



OFFICE OF
PLACER COUNTY ASSESSOR

NEWS RELEASE

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Topic: Consumer Alert - Misleading Property Tax Assessment Letters

Many Placer County homeowners received an offer in the mail this week to review their property tax assessment for a fee-\$179. This solicitation, resembling a tax bill, has generated questions and concerns from a number of property owners. Placer County Assessor, Kristen Spears, would like to inform the public that you do not have to pay a private company to request a review of your property tax assessment. The Assessor department performs property tax assessment reviews at no charge to homeowners. A homeowner may also file an assessment appeal application with the Clerk of the Board. For 2008, the time for filing an assessment review request or appeal has expired. The filing period for 2009 will open in July.

Over the past two years, the Assessor department has devoted significant resources to identifying and recognizing declining values on residential properties. As a result of complex analysis, performed by professional staff in 2008, over 36,000 property owners received notice from the Assessor that their property assessment had been reappraised and temporarily reduced to market value. Most of these property owners purchased homes over the last five years.

In 2009, for the third consecutive year, the Placer County Assessor department will review thousands of property assessments to recognize the properties whose market value on January 1, 2009, has fallen below their Prop 13 base year value. The lower of the two values will be enrolled and reflected on their tax bill. In July 2009, all property owners in Placer County will receive a notice of the assessed value of their property. Many property owners will receive the notice that their property has qualified for a temporary reduction in assessed value. Assessed value reductions will result in a lower property tax bill when secured bills are mailed out in October.

For those homeowner's who may still question their assessed value, as indicated on the July value notice, a convenient "Decline In Value" review form will be available on the Placer County Assessor website, www.placer.ca.gov. The form will be available from mid-July 2009 through December 31, 2009. In addition, homeowners have the right to file an assessment appeal with the Clerk of the Board, from July 2, 2009 through September 15, 2009. Both of these services may be requested during this time period for no additional fees or charges. Placer County Assessor Kristen Spears notes, "The best thing property owners can do right now, is to hold on to their \$179 and wait to receive their value notices in July."

Kristen Spears
Placer County Assessor