



Thomas M. Menino, Mayor  
Ronald W. Rakow,  
Commissioner

# Property Tax

# INFORMATION

## Fiscal Year 2008

Assessing Department City of Boston Third Quarter Tax Bill

### Important Dates

#### February 1, 2008

- Fiscal Year 2008 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter taxes are due.
- Abatement filing deadline for real property, personal property and exempt property.

#### March 31, 2008

- Residential exemption filing deadline.
- Personal exemption filing deadline.

#### Late March 2008

- Fiscal Year 2008 4<sup>th</sup> quarter tax bill issued.

#### May 1, 2008

- Fiscal Year 2008 4<sup>th</sup> quarter taxes are due.

### More Information

- Fiscal Year 2008 assessment and tax rate appear on your 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter tax bill.
- Mail your tax payments to:  
City of Boston Real Estate  
P. O. Box 55808  
Boston, MA 02205-5808
- For PRIOR Fiscal Year tax balances and payments, contact the Collector's office at (617) 635-4131 or 4132.
- If you have a mortgage with an escrow account, forward your tax bill to the bank or mortgage company to ensure timely payment of taxes.

### Property Taxes to Decline for Many in 2008

Mayor Menino's classification bill - with the assistance of Boston legislators - was recently enacted, resulting in savings for many homeowners in Fiscal Year 2008.

The Mayor's bill also freezes the business classification factor at 175% permanently (the previous law provided for a business factor of 170%). The higher business factor will save homeowners significant tax dollars in future years. Without this legislation, most taxpayers would have actually seen an increase on their Fiscal Year 2008 tax bill.

### Property Assessment Trends

For Fiscal Year 2008, residential assessments are based on the value of the property as of January 1, 2007, and reflect the market conditions as of that date.

Assessments for most residential properties are level with last year or have declined slightly, reflecting weakening market conditions. Conversely, the downtown commercial market, particularly office properties, experienced a surge in market values, resulting in an overall increase in value for the business property classes.

### Residential & Personal Exemptions May Lower Your Tax Bill

Taxpayers who owned and occupied a property as their principal residence on January 1, 2007 may be eligible for the residential exemption. In Fiscal Year 2008, qualified homeowners can expect to save \$1,488.57 on their tax bill.

The principal residence is the address from which you file your state income tax return. Your Social Security number will be required to verify eligibility and will be kept strictly confidential.

Personal exemptions are available to the following qualified homeowners: Elderly, Blind, Surviving Spouses or Minor Children of Deceased Parents, and Veterans.

Each exemption has eligibility requirements (e.g., age, income restrictions). You may not receive more than one personal exemption. If you qualify for two or more exemptions, you will receive the exemption that saves you the most money. For more information on exemptions, see reverse side.

### Fiscal Year 2008 Tax Rates

<b>Residential:</b>	<b>\$10.97</b> per thousand dollars of value
<b>Commercial, Industrial, Personal Property:</b>	<b>\$25.92</b> per thousand dollars of value

**Residential Exemption Amount**  
**\$1,488.57**  
(Tax Bill Savings)

### .....Updates.....

- ☑ Residential Property Assessments
- ☑ Property Tax Classification Update

### Tax Deferral for Elderly - New 4% Interest Rate

Qualified elderly taxpayers (65+) may now defer their taxes at a 4% interest rate. A tax deferral, which may be considered when a senior's continued homeownership becomes difficult, must be repaid with interest when the property is transferred or upon the death of the owner.

Mayor Menino and the Boston City Council lowered the interest rate from 8% to 4% effective in Fiscal Year 2008. For more information, go to [www.cityofboston.gov/assessing](http://www.cityofboston.gov/assessing) or call the TRAC office at (617) 635-4287.

### Taxpayer Referral & Assistance Center (TRAC) (617) 635-4287

Contact the TRAC office about:

- Property tax
- Residential exemption
- Elderly and other personal exemptions
- Duplicate tax bills
- Current motor vehicle excise tax
- Current boat excise tax
- Current tax bill balances and payments

The TRAC office is located on the mezzanine level of City Hall and is open weekdays from 9AM - 5PM. Visit the Assessing Department online at: [www.cityofboston.gov/assessing](http://www.cityofboston.gov/assessing).

# FY 2008 Frequently Asked Questions

## Am I receiving an exemption?

Check your tax bill. If an amount appears to the right of the box marked "Residential Exemption" or "Personal Exemption," then you are receiving the respective exemption.

### 2008 REAL ESTATE TAX 3RD Quarter

WARD	PARCEL NO.	BILL NO.
TOTAL FULL VALUATION		
RESIDENTIAL EXEMPTION		\$
TOTAL TAXABLE VALUATION		
1ST PREL. OVERDUE		
2ND PREL. OVERDUE		
SPEC. ASSMNT.		
WATER & SEWER CHARGES		
TOTAL TAX & SPEC. ASSMNT.		
PERSONAL EXEMPTION		\$
PAYMENTS TO DATE/CREDITS		
NET TAX & SPEC. ASSMNT. DUE		

## How to Obtain Exemption Applications

Call the Taxpayer Referral & Assistance Center (TRAC) at (617) 635-4287 or visit the Assessing Department, Room 301, City Hall. The filing deadline for exemptions is March 31, 2008.

Information about personal and residential exemptions is available online at [www.cityofboston.gov/assessing](http://www.cityofboston.gov/assessing). From that page, go to *Residential Exemption*, *Personal Exemption* or *Frequently Asked Questions*.

## What is an abatement and how do I file?

An abatement is a reduction of your real estate tax through review and correction of the property's assessed value. The abatement process is, by law, a taxpayers' recourse when they believe their property is over-assessed, disproportionately assessed, improperly classified, or exempt from taxation. Abatement applications may generally be filed by the person to whom the property has been assessed **or** the owner of the property after January 1, 2007.

The deadline to file an abatement application is February 1, 2007. The taxes due on the property must be paid by February 1 even if the abatement decision is pending. Taxpayers may obtain abatement forms from the Assessing Department, Room 301, City Hall, Monday through Friday or online at [www.cityofboston.gov/assessing](http://www.cityofboston.gov/assessing). Click on "Forms" on the left menu. By law, the Assessing Department cannot act on an abatement application filed after February 1.

## How do market conditions affect my assessment?

For Fiscal Year 2008, state law requires that all property be assessed at its full market value. Your assessment is based upon the sale of properties - on or before January 1, 2007 - which are comparable in location, style, age and condition.

## I purchased my property in calendar year 2007. When do I qualify for a residential exemption?

For Fiscal Year 2008, you must own and occupy the property on January 1, 2007 to qualify for the exemption. If you acquired the property after January 1, 2007, you will be eligible in Fiscal Year 2009.

### Purchase Year / Residential Exemption Eligibility Year

Calendar Year Purchased	Fiscal Year Eligible
2006	2008
2007	2009
2008	2010

## I'm a new owner, why doesn't my name appear on my tax bill?

For the current Fiscal Year 2008, state law requires the Collector's office to send tax bills to the owner of record as of January 1, 2007, the assessment date. Ownership changes made after that date will be reflected on tax bills in Fiscal Year 2009.

Upon request, The Assessing Department will mail tax bills in care of the new owner. You can obtain a copy of your tax bill by calling the Taxpayer Referral & Assistance Center at (617) 635-4287.

## Doesn't Proposition 2½ limit my property taxes?

Proposition 2½ limits the increase in the overall levy to an amount no greater than 2.5% more than the prior-year levy amount. However, the provisions of Proposition 2½ apply to the overall levy, not to an individual tax bill.

### This is an Important Notice. Please have it translated.

Questa è una notizia molto importante. Per piacere falla tradurre.  
Este es un aviso importante. Sirvase mandarlo traducir.  
C'est important. Veuillez faire traduire.

ĐÂY LÀ MỘT BẢN THÔNG CÁO QUAN TRỌNG.

XIN VUI LÒNG CHO DỊCH LẠI THÔNG CÁO NÀY.

Este é um aviso importante. Por favor mande traduzi-lo.

Es é un avizo importantí. Di favor, manda traduzil.

Se yon anons ki enpòtan anpil. Sou Ple, fè tradwi li pou w.

Σπουδαie Πληροφορεια – Παρακαλω να το μεταφρασετε.

## Motor Vehicle Registration Compliance Law

If you are a Massachusetts resident, you must register your vehicle with the state. By law, you are a Massachusetts resident if you receive a local property tax exemption; file a state resident income tax return; or receive a rental deduction; register to vote in Mass; enroll your dependents in a local public school; pay resident tuition for them at a state college or university; receive public assistance from the state; declare mortgaged or insured property located here as your principal residence; or obtain any employment, benefit or privilege by claiming MA residency. You may be fined up to \$1,000 per year for illegally registering your vehicle in another state, or misrepresenting the location where the vehicle is garaged. You may also be subject to assessment for unpaid taxes with penalties and interest.

## Assessing Information Online

For additional assessing information concerning real estate, motor vehicle and boat excise tax bills, current year tax payments, residential and personal exemptions, go to: [www.cityofboston.gov/assessing](http://www.cityofboston.gov/assessing).