

# Daily Herald

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PADDOCK PUBLICATION

## Tax rates slip; what you owe might not

BY BOB SUSNJARA

Daily Herald Staff Writer

Tax rates from most local governments in Lake County are slowly eroding, but that doesn't automatically translate into less cash coming out of your wallet.

That's because while tax rates slide, property values in the county are rising. Whether you'll catch a break this year depends on where you live.

For example, typical tax bills should be down in Vernon Hills and Wauconda. Residents in Grayslake and Antioch are among those who should receive higher bills.

Tax bills were sent to Lake County residents Wednesday, with the first equal installment due June 6 and the second Sept. 6. Some property owners pay their taxes as part of monthly mortgages, so not everyone forks out twice a year.

Bills might not go up as much this year — or even drop — due to the new \$5,000 homestead exemption, said Wayne Wasyko, Lake County's director of tax extension. The exemption had been \$3,500 in Lake County, until a change in state law last July.

Wasyko said tax-cap regulations mostly ensure declining rates when assessed valuations rise. And, a declining tax rate doesn't always ensure a slimmer bill, he added.

Here's how it would work under a hypothetical situation:

A government might cut its tax rate from 35 cents to 33 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation. But any potential savings could be negated if a home were to rise in value from \$200,000 to \$250,000.

"Every year, the assessed value of property goes up," Wasyko said.

One example of rising land value and a declining tax rate combining to produce more revenue is at the Vernon Hills Park District.

District residents will pay 34 cents per \$100 of equalized

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# Tax: Some must adjust to hikes OK'd in April

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assessed valuation in the 2004 tax year.

That figure is down 7 percent compared with the 37 cents charged in 2003.

"I think it's pretty amazing," Vernon Hills parks Executive Director Larry DeGraaf said of his district's declining tax rate. "In spite of all the growth and things we have accomplished, our tax rate goes down."

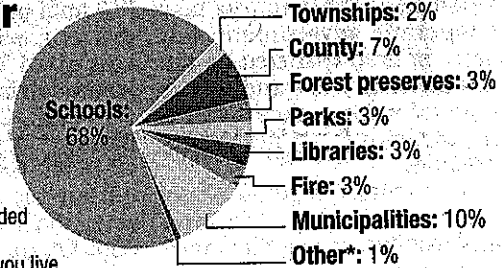
Land value within Vernon Hills park system boundaries jumped from \$930 million to \$1 billion. The park district will receive about \$3.4 million in property taxes.

Meanwhile, some Lake County residents must prepare to pay for tax increases they approved just last month.

Grass Lake Elementary District 36 and Deerfield Elementary District 109 already have increases on the new 2004 tax bills.

In the Antioch area, the owner of a \$200,000 home in

## Where your property tax money goes



Percentages are rounded and can vary slightly depending on where you live.

\*Includes: Sanitary, mosquito abatement and special districts.

Source: Lake County administrator's office

DAILY HERALD

District 36 will pay an extra \$400 to the school district. (847) 377-2400.

Questions about property taxes may be directed to the Lake County clerk's office at

• Daily Herald staff writer Mick Zawislak contributed to this report.

## Lake County tax rates

Per \$100 assessed valuation

Taxing body	2003	2004	% Change
Antioch	\$0.925	\$0.867	-6.3%
Antioch Elementary School D34	\$3.126	\$3.225	3.2%
Antioch High School D117	\$2.302	\$2.442	6.1%
Antioch Public Library District	\$0.260	\$0.253	-2.7%
Antioch Township	\$0.236	\$0.113	-52.1%
Avon Township	\$0.082	\$0.067	-18.3%
Big Hollow Elementary D36	\$2.180	\$2.521	15.6%
Central Lake County Joint Action Water Agency	\$0.058	\$0.054	-6.9%
College of Lake County	\$0.201	\$0.200	-0.5%
Emmons School District 33	\$2.875	\$2.777	-3.4%
Fox Lake	\$0.996	\$0.980	-1.6%
Fox Lake Elementary D114	\$2.527	\$2.487	-1.6%
Fox Lake Fire Protection District	\$0.311	\$0.300	-3.5%
Fox Lake Public Library District	\$0.171	\$0.170	-0.6%
Fremont D79	\$2.635	\$2.572	-2.4%
Fremont Public Library District	\$0.349	\$0.336	-3.7%
Fremont Township	\$0.165	\$0.115	-30.3%
Gavin Elementary D37	\$2.820	\$3.065	8.7%
Grant High School D124	\$2.110	\$2.139	1.4%
Grant Township	\$0.303	\$0.168	-44.6%
Grass Lake School District 36	\$2.188	\$2.684	22.7%
Grayslake	\$0.444	\$0.447	0.7%
Grayslake D46	\$3.620	\$3.651	0.9%
Grayslake Fire Protection District	\$0.447	\$0.474	6.0%
Grayslake High School D127	\$3.051	\$3.233	5.6%
Grayslake Library	\$0.359	\$0.369	2.8%
Grayslake Park District	\$0.325	\$0.375	15.4%
Greater Round Lake Fire Protection District	\$0.648	\$0.709	9.4%
Gurnee	NA	NA	NA
Gurnee D56	\$3.473	\$3.383	-2.6%
Gurnee Park District	\$0.370	\$0.374	1.1%
Hainesville	\$0.468	\$0.614	31.2%
Lake County	\$0.490	\$0.465	-5.1%
Lake County Forest Preserve District	\$0.220	\$0.219	-0.5%
Lake Villa	\$0.778	\$0.778	0.0%
Lake Villa D41	\$3.012	\$2.970	-1.4%
Lake Villa Public Library District	\$0.451	\$0.452	0.2%
Lake Villa Township	\$0.198	\$0.143	-27.6%
Lakemoor	\$0.319	\$0.333	4.4%
Lakes Region Sanitary District	\$0.203	\$0.198	-2.5%
Lindenhurst	\$0.241	\$0.244	1.2%
Lindenhurst Park District	\$0.260	\$0.301	15.8%
Lindenhurst Sanitary District	\$0.031	\$0.032	3.2%
McHenry Elementary D15	\$2.261	\$2.529	11.9%
McHenry High School D156	\$1.717	\$1.903	10.8%
Millium D24	\$3.493	\$3.476	-0.5%
Mundelein High School D120	\$2.260	\$2.198	-2.7%
Newport Township	\$0.234	\$0.087	-62.8%
North Shore Sanitary District	\$0.144	\$0.139	-3.5%
Round Lake	\$1.005	\$0.928	-7.7%
Round Lake Area Library District	\$0.374	\$0.384	2.7%
Round Lake Area Park District	\$0.520	\$0.514	-1.2%
Round Lake Beach	\$0.473	\$0.494	4.4%
Round Lake Heights	\$0.158	\$0.200	6.4%
Round Lake Park	\$0.921	\$0.494	-46.4%
Round Lake Sanitary District	NA	NA	NA
Round Lake School D116	\$5.533	\$5.585	0.9%
Third Lake	\$0.146	\$0.138	-5.5%
Volo	\$0.342	\$0.293	-14.3%
Warren Township	\$0.310	\$0.199	-35.8%
Warren Township High School D121	\$1.704	\$1.730	1.6%
Warren-Newport Public Library	\$0.243	\$0.239	-1.6%
Wauconda Fire Protection District	\$0.450	\$0.450	0.0%
Wauconda Library District	\$0.389	\$0.375	-3.6%
Wauconda Park District	\$0.368	\$0.354	-3.8%
Wauconda Township	\$0.211	\$0.171	-19.0%
Wauconda Unit D118	\$4.401	\$3.889	-11.6%
Woodland D50	\$3.392	\$3.330	-1.8%

### Typical tax bills

<b>Gurnee (total rate)</b>	7.449	7.236	-2.8%
<b>Typical tax bill</b>	\$5,326	\$5,228	-1.8%
Based on a typical home in the village of Gurnee and township of Warren, inside Gurnee Elementary District 56 and Warren Township High School District 121, using the Warren-Newport Public Library District, North Shore Sanitation District, Gurnee Park District and the Central Lake County Joint Action Water Agency with a home selling price of \$225,000 in 2003 that increased by 3 percent to \$231,750 in 2004 with a \$3,500 homeowners exemption in 2003 that increased to \$5,000 in 2004.			
<b>Grayslake (total rate)</b>	9.593	9.779	1.9%
<b>Typical tax bill</b>	\$6,539	\$6,800	3.9%
Based on a typical home in the village of Grayslake and the township of Avon, inside Grayslake Elementary District 46 and Grayslake High School District 127, using the Round Lake Area Park District, the Grayslake Public Library, the Grayslake Fire Protection District and the Central Lake County Joint Action Water Agency with a home selling price of \$215,000 in 2003 that increased by 4 percent to \$223,600 in 2004 with a \$3,500 homeowners exemption in 2003 that increased to \$5,000 in 2004.			
<b>Round Lake (total rate)</b>	9.222	9.211	0.1%
<b>Typical tax bill</b>	\$5,057	\$5,074	0.3%
Based on a typical home in the village of Round Lake and township of Avon, inside Round Lake Area Unit District 116, using Round Lake Area Public Library, Round Lake Area Park District, the Greater Round Lake Area Fire Protection District and the Central Lake County Joint Action Water Agency with a home selling price of \$175,000 in 2003 that increased by 3 percent to \$180,250 in 2004 with a \$3,500 homeowners exemption in 2003 that increased to \$5,000 in 2004.			
<b>Antioch (total rate)</b>	7.748	8.003	3.3%
<b>Typical tax bill</b>	\$4,507	\$4,683	3.9%
Based on a typical home in the village and township of Antioch, inside Antioch Elementary District 34 and Antioch High School District 117, using the Antioch Public Library District with a home selling price of \$185,000 in 2003 that increased by 3 percent to \$190,550 in 2004 with a \$3,500 homeowners exemption in 2003 that increased to \$5,000 in 2004.			

Source: Lake County clerk

# Here's a reason to covet thy neighbor's tax bill

Those on McHenry side of Lakemoor will see slight decrease in rates

By SCOTT RAY  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Lakemoor residents will soon find their property tax bills in the mail, but where they live will determine whether they see an increase in their tax rates.

While all residents living within the same governmental district have access to the same services, what those homeowners pay in taxes could fluctuate.

Residents living on the McHenry County side of this town that straddles the border between Lake and McHenry counties will see a slight decrease in their tax rates, while residents living on the Lake County side will see an increase over last year's tax rates for the same services.

For instance, depending on which side of the street a homeowner lives on in the Lakemoor Farms subdivision, they could have a higher tax rate than their neighbor.

Lake County homeowners living in the subdivision, off Route 120, will see an 11.9 percent increase in the tax rate for McHenry Elementary District 15 over what it was last year, while McHenry County homeowners in the same subdivision and school district will see a 4.1 percent drop in the rate.

McHenry County residents will also see their Lakemoor village tax rate drop 4.4 percent, while Lake County residents will see that rate increase by 4.4 percent. Lake County residents will pay a higher rate to McHenry High School District 156 and to other taxing districts compared to their McHenry County counterparts.

## McHenry County tax rates

Per \$100 assessed valuation

Taxing body	2003	2004	% Change
McHenry County	\$7.153	\$7.746	+2.7
McHenry County Conservation Dist.	\$1.663	\$1.580	-5.0
Village of Island Lake	\$4.972	\$4.922	-1.0
Village of Lakemoor	\$3.287	\$3.144	-4.4
Crystal Lake Elementary Dist. 47	\$2.9933	\$2.8927	-3.4
Crystal Lake High School Dist. 155	\$2.0433	\$1.9780	-3.2
McHenry Elementary Dist. 15	\$2.3241	\$2.2280	-4.1
Barrington Unit Dist. 220	\$3.5224	\$3.7893	+7.6
McHenry County College Dist. 528	\$3.130	\$3.303	-3.1
McHenry Twp.	\$1.345	\$1.313	-2.5
McHenry Twp. Road & Bridge	\$2.445	\$2.384	-2.5
Nunda Twp.	\$0.788	\$0.6767	-2.7
Nunda Twp. Road and Bridge	\$2.247	\$2.285	-2.6
Nunda Twp. Cemetery	\$0.013	\$0.013	+0.0
McHenry Fire Dist.	\$4.151	\$4.173	+0.5
Nunda Rural Fire Dist.	\$5.294	\$5.328	+0.6
Wauconda Fire Dist.	\$4.195	\$3.858	-12.8
McHenry Library Dist.	\$2.414	\$2.371	-1.8
McHenry Nunda Library Dist.	\$1.374	\$1.326	-3.5
Wauconda Area Library Dist.	\$3.574	\$3.853	+7.8
Barrington Countryside Park Dist.	\$0.246	\$0.276	+12.2
Barrington Library Dist.	\$1.941	\$1.971	+1.5

Source: McHenry County clerk

The discrepancies in tax rates are caused by Lake County's using estimated, rather than actual, figures of a taxing district's assessed valuation, according to Shaughn Muldowney, McHenry County's tax extender.

The overall assessed valuation in both counties has increased, which can lower tax rates. But Lake County's estimates this year are based on last year's assessed values.

Lake County used estimated figures to speed up the processing of tax bills, said Wayne Wasylo, Lake County's tax

extender.

Although some residents will pay a higher rate this year, the bills will be adjusted to correct the matter on next year's bills, Wasylo said.

"In the long run, everything evens out," he said.

Lakemoor's situation is not unique. Fluctuation in rates routinely arises in other border towns. Portions of Barrington Hills, Harper College and other taxing districts along the Cook and McHenry border are also affected by the differing county schedules, fluctuating rates from county to county.