

Not much change

Written by Deb Egenberger
Thursday, 24 December 2009 20:17 -

Increased valuation offsets lower levies to keep property tax statements virtually the same.

Many Dawson County taxpayers should have a little extra pocket change next year.

Maybe even enough to go out to eat at a cheap restaurant ... once.

Dawson County treasurer Sharon Wood said property owners received their tax statements earlier this month.

On average, taxpayers will save roughly \$10 over their bills from 2008.

"I don't think there are any huge changes across the county," Wood said.

In spot checks of bills sent to property owners in the county's three largest communities, Wood said changes ranged from saving as little as \$3 this year to paying an additional \$58.

"It all depends on the total levy for the community you live in and the value of your property," she said.

Valuation in the city of Gothenburg is \$143,664,700, up .4% from the previous year.

At the same time, the overall levy assessed to property owners in Gothenburg is down 3 cents.

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That makes tax bills pretty similar to last year, Wood said.

A look at four different property tax statements mailed to Gothenburg addresses shows one increase of \$8 and three decreases of \$3, \$4 and \$18.

Nebraska property taxes for 2009 are due on Dec. 31. However, Wood said, most people choose to take advantage of an option to pay half by May 1 and the other half by Sept. 1.

Wood said only one tax statement is sent, though, so those who happen to forget the May and September deadlines might find their property taxes listed as delinquent.

She is willing to help with reminders.

Wood will send an e-mail notice to those who request it reminding them their first half or second half of taxes are due.

To get a reminder, simply send an e-mail request to the treasurer's office at dctreasurer@cozadtel.net.

"I've had a great response already," she said.

While some residents make those payments directly to the county, others have taxes paid from escrow accounts through a mortgage company.

"Regardless, it remains the property owner's responsibility," Wood said.

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Many landowners in agriculture pay their property taxes before the end of the year so they can take advantage of other savings when filing their income tax, Wood said.

Already, the treasurer's office has collected \$469,000.

Last year, Wood said her office brought in more than \$3 million by year end and she expects to match that again in 2009.

Dawson County residents may research their property values and pay their taxes online using an electronic check or credit card.

Wood said despite added handling fees, this process is gaining popularity.

To search properties or to pay tax bills on the Internet, visit www.nebraskataxesonline.us and click Dawson County on the map.