

Property Assessment

Annually, municipalities are required to complete a General Assessment. The purpose of a general assessment is to conform with Provincial Legislation and Ministers guidelines and adjust assessment to more current market values. The Municipal Government Act gives municipalities and assessors the authority to complete General Assessments. A General Assessment is an overall review of the assessed value of property (market land and buildings) within the municipality.

Market Value

January 1, 1995 the Province passed new legislation, the "Municipal Government Act" requiring all municipalities to use the value of a person's property as a measure for calculating taxes when completing a General Assessment. Market Value is the valuation standard for all properties except machinery and equipment, linear, railway and farmland which have legislated, regulated rates applied.

Market Value means the amount that a property might be expected to realize if it is sold on the open market by a willing seller to a willing buyer.

Mass Appraisal

Sales are analyzed using a "Mass Appraisal Process". Mass appraisal means the process of preparing assessments for a group of properties using standard methods and common data. Therefore, your assessment may be slightly higher or lower than the market value of the property because sales are analyzed by groups or areas. The assessor applies the results against both sold and unsold properties.

Property Classification

Proper classification is determined by the use of the property and may be residential, non-residential, farmland, linear or machinery and equipment. Taxes are computed by multiplying your assessment by the appropriate tax rate for your classification. Some properties have more than one class and will have more than one tax rate.

Residential Properties are assessed at market value and must be an estimate of the value of a property on July 1 of the assessment year.

Non-Residential Properties refer to commercial and industrial uses such as stores, warehouse manufacturing plants or a commercial business operating on a residential property. Market value is the valuation standard for these types of properties.

Farmland is valued based on regulated rates as prescribed in the ministers guidelines and is based on the capability of the land to produce agricultural products.

Linear assessments are prepared annually by provincial assessors at regulated rates and forwarded to municipalities each year. Eg. Transmission lines, telecommunication equipment, wellhead and pipelines.

Machinery and Equipment assessments are regulated assessments prepared by your assessor. Eg. Oilfield facilities, gas plants, processing and manufacturing equipment.

Farm Residences along with the first 3.00 acres are assessed at market value as if it were a parcel. The balance of the parcel is assessed at farmland value.

Exemptions

Farm buildings are exempt from assessment to the extent they are used for farming purposes. An exemption in assessment for a farm residence is based on the amount of agricultural valued land in the owners unit. The exemption of the first residence is \$61,540 based on the amount of qualifying farmland.

Additional farm residences used for farm purposes are exempt to a maximum of \$30,770 per residence providing the owner has qualifying agricultural farmland remaining in his unit after his first exemption has been calculated.

The Assessment Process

Combined Assessment & Tax Notice

Review your assessment and tax notice to see if the estimate is reasonable. If you own or recently purchased land outside of Ponoka County and have not used all of the farm residence exemption, the balance may be applied against any balance remaining on your residence in Ponoka County as part of your farm unit.

If you find errors on your Assessment and Tax Notice, contact the Assessor at the Ponoka County office at 403-783-3333. If the municipality agrees your assessment requires changes, the assessment department will process it.

If you do not agree with the assessment you may appeal your assessment by the date shown on the assessment/tax notice, in writing to the Assessment Review Board.

If you do not agree with the decision of the Assessment Review Board, you may appeal that decision within 30 days of notification from the Assessment Review Board to the Municipal Government Board.