

Frequently Asked Questions:

How do I know that the assessor has the correct information about my property?

Because the information about your property will be used to determine your assessment, it is in your best interest to make sure that your assessor's data is correct for your property. You can check with your assessor's office to receive a listing of the information pertaining to your property.

When will I know my new assessment?

Based upon the available information about your property, your assessor will estimate the market value of your property. A notice then will be sent informing you of your new assessment. If you have any questions or disagree with the new assessment, you should arrange for an informal meeting with your assessment official(s) to review the information on which the value is based. If the assessment official(s) feel that mistake was made (or there is any other reason to question the accuracy of the assessment), the assessment will be amended. Only when your assessor is convinced that all the property assessments are as accurate as possible will they be placed on the tentative roll.

Where can I learn more?

Your best source for information about assessment practices in your community is your assessor. The county director of real property tax services is another good source of information. Additional information regarding assessments and tax exemptions are available online either from your local towns or cities website or www.eriecountyassessors.org or www.erie.gov

My property is not for sale so how can it be worth what you say it is?

According to the New York State Property tax law, all properties must be assessed at their fair market value—regardless of whether the property is actually for sale or not. Fair market value is not the highest price a property might sell for but the most probably selling price.

My assessment is fair and accurate but my taxes are still too high—what do I do?

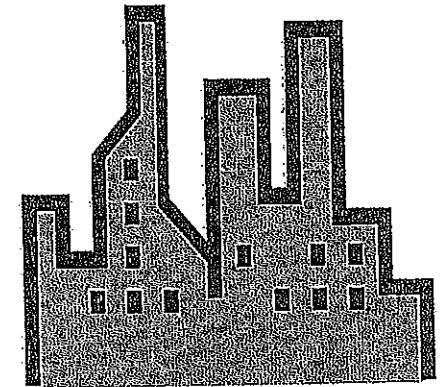
The Assessor's Office is only responsible for the accuracy of your assessment. If that is correct and your taxes are still too high, you must contact your local taxing jurisdictions (county, school, town/city, village) and express your concern to them.

The Assessor has no interest to overvalue or undervalue any real property.

The objective is to produce an equitable assessment roll for the fair distribution of the real property tax burden.

Additional information on assessment practices can be found www.eriecountyassessors.org

REAL PROPERTY ASSESSMENT UPDATE PROGRAM



ERIE COUNTY ASSESSOR'S ASSOCIATION
PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMITTEE



ASSESSORS OFFICE
Town of Cheektowaga
3301 Broadway
Cheektowaga, New York 14227

The Assessment Update Process:

As the real property assessments are updated in the Towns, Cities and Villages in Erie County, it is important that property owners be brought up to date on the present status and learn what to expect in the near future.

Under the Law, only the Assessor of each assessing unit has the authority to establish assessments on real property. All others involved in this project are advisory. Expertise is drawn from many eminently qualified sources including the New York Office of Real Property, but the final bottom-line establishment of the assessments for real property is in the hands of the Assessor.



The Assessment Update Steps:

I. Data Update:

Changes to the property inventory file are being made for new construction, fire, demolition, new sales, and corrections resulting from the ongoing review of data.

Data mailers are sent to property owners for verification.

II Valuation:

The New York State Real Property Information System will be used to generate new values for each parcel based upon the updated information.

III Field Review:

The field review is an exterior review of the parcel at which time a determination is made as to whether the value generated for such parcel is accurate. Each value is accepted or adjusted by the Town or City Assessor.

IV Assessment Change Notices:

Upon completion of the field review, an Assessment Change Notice is then mailed to each property owner detailing the new proposed value. The Assessment Change Notice will give each property owner an estimate of the effect his new assessment will have on his or her future real property taxes.

How to Determine if your assessment is fair:

- 1) Review your preliminary assessment as found on your Assessment Change Notice. If it appears to be fair, no action is required.
- 2) If you Don't Agree with your preliminary Assessment and you believe your assessment is not accurate:

Be prepared with information to support your claim. An example of useful information: interior photos, structural damage that the assessor may not be aware of.

Review the comparable book available at the assessor's office or on-line if available. Find comparable properties to your own.

- 3) Schedule an informal hearing with assessment staff. Bring supporting documentation.
- 4) After the informal hearing process you will receive by mail a notice of assessment.

While the roll is tentative, you still have the ability to meet informally with your assessor about your assessment. If at the end of such a conversation, you still feel you are over-assessed based upon the market value of your home, you have the right to file a formal review. More information about the assessment review process, including application deadlines and instructions, can be found in "How to File for a Review of Your Assessment _ A Guide for Property Owners", available at your assessor's office.