

## Chapter 1 : How to protest your property taxes in Texas | Watchdog | Dallas News

*1. Find Out How Your Local Government Assesses Property. Before you file an appeal, you need to understand how the assessment process [calendrierdelascience.com](http://calendrierdelascience.com) some research to find out what the tax rates are in your area, how the market value of a property is determined, how often assessments are made and how property taxes are ultimately calculated.*

For one thing, properties are typically assessed only once every two to three years, according to an NTU survey of assessors, and sometimes the cycle is longer. So while home values drift down, assessments stay put. And property taxes are likely to head up. In the most recent election cycle, voters concerned about budget shortfalls approved increases in property tax rates -- especially in California, Michigan and Ohio -- says Pete Sepp, a spokesman for the NTU. In many areas, the combination of over-assessed properties and higher taxes has homeowners fighting back. Advertisement Greg Cudahy of Milton, Ga. He decided to take the appeal to the next stage, and the Fulton County Taxpayers Foundation, a nonprofit advocacy group that assists local property owners in appealing their assessments, took his case to the local appeals board. Before you start the appeal process, research how your local government assesses property. Look at the length of time between assessments as well as how the market value of a home is determined. An appraiser might compare your property with similar, recently sold properties to determine its market value, then multiply that by a set fraction, known as the assessment ratio. Another method sometimes used in rural areas or wealthy neighborhoods where homes have unique features is to estimate the cost of replacing a house, adjusting for factors such as the land value. The next step is to check for errors in your assessment. Check that the square footage listed is correct for both the house and the land. If you find an outright error -- for example, the card says your home has three bathrooms but it has only two -- you may be able to show the assessor your blueprints to get a reduction and skip the formal appeal. Investigate the assessed value of similar properties in your area to see how yours compares. Look at property cards for homes of similar age and square footage with the same number of bedrooms and bathrooms. If you find that your assessed value is considerably higher than that of at least five homes the more you can document, the better, you may have a solid case for appeal. Try to find comparable properties that are as close as possible to your own -- nearly the same square footage, in the same neighborhood, and with similar grades of construction materials. You may be able to argue for a reduction based on certain differences between your home and comparable ones. Get all the breaks you deserve. In some places, such as Florida and Washington, D. Tax exemptions may be subject to income limits or linked to taxes that benefit school districts. Rules vary by locality, but your assessment letter should explain how an appeal works. You may be able to negotiate a settlement informally before the assessor completes the rolls and get a reduction right away. You should receive a response within a couple of months. You can use any visual aids, such as photographs, that could help you, and you may pass out copies of your important points in writing to each member of the board. Usually, you can take a case that fails at the local level to a state board, which may function much as the local one does. Or it may handle only narrowly defined cases. For a homeowner, court fees and the cost of a lawyer probably outweigh any reduction. Where to get help Advertisement Tracking down expert assistance to save time or reinforce your appeal may be worth the price. One option is to enter your address at ValueAppeal. Hiring a professional real estate appraiser who will take a thorough look at your property provides the strongest evidence of its worth, but check whether your community allows outside appraisals in an appeal before you get one. If you go this route, find someone with national certification, such as through the Appraisal Institute or the National Association of Independent Fee Appraisers. Be wary of solicitations from law firms or other services offering to assist you with an appeal in return for a high percentage of any savings on your bill. Most often, residential homeowners can go through the process on their own.

**Chapter 2 : Challenge Your Property Taxes and Win!**

*We are being annexed and property taxes on everything we own doubled. this book show how to appeal you county taxes and may deduce you cith taxes to make it more even. I am having to sell in order to escape annexation but it may be too late for me.*

In some instances, the savings will be several thousand dollars. Some reductions were so significant, they effectively lowered the purchase price of the property. If this sounds like something beneficial, you may want to save this article for future reference. Before addressing the details, let me begin with an overview. Those of us in the rental business know that in order to maintain an ongoing profitable return, we need to maximize rent and minimize expenses. By expenses, I am referring to any expenses related to the property itself, including, but not limited to, maintenance and repair costs including capitalized improvements , hazard and liability insurance premiums, and county property taxes. By improving the property to market ready condition, you should be able to demand the maximum rent the market will bear. By using an insurance vendor that specializes in rental properties, you can be assured of getting the best market rate for the coverage you require. Most investors that I have worked with over the years are already doing these things. What most investors are not doing is reducing their property taxes. The savings here should not be overlooked, as they can significantly increase both monthly cash flow, and overall cash on cash return, with just a couple of hours of work. Of course it should, but in most cases it will not. Most property owners do not protest their property taxes. For those of you who are new to protesting property taxes, let me start with the property tax timeline. The Tax Season Each April, in Texas, the county appraisal districts send the Notice of Appraised Value for the current year in a statement to each property owner. These are usually received no later than May 1st. Just a note here " the line gets really long the closer you get to the May 31st deadline". If you purchased a property between January 1st and June 1st of the current year or already own a property from a prior year , you can protest your property taxes during May. Effective Tax Protesting for Purchases Between January 1st and June 1st Upon closing and funding, call your county appraisal district or go online and see what their process is for protesting. If you closed in January or February, you will probably receive your Notice of Appraised Value in the mail, as this should be enough time for them to process your transaction. The procedures for protesting are listed on the notice. Most appraisal districts will have you make an appointment to see an appraiser in person, to protest the value sometime during May. You can make this appointment over the phone or in person the same day, at the appraisal district. Some appraisal districts now allow you to protest your property on their web site. Prior to meeting with an appraiser, you need to have the following 4 items ready to make your case: This shows the appraiser what you paid for the property. A copy is fine as they do not need your original. You will want to use pre-rehab photos. The uglier, the better. Appraiser, this property was a disaster when I bought it. Just look at these photos". This shows the amount of work needed to get the property in livable condition. If you have this documentation, it helps prove your case. The tax appraiser will certainly be looking at them online, when making a decision on your value. However, they will not be weighted as heavily as the other items if your property needed significant work. If you are not familiar with how to get effective comparables, you need to get with a realtor or appraiser to help you. Remember, you need sold comparables, not active, pending, cancelled, etc. At your protest appointment, your objective should be to get the tax assessed value lowered to the purchase price of the property you cannot go lower than the purchase price in most cases. If the property needed significant work, the purchase price is justifiable for the new assessed value. Less is more in these situations and the appraiser knows why you are there. Merely stating that you want the value lowered to a specific amount due to condition, should suffice. The appraiser in most appraisal districts, and most situations 3 will lower the value, maybe not to the purchase price, but to some lower assessed value. Take what you can get. However, if you are not happy and feel that you were not treated fairly, you can refuse to sign the adjusted value form, and take your case to the Appraisal Review Board ARB. This is a separate hearing that has 3 members of the community and 1 to 2 appraisers. These hearings are by appointment only and can be very effective if you have the time and a case worth appealing. If this hearing does not go well, you

3 Some appraisal districts can be extremely difficult and may not lower the value at all. There are issues here that are beyond the scope of this article. I know people who have done this and were successful they were protesting several properties and could justify the legal expense. The point here is to illustrate that there are options beyond your protest appointment. If this scenario applies to you, your settlement statement may not have much significance, as it did in the previous section. If the subject property is in good condition, there is no need for photos or estimates of work to be performed. Sold comps will be the primary tool for building your case to protest the value. When using sold comps it is important that you are comparing your property to other properties in similar condition, in the same area. Most likely this will mean removing foreclosures and other properties that need significant work. Use comps that sold for a lower value in the same condition. If your property has been overvalued, the tax appraiser will, in most cases, lower it to something more reasonable. One thing to note is the appraisal district is required to provide you with the data they are using to assess your property. If you feel you need it, you should go through their process to get it. Read their respective sites to find where it is located. In Dallas County for example, it will be on your Notice of Appraised Value sent by the appraisal district. There will be a PIN on the Notice that you can enter online to see the comps the district is using, which you can use for your pre-protest research. This may sound strange, but it is a fact. You can have homes built 30 years apart, with different materials, in a completely different subdivision, yet the appraisal district is comparing your older property to a newer one still common in certain areas of Dallas County. When this is the case, you can more easily make the argument, as you have their data to use against them. I had several rental properties that I had purchased during the summer, well after the May 31st protest deadline. What I discovered, was that I could still protest my taxes for the entire year under a certain section of the Texas Tax Code, as long as certain criteria was met. For any purchase after May 31st and before the end of the year, you can file your protest under the Texas Tax Code "Section 41.03. In Dallas County, you can write a short letter addressed to the chairman of the ARB, stating that you wish to protest under Section 41.03. Be sure to include your settlement statement HUD-1 to show proof of purchase price. You can also send photos and estimates of work to be performed. You will be 4 Section 41.03 Everything else in the process is the same. Still worth the effort. Over the years, I have had tremendous success getting values lowered to the purchase price, both during the protest window, through the ARB. Recently, I have had tax appraisers call me from DCAD following a protest letter sent, where they lowered the tax assessed value over the phone. It appears they are now looking to save everyone time in the process. If you give them enough information, you will probably receive a similar experience. As real estate investors, we all want the maximum return we can get from each property. I would highly encourage you to protest every property you purchase. Even protesting just one property can make a huge difference in your cash flow. If you have multiple properties the savings can literally be thousands of dollars. I look forward to hearing about your experiences. If you have any questions, feel free to give me a call. I look forward to assisting real estate investors in any way I can. Investmark Mortgage delivers speed, certainty and clarity to every client utilizing our 4 Keys to Success. Visit our website or contact us with any questions.

### Chapter 3 : How to Appeal Your Property Tax Bill

*For more on the process, check out the book *Appeal Your Property Taxes - And Win*. John C. started Action Economics in as a way to gain more knowledge on personal financial planning and to share that knowledge with others.*

Challenge Your Property Taxes and Win! The process was very simple, and is something everyone should look into doing if they own property. The result can possibly save you hundreds of dollars! This was my situation: My wife and I finished our basement last year. When we hired the contractors to do the electrical and plumbing work, we filed for a permit with the county to keep everything legal. That was to be expected, but I was shocked to see how high the county assessed our home. We looked into the matter further and our house was listed as having more square footage and 1 more bedroom than it has. Based on the assessed value, what we thought our house was worth, and how much our neighbors houses were assessed for, we decided to challenge our taxes. After record growth in many markets throughout the US, many of those same markets have softened or even diminished in value. This can be especially problematic if your area only reassesses property values every two or three years and you got hit at the top of the bubble. If you are considering an appeal, you should know what your house is worth in relation to your tax assessment. You will want to ensure all the information the county has for your house is accurate. Most counties have a website where this information is readily available. If the information is inaccurate, you could have a case for reassessment. Research neighboring properties You need to know whether your house is appraised fairly or not. Most counties have web sites that provide property information including purchase price, property taxes, number of bedrooms, square footage, home improvements, total land, and other information concerning the property. Save Our Home laws Some states have laws that limit the amount that property taxes can be raised for someone who already owns their house, and the taxes are not brought up to market value until the house is sold. These laws are designed to keep people from being priced out of their home because they cannot afford the continual increases in property taxes. To challenge or not to challenge? If there is a difference between the market value and the assessment value of your home, you need to decide whether or not you want to challenge your taxes. If the difference is only a few thousand dollars, it may not be worth the hassle. However, if the difference is large, it is almost always worth the effort of challenging your taxes. Keep in mind that sometimes your house may be assessed at less than market value. There may be reasons for this " you may live in a county that does this purposely to give all tax payers a break, or your taxes may not have been adjusted recently. If it is the latter, be prepared for a tax hike the next time taxes are reassessed! Some counties will do a reassessment based on a telephone or e-mail request, but others require a formal appeal. This usually involves filling out a special form, and sometimes appealing before a board. These actions should increase your chances of a successful property tax challenge: Research and gather information. Determine the market value for your house and the tax assessment value. Now that you have your data, organize it. Many counties limit you to one challenge per tax cycle unless there are major changes to your property , so take the time to do this correctly. You are appealing your taxes to people who have the power to grant your request for lower taxes, or stick you with higher taxes for the duration of the assessment cycle, which may last a few more years. Remember, the county auditors and tax assessors are probably dealing with many people in a similar situation to yours. Being nice will not only leave a favorable impression with them, it is the right thing to do. These steps will not guarantee you success when challenging your property tax assessment, but following them will increase your chances of getting your request approved. Good luck, and I hope you win your challenge!

## Chapter 4 : How to Appeal Your Property-Tax Bill

*If you're a homeowner, you probably already know that recent tax legislation means you can now deduct only up to \$10,000 worth of property taxes from your federal tax bill.*

**Zombie Foreclosures Hit Homeowners** The first thing to keep in mind is that an appeal is a process. A properly documented appeal is clearly much more likely to be successful. By contrast, an appeal that simply grouses that your taxes are too high and that your neighbor pays less is likely to fail. Just as in the real estate market, the specifics will vary from one locale to the next. Learn the appeals process. Anyone considering an appeal of their property taxes will need to become knowledgeable about how the process works, who to work with, and what forms and information is required to appeal the assessment on your home. You will also need to know the filing deadlines for when any appeals will be heard for the coming tax year. The point is that you do not want to overlook a simple technicality that could jeopardize your chances of winning an appeal.

**Review property tax records.** All properties assessed a tax are listed in a public document called a tax roll. Get a copy of the tax roll and what is known as the "property tax card" for your home. The information for these records is the basis for the assessed value of your home and the resulting property tax you pay. Check to ensure that the tax records are correct in describing the number of bedrooms, bathrooms, and dimensions and square footage. Also check to see that the records indicate the correct year the home was built. If you removed any buildings or filled in an in-ground pool, see to it that the records properly reflect this. If the records state you have a fireplace or a finished basement and you do not, this can result in a higher tax assessment. If any of this information is wrong, you have good grounds for an appeal. The most common appeals for homeowners are based on either errors in fact for example, incorrect data used by the assessors in valuing your home or errors in judgment where the homeowner believes the tax is based on a home value that is too high. Appeals based on errors in fact are easier to win. Appeals based on your belief that your homes tax value is too high will need to include several appraisals and information on similar property with lower values. Compile a list of property values. Prepare a list of at least three similar properties. You can hire a professional to appraise your home and similar ones for the purpose of comparison, although that will involve additional costs. You may feel more comfortable if you believe that a professional appraisal will be more convincing and provide the information you need to support your case. You just need to make sure that the potential savings in lower property taxes is worth the cost of the appraisal. Finally, you will need to present your information and follow the process required by your local property tax board. Work with your property tax assessor -- the less formal the process and the fewer people involved, the more effective and efficient the result tends to be. Be aware of the deadlines and dates required by the process; if you send in your corrections after the assessor has sent his final record to the tax board, even before it is certified, it is harder for the assessor to change it. If an assessor agrees with the facts you present, he can intervene before the tax board certifies the tax roll, which saves time and money for all involved.

1. *Decide if an Appeal is Worth Your Time. How much effort you decide to put into a challenge depends on the stakes. The median property tax paid in , the latest available figure, was about \$2,*

There was no time to eat and your dog ran out the door. Nothing could get worse. Today is the day you take a stand. Today, the appraisal district must go down. All around you sits an endless sea of disgruntled allies waiting for their own opportunity on the battlefield. You can hear their war cries, spiked with anger yet underscored with doubt and fear. You realize these amateurs have no chance. Minus the grumbling stomach and the less than ideal drumbeat in your head you are nearly invincible. Good thing, because your name just got called. The purpose of this article is to give you some perspective on a proper approach to a successful protest. Too many property owners have no plan. With a yearly effort you could end up saving several hundred to several thousand dollars in property taxes over time. Most Common Misconceptions First and foremost, understand that when you are negotiating with an appraiser at the appraisal district, you are protesting your property value, not your property taxes. If your strategy for winning your protest is to give the appraiser a sob story about how your ever increasing taxes are a huge burden, your story will fall upon deaf ears. The appraisal district has absolutely no control over your taxes; they simply determine property values. I actually witnessed a property owner protest on the basis that his property value was too low!! He wanted the appraiser to raise the value so that he could sell his house at a higher price. In most cases, no appraiser will physically visit your property to assess the value. The counties simply do not have the manpower to cover the entire county on a yearly basis. Harris County, for instance, has approximately appraisers who are required to attribute value to more than , property accounts. Do not consider your tax assessed value to be indicative of your true market value. As investors, do not purchase or even evaluate a property based on the tax assessed value. Your five year old purchase price is no longer valid! Each year stands on its own and the current comparable sales can and will affect your value. Finally, the appraisal district will not retaliate if you protest! It is your right to protest by law, and again, they simply do not have the manpower to pick on everyone who protests each year. The following ideas are some that I followed for every property I represented. Appraisers will actually appreciate your due diligence. The deadline to file your protest for the season is June 1st. Request the House Bill Evidence packet. This is the most important step you can take towards ensuring a successful protest. The HB contains all of the information which the appraisal district used to arrive at your property value. The information within this packet is also your main source for ammunition in getting your value reduced. For Harris County property owners, this packet will be made available online 14 days prior to your hearing date. Call the appraisal district for instructions on how to access it. Qualified negative influences could be busy streets, water tower looming over your house, sewer plant nearby, commercial property bordering your residential, etc. Google Earth is a wonderful thing. I would recommend printing a satellite view of your property and the surrounding area. It could be anything. Get creative and add support to the rest of your presentation. MLS Sales " If you have a Realtor who is willing to help you with your evidence gathering, you may want to have them print some of the SOLD properties you find in the House Bill neighborhood sales page. It sold for a higher price because it actually had a complete remodel just two years ago and yours actually is in original condition. Therefore, your value should be adjusted downward from that sale. Have an opinion of value ready when you meet with the appraiser and then support that value with the evidence you have prepared. Saying you want a lower value without knowing what that lower value should even be suggests to the appraiser that you have no idea of what you are doing and you are likely to go on and on begging like a child until you get a reduction. Appraisers respect property owners with opinions of value. The shorter the story, the better. Appraisers may sit with property owners every single day. They hate protest season and they hate people in general by the second week. Limit your stories and stick with the evidence. The appraiser will appreciate it and will hopefully return the love in the form of a value reduction! However, I would like to point you in the right direction as far as what you need to be looking at as the HB is extremely powerful. I never personally visited any property I represented in Harris County, yet had a high success rate at getting values

## **DOWNLOAD PDF APPEAL YOUR PROPERTY TAXES-AND WIN**

reduced simply by learning to read the story provided in the HB. There are four main pages I want you to look at in the HB. On the ISD page you will find a small sample of neighborhood or surrounding area sales which the appraisal district has used in order to come up with your value.

**Chapter 6 : How to Appeal Property Taxes (with Pictures) - wikiHow**

*Sick of New Jersey's high property taxes? Don't miss your chance to challenge yours. Here's one story of a successful appeal. How to appeal property taxes and win over the appraiser (we did).*

Well, one thing that did not plummet along with that is the property taxes most people are paying on those homes. The taxes some of us have been paying on our homes have been inaccurate or unfair to say the least. Several months after the housing market was in a full-fledged decline, I started seeing a good bit of coverage on this topic. And at the top of the list was what could the average homeowner do about it? About the only remedy is to dispute the property tax assessment on your home. I saw all kinds of websites and links to people offering their help and services, often for a pretty hefty fee. My first question was "is this even worth doing? A Do It Yourself Appeal? So, after quite a bit of research, I found out exactly what I had to do to complete this process. Getting this information almost seemed more time consuming and difficult than the actual process. After that, I found out the following: The Letter Sometime early next year, I will be getting a notice in the mail from the state with their tax assessment of my property for the year This all sounded a little cryptic to me. This letter must be sent within 45 days of the receipt of your letter from the state. And basically, you simply tell them why you disagree with their assessment. But along with why you disagree, you do need to provide some sort of concrete evidence. The Proof First, you will need a current appraisal of your home. And obviously, these cost money. Believe it or not, I found a real estate agent that ran them for me for free. They either stand by their original assessment, or they make an adjustment. If you still disagree with the result, you can appeal it again. After this, you will be sent another letter. There you can state your case in person and a final, non-disputable judgment will be rendered. Is It Worth It? At the very least, this IS worth it. The biggest thing you need to weigh is the cost of getting an appraisal done on your home versus what you might potentially save. But if you genuinely feel like you have a case that could lead to substantial savings, I say go for it. Have you had an experience with disputing your property tax assessment? Any stories of people succeeding or being turned down in their appeals? Feel free to share your experiences with our other readers below.

*First and foremost, understand that when you are negotiating with an appraiser at the appraisal district, you are protesting your property value, not your property taxes. If your strategy for winning your protest is to give the appraiser a sob story about how your ever increasing taxes are a huge burden, your story will fall upon deaf ears.*

In many jurisdictions, this is the time of year that you can appeal the property tax assessment on your home. Home values have fallen in most parts of the country, but often tax assessments have not. Let me throw out a couple of statistics from the National Taxpayers Union that, taken together, spell opportunity: Only 2 percent of homeowners appeal their property taxes. So strive to be one of the few, the proud. The National Taxpayers Union says the majority of homeowners win at least a partial victory. Depending on the rules where you live, you will only have 30 to days to let the local government know you intend to appeal. Send your appeal application by certified mail or hand deliver it and get it stamped, so you will have proof that it arrived by the deadline. As an example, in Washington, D. Once you get these internal government documents, you should scrutinize them, looking for errors that give you a great argument for your appeal. There are really only three basic arguments you can make to appeal your tax assessment. That keeps it nice and simple. See if one applies: The assessor made a mistake in describing your house. This argument covers situations where the assessor made simple math mistakes. Maybe he got the square footage wrong only heated, livable areas should be counted , or stated that you have five bedrooms when you have three. All you have to do is gather documentation and describe the errors in writing or in person. You just bought the house for less. If you recently purchased your home for less than the assessed value would indicate, lucky you. If the assessment is right, you will lose, but it means you got a tremendous bargain when you bought the place! This is pretty cut and dried, and can probably be taken care of with a simple letter or phone call. The assessor made poor comparisons in valuing your house. If this is the case, you can argue that the houses the city or county used as comparisons are far better and nicer than your house. According to attorneys who handle these cases, the difference between your house and the comparables needs to be at least 10 percent for you to have a good case. Some jurisdictions will actually tell you what percentage difference they consider actionable. My neighbors appealed their property taxes and won.

## Chapter 8 : How to Protest Your Property Taxes and Win

*Account for the time and money you will need to expend. A property tax appeal can take months or even years of work. If you are not in a market with high taxes and high real estate values, you can probably only expect a return of \$\$*

This is the season of property tax assessments, and your property taxes may have been reassessed at a higher rate. First will come a polite notice of assessment, followed closely by your new tax bill. Depending on home sales in your area and how badly your tax assessor is motivated to collect higher taxes, your property taxes could be raised significantly. The homeowners most taken by surprise by new assessments are the ones who have lived in their new homes less than a year. When new homeowners close on their new homes, lenders require that they pay the current property taxes to the end of the year. Most new homeowners expect to be taxed at that same rate the following year. What happens now is that new homeowners will pay a new rate - a rate established by the purchase price they paid on their new home and comparable prices paid for other homes in the neighborhood. This new rate can be assessed hundreds or thousands of dollars higher than the previous owner paid. Taxing authorities tax as closely as possible to current market value. Now, I know there are skeptics out there who think that researching property taxes is more of a hassle than paying them. But would you still think that if I told you that over half of the people that protest their tax assessments get them reduced? Save a Fortune on your Homeowners Property Tax, published by Dearborn, lowered property taxes are the direct result of lowered assessed values. So what is the "assessed value"? The assessed value is the amount of money the assessor thinks your property is worth. Your objective, then, is to find a way to lower the assessed value of your home and to convince the assessor that you are right. The authors divide this process into eight steps. So, first things first. How do you determine why and when you should appeal your assessed value? Authors Koenig and Lafay say there are four circumstances in which you have substantial evidence for a case: If you have an illegal assessment. Check to see if your home is assessed at a higher percentage of its market value than the law allows. If you have an unequal assessment. It is illegal for a home to be under the percentage of the market value, and it is unequal if it is greater than the market value. If there is an error in your tax records. There could be a mathematical error in recording the details of your house or lot. If you fit into any of these four categories, you have reason to pull together a case and appeal your assessment value. Since "overvalued, over-assessed property is one of the most common and successful grounds for challenging your tax bill," it is important to determining the value of your property. You may find comparable properties are charged substantially less than you are, and this is a good argument. You could be saving hundreds, maybe even thousands of dollars annually. Let the book "Save a Fortune on your Homeowners Property Tax" guide you through the eight steps to lowering your property taxes. Check your local library for a copy today.

## Chapter 9 : How to Appeal Your New Jersey Property Taxes and Win

*In New York, homeowners with incomes below \$, can exempt the first \$30, of a home's full value from school property taxes -- even if they have kids in the public-school system -- and.*