

UPDATED PROPERTY TAX INFORMATION NOW AVAILABLE FOR TEXAS PROPERTY OWNERS

Ellis County - New and updated property tax information has just been compiled by Ellis Appraisal District and is available now to assist property owners. This property tax information is current and covers a wide range of topics, such as property owner remedies, exemptions, appraisals, and has information for select groups, such as disabled veterans and persons age 65 or older.

“Whether you are a homeowner, business owner, disabled veteran or a property owner, it’s important you know your rights concerning the property tax laws.” said Kathy Rodrigue, Chief Appraiser of the Ellis Appraisal District. “You can contact us about any property tax issues with full confidence that we will provide you the most complete, accurate and up-to-date information to assist you.”

This includes information about the following programs:

- **Property Tax Exemptions for Disabled Veterans** - The law provides partial exemptions for any property owned by disabled veterans or surviving spouses and surviving children of deceased disabled veterans. Another partial exemption is for homesteads donated to disabled veterans by charitable organizations at no cost or not more than 50% of the good faith estimate of the homestead’s market value to a disabled veteran and their surviving spouse. The exemption amount is determined according to percentage of service-connected disability. The law also provides a 100% homestead exemption for 100% disabled veterans and their surviving spouses and for surviving spouses of U.S. armed service members killed in action.
- **Property Tax Exemptions** – Non-profit organizations that meet statutory requirements may seek property tax exemptions and must apply to the appraisal district by a specific date. Businesses that receive tax abatements granted by taxing units; ship inventory out of Texas that may be eligible for the freeport exemption; store certain goods in transit in warehouses that are moved within 175 days; construct install or acquire pollution control property; own and operate energy storage systems; convert landfill-generated gas; or store offshore drilling equipment while not in use may also be eligible for statutory exemptions.
- **Rendering Taxable Property** - If a business owns tangible personal property that is used to produce income, the business must file a rendition with the appraisal district by April 15th (because of COVID-19 the appraisal district has extended the deadline to May 15th). Personal property includes inventory and equipment used by a business. Owners do not have to render exempt property such as church property or an agriculture producer’s equipment used for farming.
- **Appraisal Notices** – If a property owner’s property value increases \$1,000 over last year, their property is in a reappraisal area, they have rendered, or they are a new owner by January 1, they will receive a notice of appraised value from the appraisal district. The city, county, school districts and other local taxing units will use the appraisal district’s value and adopt their respective property tax rates for the coming year.
- **Property Taxpayer Remedies** – This Comptroller publication explains in detail how to protest a property appraisal, what issues the appraisal review board (ARB) can consider and what to expect during a protest hearing. The publication also discusses the options of taking a property owner’s case to district court, binding arbitration, or in some cases the State Office of Administrative Hearings if the property owner is dissatisfied with the outcome of the ARB hearing.
- **Homestead Exemptions** – A homestead is generally defined as the home and land used as the owner’s principal residence on Jan. 1 of the tax year. A homestead exemption reduces the appraised value of the home, and as a result, lowers property taxes. Applications are **FREE** and available at the appraisal district or at the website listed below and submitted to the appraisal district.
- **Productivity Appraisal** – Property owners who use land for timberland production, agricultural

purposes or wildlife management may be granted property tax relief on their land. They may apply to the appraisal district for an agricultural special appraisal which may result in a lower appraisal of the land based on the property production, versus the property's market value.

- **Residence Homestead Tax Deferral** - Texas homeowners may postpone paying the currently delinquent property taxes due on the appreciating value of their homes by filing a tax deferral affidavit at the appraisal district. This tax relief allows homeowners to pay the property taxes on 105 percent of the preceding year's appraised value of their homestead, plus the taxes on any new improvements to the homestead. The remaining taxes are postponed, but not cancelled, with interest accruing at 8 percent per year.
- **Property Tax Deferral for Persons Age 65 or Older or Disabled or Disabled Veteran Homeowners** – Texans who are 65 or older or disabled, as defined by law, or who qualify for a disabled veteran exemption may postpone paying current and delinquent property taxes on their homes by signing a tax deferral affidavit. Once the affidavit is on file, taxes are deferred, but not cancelled, as long as the owner continues to own and live in the home. Interest continues to accrue at 5 percent on unpaid taxes. You may obtain a deferral affidavit at the appraisal district.
- **Notice of Availability of Electronic Communication** – In appraisal districts located in counties with more than 200,000 populations or that have authorized electronic communications and that have implemented a system that allows such communications, chief appraisers and ARBs may communicate electronically through email or other media with property owners or their designated representatives. Written agreements are required for notices and other documents to be delivered electronically instead of mailing.
- **Protesting Property Appraisal Values** – Property owners who disagree with the appraisal district's appraisal of their property or any other action that adversely affects them may protest to the Appraisal Review Board (ARB). Ellis Appraisal District offers online appeals or informal discussions by phone or email (COVID-19 will likely preclude in office discussions) with a staff member once a protest is filed. Many times protests can be settled online or informally, but if not, property owners will be notified of a date/time for a hearing with the ARB. (COVID-19 may cause hearings to be limited to affidavit, phone or possibly video conference – we are still exploring all options.)
- **Ellis Appraisal District and Your Taxing Units both have a role in your property taxes:**

<u>Taxable Values as certified by the Appraisal District</u>	X	Annual Adopted Tax Rates
100		by <u>Each Taxing Units</u>

Just as you are notified about your market/appraised value by the Appraisal District, this year in August, each property owner will also receive a postcard directing them to an Internet website from which the owner may access information related to the actions taken or proposed to be taken by Each Taxing Unit in which the property is located that may affect the taxes imposed on the owner's property.

For more information about these programs, contact the Ellis Appraisal District by:

Visiting our website at: www.elliscad.com or www.elliscad.org

Giving us a call at: 972-937-3552 or Toll Free 1-866-348-3552

Coming to visit us at: 400 Ferris Avenue, Waxahachie, TX 75165 (After COVID-19 restrictions are lifted)

Or faxing or mailing questions to us at: Fax 972-937-1618
P O Box 878, Waxahachie, TX 75168-0878

We look forward to the opportunity to serve you.

More information is also available from the Texas Comptroller's Property Tax Assistance Division's website at comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/property-tax/ or at (800) 252-9121.