

AVOID PROPERTY TAX PENALTIES



Many tax delinquencies occur during the first year of property ownership. As a new property owner you should be aware of the following:

Name on Tax Roll & Tax Bill

The assessment roll from which tax bills are prepared is required, by law, to list the assessee as of January 1st of that year. Property is assessed to the owner as of January 1st of that year. Deeds recorded after January 1st, therefore, would not reflect a change of ownership on the tax rolls until the following year.

Tax Bills are Mailed Only Once a Year

Tax bills are mailed in the latter part of October, to the owner of the property as of January 1st of that year. If your deed was recorded after January 1st of that year, the tax bills would reflect the previous owner's name and you may not receive a tax bill until the next year, even though as owner you are liable for the taxes. If you do not receive a tax bill by November 15th, and if taxes were paid in escrow through December 31st ONLY, you should contact the Tax Collector's office for replacement bills.

Due Date

Real Property taxes are due and payable (and delinquent) the same dates every year. The first installment is due November 1st and delinquent after December 10th. The second installment is due February 1st and delinquent after April 10th. You may wish to make note of these dates. The post office cancellation mark is used by the tax collector as the date of receipt of your payment, and it must be postmarked no later than April 10th and December 10th.

Failure to Receive a Tax Bill

This does not relieve the owner from the liability to pay taxes, nor does it relieve the imposition of penalties. State tax laws place the responsibility of obtaining a tax bill and making payment timely upon the property owners.

Supplemental Property Taxes

The property which you are purchasing will be reassessed upon the change of ownership. The reassessment will generally be in the form of an increase in taxes based on the new property value. In addition, there may be supplemental taxes assessed against the property, either prior to or after the close of your escrow and any recent change of ownership and/or document or record indicating a work of improvement to the property.

In the event you require additional information or have questions regarding your property taxes, you should contact the Tax Collector's office of the county in which the property is located.