

COMMON ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS:

Some of my neighbors have told me the only reason for the reassessment is to raise taxes. Is this true?
No. The reassessment has no impact on the total amount of taxes collected. However, it may change your property's percentage share of total taxes collected to increase, decrease or, have a minimal effect.

Why do you need to inspect the interior of my home?

There is no question that a inspection is an inconvenience. For that, we apologize. However, building size, age, features, quality, and condition, along with many other factors affect the market value of your property. The only way to ensure a Fair Market Value is to collect current exterior and interior data for each property. We are not concerned with your housekeeping nor personal belongings. This information will not be recorded and kept confidential.

What if I refuse to allow the assessor into my home?

The Wisconsin Legislature recognizes the conflict between the right of privacy and the need for accurate information when establishing assessments. If an owner refuses entry into the property, the assessor sends a certified letter requesting a reasonable time for viewing the home. If no response is received, or entry is refused, the assessor is required, *by law*, to estimate the value of the home based on the best available information.

How does the assessor value property?

Wisconsin law requires that property assessments be based on Fair Market Value. Estimating the market value of your property is a matter of determining the price a typical buyer would pay for it in its present condition. Some factors the assessor considers are: what similar properties are selling for; what it would cost to replace your property; the rent it may earn; and any other factors that affect value. It is important to remember that the assessor does not create assessed value, but rather interprets what is happening in the market place through real estate sales.

What can I do to ensure a fair and reasonable assessed value for my property?

Even with the best of care and intentions, mistakes are possible. Inform the assessor of any problems that might affect market value. There will be an opportunity to discuss your assessment with the assessor at the Open Book. Should you feel your assessment is in error, bring to the Open Book any documentation that supports your opinion of value. Property owners will be notified if there is a change to their assessment, when the project is completed. If the discussion with the assessor does not resolve your concerns, a Board of Review will be held where you can again present sales or other market value evidence that shows the assessment to be in error.

Do all assessments change at the same rate?

No, not necessarily. There are differences between individual properties and between neighborhoods. In one area, the sales may indicate a substantial increase in value in a given year. Yet in another neighborhood for example, there may be no change in value, or even a decrease in property values. Different types of properties within the same neighborhood may also show different value changes. For example, one-story houses may be more in demand than two-story houses, or vice versa. Older homes in the same area may be rising in value more slowly than newer homes. Perhaps the older style homes that have been traditionally selling low are now selling much higher. There are numerous factors to be considered in each property, which will cause the values to differ. Some of the factors which can affect value are: location, condition, size, quality, number of baths, number of bedrooms, basement finish, garages, overall condition as well as many others.

What is the bottom line?

Assessments are required by state law and are mandatory. The real issue is whether your property is assessed at the statutory required market value. Look at your final assessment after the revaluation. If it appears to be an accurate value when compared to sales of similar property, then it probably is a fair assessment. If, in your opinion, it does not reflect the market value of your property when compared to sales of similar properties, you should talk to our assessment staff. We may be able to provide information or take further actions to resolve your concerns.