1,677,646,500	\$19,903,200	1.20%
330 - Darrington	\$550,558,500	\$553,355,300	\$2,796,800	0.51%
332 - Granite Falls	\$1,891,352,400	\$1,888,368,100	-\$2,984,300	-0.16%
401 - Stanwood	\$2,840,881,000	\$2,831,926,000	-\$8,955,000	-0.32%
417 - Northshore	\$7,991,645,700	\$8,069,444,600	\$77,798,900	0.97%
TOTAL	\$107,307,451,906	\$108,830,094,052	\$1,522,642,146	1.42%

***Total includes all real property value both taxable and exempt. It does not include 2008 new construction value.**

****Individual neighborhoods and property value average changes may be higher or lower than that of the total school district change in value.**

Portmann said, "Generally speaking, commercially zoned property, apartment buildings, condominiums, waterfront and view properties continued to see an increase in value, while the majority of property values decreased slightly or did not change from the previous year's assessment." Countywide residential assessed value decreased 1.92%, while commercial value increased 10.97%. The total change in value for all properties combined increased 1.42%.

Appraisers will spend the next few months adding new construction to the assessment rolls, so some property owners will receive a new notice of assessed value in the fall for new construction added this year. By law, the assessment date for new construction is July 31st of each year instead of January 1st.

Petitions to Appeal the New 2008 Assessed Value to the Board of Equalization

Petitions or appeals to the Board of Equalization must be filed with the Board within 60 days of when the notice was mailed. If your value did not change and you did not receive a new notice, your appeal deadline is July 1st, 2008. The appeal process does not require an attorney, but you will need to present evidence that the Assessor's value is incorrect. Appeal forms and instructions are available on the [Board of Equalization's website](#) or by contacting the Clerk of the Board at 425-388-3407.

Researching Sales and Assessment Information

The new 2008 assessed values are also available on the Assessor's web site and can be accessed by parcel number, address or by using the [Snohomish County On-line Property Information \(SCOPI\) application](#). The website also displays sales that have occurred in 2007 which were used in setting the new assessed values.

2009 Property Tax Information

The amount of property taxes each property owner will pay next year will be determined by the taxes levied by each individual taxing district and by voter-approved measures. The amount of taxes property owners will pay in 2009 will not be available until February of next year after taxing districts have submitted their budgets and levy amounts for 2009.

Taxing Districts Levy Rate Calculations

More information is also available on [how levy rates are calculated](#) on the assessor's website.

Measures requiring voter approval may be voted on in 2008, and could affect property taxes in 2009. Voter approved measures typically account for 40% to 45% of property taxes collected. Combined, the state school levy and local school district levies typically accounted for 61% of all property taxes collected in 2008.

In 2004, the typical levy rate in Snohomish County was \$12.50 per thousand dollars of assessed value and for taxes payable in 2008 the typical rate was \$8.92 per thousand dollars of assessed value.

Assessed Values, Taxes, Levy Rates & Percentage Change for All of Snohomish County				
2004		2008		% Change over 4 years
Typical Levy Rate	\$12.50	Typical Levy Rate	\$8.92	-29%
Average Residence Value	\$196,000	Average Residence Value	\$346,800	77%
Property Tax	\$2,449.76	Property Tax	\$3,095.05	*26%

***Increase in property tax is due mostly to voter approved measures for school districts & fire districts – without voter approved measures levy rates would have dropped further as assessed values increased.**

In the past few years, property owners have often been surprised to learn their taxes may have decreased from the previous year even though their assessed value increased. This is due in part to Washington States budget-based property tax system. Many people also expect that their taxes will decrease as assessed values decrease.

In Washington State, as property values decrease property tax levy rates increase (up to their maximum allowed rate) and levy rates will decrease when assessed values increase. Due to a larger tax base (assessed value of the county), Snohomish County property values would have to decrease significantly before taxing districts’ levy rates increased to the point that they were limited by their levy rate in how much they could collect. [Current levy rates and maximum rates for each taxing district](#) are available on the assessor’s website.

The same is not true for all counties in Washington State. Many of the smaller counties also have a smaller tax base; therefore their taxing districts may already be at their maximum allowable levy rate. See page 9 and 10 of the [Assessor's 2008 Annual Report](#) for examples of how decreases in assessed value affect rates. The Annual Report also provides detailed information on all taxing districts’ Jan. 1, 2007 assessed values and levies for property taxes collected in 2008.

Property Tax Relief Programs:

- **Senior and Disabled Persons Property Tax Exemption Program**

The Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Exemption is available for qualifying property owners that own and occupy a residence or mobile home and are now, or were 61 or older by December 31st of last year OR are retired because of a disability. Property owners that qualify for this program are “exempted” from paying a portion of their property taxes and their assessed values are “frozen” when they enter the program. If your total combined household income in 2007 was \$35,000 or under, you may qualify for an exemption and/or a reduction on your 2008 property taxes. Exempted property taxes do not have to be repaid at a later time.

If you qualify for the Senior/Disabled Exemption program, but are still not able to pay your remaining tax, you may also apply for the deferral program.

- **Answer to a Frequently Asked Question Regarding “Frozen” Values**

Question: I already have a senior citizen or disabled person property tax exemption and my taxable value was “frozen” when I entered the program. Will the new assessment affect my taxes?

Answer: No. Property owners that qualify for an exemption are taxed on the market value of the property on the date of qualification or the “frozen value” and not on the new market value.

- **Senior/Disabled Property Tax Deferral Program**

If your total combined income was \$40,000 or less in 2007, you may qualify for the Senior Citizen and Disabled Persons *Deferral* program. In this program property taxes are not “exempted” but instead all taxes are paid by the State of Washington and become a lien on the property. In this program, lower income seniors and disabled persons are able to stay in their homes and use the equity they have built up to pay the property taxes at a later date. For information about either program, please call the Assessor’s office at 425-388-3433.

- **New Limited Income Property Tax Deferral Program**

If you are a homeowner with limited income, Washington has a program that may help you pay your property taxes and/or special assessments beginning in 2008. Under this deferral program, the Department of Revenue pays 50 percent of your property taxes and/or special assessments on your behalf. The program is not an exemption or a grant. Deferred taxes are taxes that have been postponed. When you no longer own and use the property as your personal residence, you must repay the deferred tax. The deferred amount, plus interest, becomes a lien in favor of the state until the total amount is repaid.

- **Program Requirements**

To be eligible for this program, you must meet ownership, residency, income (a total combined household income of \$57,000 or less in 2007), and equity requirements. In addition, your first property tax installment for the year must already be paid.

- **Application Forms and Other Programs**

Application forms for the above programs and others are available on the office website by clicking on the following link: [Forms and Publications for Exemption and Deferral Programs and Special Classifications](#)

Office Hours are: 9:00 am - 5:00 pm Monday - Friday. The Shared Customer Service Center is located in the: Robert J. Drewel Administration East Building, 1 st floor Mailing Address: 3000 Rockefeller Ave M/S 510, Everett, WA 98201



Cindy Portmann, Snohomish County Assessor