



CHAMPAIGN COUNTY ASSESSMENT OFFICE

1776 East Washington Street
Urbana, Illinois 61802-4581
(217) 384-3760 • FAX (217) 384-3762
Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Residential Property Valuation Process

By law, the township assessor is charged with discovering and valuing all real property within their jurisdiction as of January 1st of each year. This means determining the fair market value of three types of real property: the land, the permanent structures on the land, and the contributory value of any farm buildings that might exist. A fourth category of property is farmland and its value is determined by the Chief County Assessment Officer as directed by the Illinois Department of Revenue.

A property owner pays their real estate taxes one year behind so that they can be active participants in the property tax cycle. Assessment officials are required by law to notify property owners of any change in the value of a property and the law also requires sufficient time for the owner to appeal said change. Each year in Champaign County our 3-member appointed Board of Review hears assessment complaints from July 1st through September 10th.

Assessment officials perform their duties through a process known as "mass appraisal". The township assessor gathers about 15 pieces of factual information about a property and then uses a state cost manual to arrive at an estimate of market value. The assessor may apply factors to a property based on recent property sales that have occurred in an area. The township assessor receives their authority from the state constitution and they may change any assessment by any amount each year between January 1st and April 15th. The following table is an outline of the assessor's approach to valuing a residential property. This table is a basic guide and each assessor may choose to use other supplement data in their valuation process.

**GENERAL GUIDELINES USED BY TOWNSHIP ASSESSORS
IN CHAMPAIGN COUNTY To determine the value of a RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURE
(Commercial-Industrial-Farm Buildings are valued in a different manner)**

	ATTRIBUTE	ILLINOIS COST MANUAL	REFINEMENT
1.	SQUARE FOOTAGE Ground floor square footage is calculated for each story (i.e. 2-Story assessor sq. ft. 1,250 when an appraisal sq.ft. would say 2,500)	The manual has categories for 1-Story, 1 ½- Story, 2-Story, etc. The value of each story is added together and each value includes the cost of a basement	Wood frame or masonry construction tables are used (any other type requires special research)
2.	NUMBER OF STORIES Combining of multiple stories	The computation ladder has deductions that are used when two or more story types are added together	The story type with the smallest square footage is used for the reduction
3.	FOUNDATION TYPE -basement -crawl -slab -split level	Manual includes a basement and deductions are made for crawl space or slab and split level	Split-level homes have their own valuation process
4.	HEATING TYPE Lack of central heating is noted	Manual includes a value for a central heating – floor furnaces or space heaters are a reduction	Calculated by each story (no deduction for electric baseboard)
5.	PLUMBING Plumbing value is added when the number of baths is greater than one	Additions for “plumbing points” or fixtures above 1 bath are valued at \$1,235 each	The manual figures 3 fixtures per bath but today’s homes could have more
6.	GARAGES Garages are valued 3 ways: Attached, attached with living area above (integral) or detached	Attached garages are valued at the grade and condition of the house while detached stands apart at its own grade and condition	Wood frame or masonry construction tables are used (any other type requires special research)
7.	CENTRAL AIR CONDITIONING	The manual does not include central air conditioning	Calculated by each story
8.	FINISHED ATTIC Living area less than 50% of the floor below	The manual does not include a finished attic	Calculated by square footage
9.	STOOPS, DECKS, or PATIOS	The manual has values for all three by square footage	Assessor may decide extent of contribution to value for stoops, decks, or patios

10. PORCHES	The manual has values for open and enclosed porches	Wood frame or masonry construction tables are used
11. ORIGINAL GRADE OF CONSTRUCTION AA-2.25 A-1.50 B-1.22 C-1.00 D-.82 E-.50	Most construction is considered average or "C Grade" which use a multiplying factor of 1.0	Grade can be set in between a range i.e. B+10 is 1.32
12. PARTIAL MASONRY TRIM The calculated square footage of brick or artificial stone	The manual uses a per square footage calculation based on grade (A-B-C-D)	Categories: brick, stone, or artificial stone
13. FIREPLACE(S)	The manual uses a lump sum value based on quality grade (A-B-C-D)	100% masonry is always a B Grade
14. FINISHED BASEMENT	The manual uses per square footage calculation based on grade (A-B-C-D)	Two sub-categories exist: Living area and recreation area
15. COST FACTORS	The assessor is may use a direct cost factor to adjust the manual for building material increases	This factor also is used to allow for regional adjustments throughout the state
16. NEIGHBORHOOD FACTOR or DESIGN FACTOR	The assessor may determine other factors in his/her jurisdiction that affect value	Neighborhood factors based on like or similar properties may also further refine the mass appraisal process
17. CONDITION Known as the CDU Condition Desirability Utility	This determination directly affects the depreciation.	The CDU range is: Undesirable Poor Average Good Excellent
18. DEPRECIATION Remaining Economic Life	The assessor uses a depreciation table to adjust for the age of the house.	The assessor may deviate from the standard values when adequate research so indicates

Assessment officials urge property owners to obtain a copy of their property record card from time to time to assist us with the accuracy their information. We gather physical and visual information of about 15 attributes for the typical dwelling and then apply a mass appraisal technique to arrive at a market value. The mass appraisal process is not a perfect science and that is why the law requires that the property owner receive a notice in the mail each time an assessment is changed.

In Champaign County there are two times each year that notices are mailed. The first time is when an assessor has changed a value as of January 1st and that notice is mailed around July 1st. The Board of Review is in session for assessment complaints each year from July 1st through September 10th to hear appeals of the assessor's changes and also to hear appeals on any property. Once the assessment year has ended, after December 31st, the Board of Review prepares a sales study that compares the sale price of each property to its assessed value. This annual comparison is a report card of sorts for the accuracy of the assessor's work. A three year sales study is generated for each township and the three year study is the basis for the next assessment change.

The second time the assessments are changed is in February of the following year. This is the final part of the valuation process that began on the previous January 1st. Township assessor changes are the preferred way to adjust property values since they are applied to similar kinds of properties. The February Board of Review multipliers are blanket increases that tend to make assessments less uniform. After the Board of Review multipliers are applied only the portion of the assessment related to the February increase can be appealed. That appeal must be done at the state level by applying to the Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board (PTAB) within thirty days of receiving the Board of Review notice in February.

Property owners have several opportunities to be involved with the determination of the value proper value. The full value of a property can only be appealed during the summer appeal time. Appeal decisions are rendered by the local Board of Review in the fall. However, if not satisfied with the local board an owner may appeal to PTAB.

In Champaign County our assessment officials are responsible for the values on the left-hand side of your property tax bill. We handle the assessments and we grant special exemptions as allowed by law. However, our part is only 50% of your tax bill. Take a close look at the taxing bodies listed on the right-hand side of your tax bill. These taxing bodies all hold budget hearings and final tax levy hearings every fall before the tax rates are calculated. The public should take notice that when levy bodies raise their amounts by more than 1.05%, they are required to hold a special public hearing. These hearings are the forgotten appeal process that taxpayers can participate in each year. Even if the assessment officials kept all assessments the same, the levy bodies can call for more monies to operate. The challenge for taxpayers is to get involved and find out how

You Can Make A Difference in Property Taxes!