

Placer County Property Tax FAQs

Auditor-Controller Questions

Direct Charges in General

- **What are direct charges?**

Direct charges are flat amounts levied by various taxing entities on a per parcel basis. They are for services or benefits provided directly to a property and are non-ad valorem (not based on value). The Auditor-Controller performs the ministerial duty of placing these charges on the annual tax bills. Each year, in accordance with state law, the levying entity provides our office with a listing of the parcels and amounts to be charged, along with a resolution from their Board.

The calculation of the charges is the responsibility of the levying entity. Please contact them directly with any questions. The phone number for each is shown on your tax bill.

A complete current-year list of direct charges is provided via the Direct Charge Contacts link on our office's main Property Tax Information web page.

- **What are the direct charges for?**

Direct charges are levied for a number of purposes. For questions regarding any of these charges, please contact the levying entity directly. The phone number for each is shown on your tax bill and on the Direct Charge Contacts link on our office's main Property Tax Information web page.

- **Are there any reductions to or exclusions from direct charges for senior citizens?**

Our office is aware of two direct charges currently offering some adjustment for senior citizens. These are:

- Tax code 63200 - City of Rocklin Park Dev & Maint 866 807-6864
- Tax code 73500 - Tahoe Truckee Unif Sch Meas A 530 582-2500

Our office does not have any specifics about these exemptions. Please contact the levying entity directly with any questions.

- **Are direct charges tax-deductible?**

Please contact the IRS or an income tax professional for this information.

- **Can our association place our road maintenance fee on the tax roll?**

You would have to officially form a CSA (County Service Area) or PRD (Permanent Road Division) in order to have road maintenance fees placed on the tax roll. For information on this process, contact the Department of Public Works at 530 745-7563.

Mello-Roos (MR) Direct Charges

- **What is Mello Roos?**

The Mello-Roos Act of 1982 provides a method for local governments to finance public facilities. This legislation allows taxing entities to designate specific areas as "Community Facilities Districts" (CFDs) and, with the approval of two-thirds of the qualified voters, allows these entities to issue bonds and collect special taxes (in the form of direct charges) to finance such projects. The direct charge you pay is used to make the payments of principal and interest on the bonds.

If a Mello-Roos direct charge on the annual property tax bill becomes delinquent, the property may be subject to foreclosure by the levying taxing entity.

- **How can I tell if there is a Mello Roos direct charge on my tax bill?**
The last two characters of the tax code description on your tax bill will be MR.
- **How long will the Mello Roos charge be on my bill?**
This charge is used to make the payments of principal and interest on the bonds and will stay in effect until the bonds are paid off. Only the levying entities have the maturity information, so please contact them directly with any questions. The phone number for each is shown on your tax bill and on the Direct Charge Contacts link on our office's main Property Tax Information web page.

1915 Act Bond Direct Charges

- **What is a 1915 Act Bond?**
Under the Municipal Improvement Act of 1913 and Improvement Bond Act of 1915, 1915 Act bonds can be issued by an assessment district to raise money needed to build improvements, such as streets, curbs, gutters and underground sewer and water infrastructure that generally enhance land value and give land utility. The properties that directly benefit from the improvements are then assessed an annual amount on the property tax bill. The direct charge you pay is used to make the payments of principal and interest on the bonds. If a 1915 Act Bond direct charge on the annual property tax bill is not paid in full by June 30th, the property may be subject to foreclosure by the levying taxing entity.
- **How can I tell if there is a 1915 Act Bond direct charge on my tax bill?**
For a complete current-year list of all direct charges, please visit the Direct Charge Contacts link on our office's main Property Tax Information web page. 1915 Act Bonds are identified by either a single or double asterisk (* or **). If any of those are on your tax bill, then you have a 1915 Act Bond on your property.
- **How long will the 1915 Act Bond charge be on my bill?**
This charge is used to make the payments of principal and interest on the bonds and will stay in effect until the bonds are paid off. Only the levying entities have the maturity information, so please contact them directly with any questions. The phone number for each is shown on your tax bill and on the Direct Charge Contacts link on our office's main Property Tax Information web page.

Tax Rates

- **What does a Tax Rate consist of?**
In California, Proposition 13 was passed in 1978. It limits the property tax rate to 1% of assessed value, plus any additional ad valorem (based on value) tax rate necessary to fund local voter-approved general obligation bonds and other indebtedness. Therefore, any tax rate you see on your tax bill in addition to the 1% represents a debt or debts approved by the voters.

Prior to Proposition 13, tax rates set to cover an entity's general obligation bonds and other indebtedness could be passed by a majority vote. Proposition 13 changed this by requiring a two-thirds vote. In the November 2000 election, voters approved Proposition 39 allowing the voting threshold for school general obligation bonds to be lowered to 55%, if the school board so chooses.
- **I thought a tax bill couldn't exceed 1% of the assessed value. Why does my bill exceed 1%?**
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charges (non ad-valorem items) may be placed on the tax bill at the express written direction of various local taxing entities.

- **How is the general obligation bond rate calculated?**

The tax rates for voter approved debt are computed yearly. Several components are used to make this calculation. Generally, the two primary factors are the amount of money needed for the annual repayment to the bondholders and the assessed value in the district for the tax year. In addition, other components are used, such as the prior year balance and revenue from other sources.

- **When does the general obligation bond mature?**

Please see the Maturity Dates for Voter Approved General Obligation Bonds link on our office's main Property Tax Information web page.

- **If I'm over 65 or do not have any children, why do I still have to pay the voter-approved general obligation school bonds?**

Tax rates for local voter approved general obligation school bonds are levied on all properties within the school district boundaries pursuant to the California State Constitution.

- **My children don't go to the school listed on my tax bill. Why are these charges on my bill?**

The property tax/tax rate area structure provides information as to what school district (not individual school) your property is in. It does not determine the specific school that your children would attend. That information and the intra-district boundaries are maintained by the school system. Please contact the school district or the Placer County Office of Education to confirm the appropriate school for your children.

- **I live in another county, so why do I have to call Placer County with questions about my tax bill?**

Some school districts are located in more than one county. The "primary" county (County of Control) is the one responsible for calculating the tax rate to be levied throughout the school district's boundaries. Since that primary county has the specifics about the calculation, it is necessary to contact them. For example, the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District (TTUSD) is in El Dorado, Nevada and Placer counties. Placer is the County of Control, so our phone number appears as the contact number for TTUSD tax rate data.

Roll Correction and Refunds

- **When will my roll correction be processed?**

Before the Auditor's Office can process a roll correction, we need to receive the revised assessed value information from either the Assessor's Office or the Assessment Appeals Board. Once we have received accurate data from the appropriate office, we are usually able to process the change within two weeks. If the change results in a refund, it will be at least an additional week before the refund check is created.

- **When can I expect my refund?**

If you are expecting a refund as the result of a tax roll correction or Assessment Appeals Board determination, please see the answer above under "When will my roll correction be processed?" If you are expecting a refund due to an overpayment or duplicate payment of property taxes, please contact the Tax Collector's Office.

- **What property is my refund check for?**

The assessment number of your property appears in the invoice column of your refund check stub. If the number shown is for a supplemental assessment (number begins with a 99 or 98), refer to the assessment notice you previously received from the Assessor's Office. It should show the property's associated parcel number and location.

- **Why didn't I receive any interest on my refund?**

Per California State Law, interest is paid when it is \$10 or more, but it is not paid on negative supplemental assessments.

Supplemental Taxes

- **What is a supplemental tax? / Why did I receive two supplemental assessments?**

A supplemental assessment is created each time property is revalued by the Assessor due to a change in ownership or completion of new construction. The date either of these occurs is called the "date of event".

Supplemental taxes are calculated for the portion of the fiscal year for which the change in value applies. A factor based on the date of event is set by state law and this factor is applied to the tax rate calculation. The Auditor issues refunds when supplemental assessments result in a decreased value.

The value of a supplemental assessment is the difference between the prior and the new assessed values. The taxes are prorated based on the date of event on which the change of ownership occurred or the new construction was completed to the end of the fiscal year on June 30th. Depending on the date of event, either one or two supplemental assessments may be generated. If the event date was between January 1st and June 30th, there are two supplemental assessments because two different tax years are affected. The following show examples of how two assessments might occur. Please remember that taxable property is assessed by the Assessor each year as of the January 1st lien date to generate tax revenue for the fiscal year that begins on the upcoming July 1st.

- If property was purchased in February, 2011, then one assessment is for the value difference for the remainder of the 2010/11 fiscal year. The other assessment is for the value difference for the 2011/12 fiscal year since the event occurred after the 1/1/11 lien date for the 2011/12 secured roll. This value difference will not be picked up on the annual secured roll until the 1/1/12 lien date, which is for the 2012/13 tax roll.
- Multiple "Supplement Events" occurred (such as a change in ownership followed by completion of new construction OR multiple completions of new construction) within a fairly short time span. A separate assessment will be calculated for each Supplemental Event.

For additional information on the assessing of supplemental values, contact the Placer County Assessor. For additional information on paying supplemental taxes, contact the Placer County Treasurer-Tax Collector. There are links to their websites on our office's main Property Tax Information web page.

How are my taxes calculated?

Property taxes for the various tax rolls are calculated as follows:

- Secured Taxes = (Net Assessed Value x Tax Rate) + Direct Charges
- Unsecured Taxes = (Net Assessed Value x Prior Year Tax Rate) + Direct Charges
- Supplemental Taxes = Net Assessed Value Difference x Tax Rate x Proration Period for each appropriate tax year until the difference is included on the annual secured roll

Allocation of Property Tax

- **What is the assessed value of a specific tax rate area (TRA) or a specific taxing entity?**

See the various assessed value information links on our office's main Property Tax Information web page. These links will also show you the TRAs within a taxing entity.

- **How are property taxes allocated?**

See the Distribution of Tax Dollars Levied chart in the Final Budget, which can be accessed through the Financial Reports link on our office's main web page. You can also access the 1% Property Tax Rate Allocation to Taxing Entities (AB8) schedules for the last 10 years on our office's main Property Tax Information web page.

- **What are the increment factors for a specific TRA?**

See the AB8 Tax Increment by Taxing Entity within TRA schedules for the last 10 years on our office's main Property Tax Information web page.

- **What is the Teeter Plan?**

Beginning in 1993/94, Placer County implemented the alternative method of apportionment commonly referred to as the Teeter Plan. The basic concept of the Teeter Plan is that the County apportions to taxing agencies 100% of their secured (and supplemental secured) levy (adjusted for roll changes), with the County owning the delinquent receivables. Placer County "Teeters" all secured ad valorem taxes as well as all direct charges (with the exception of 1915 Act Bond and Mello Roos charges). 55% of the current secured roll is apportioned in December, 40% in April and 5% in June. We also distribute any adjustments due to roll changes processed during the year in June.

Tax Collector Questions – if you have questions about any of the following, please contact the Tax Collector's Office at 530 889-4120 or <http://www.placer.ca.gov/Departments/Tax.aspx>

Property tax payments
Penalties for delinquent payments
Tax redemption and installments plans
Tax defaulted land sales
How much do I owe?
How can payments be made?
Who do I talk to regarding a lien?
I lost or did not receive my tax bill
If I don't agree with a certain direct charge, can I exclude it from my payment?
Is there a program to help people who need help in paying their property taxes?

Assessor Questions – if you have questions about any of the following, please contact the Assessor's Office at 530 889-4300 or <http://www.placer.ca.gov/Departments/Assessor.aspx>

Assessed Values
Supplemental valuations due to ownership changes and/or new construction
Property value exemptions: Homeowner's, Veteran's, etc.
Parent/Child or Grandparents/Grandchildren Transfers
Possessory Interest
Who can I contact to have my property value re-evaluated?
Why did my value increase when my neighbors' decreased?
Why have I received a notice of change in assessed valuation?
Why have I received a notice of supplemental assessment?
How can I estimate my supplemental taxes? (there is an estimator on the Assessor's website)
What is a lien date?
Who do I contact to change my name and/or address?
Can I carry over my value if moved from another county?