



Cheryl E. Johnson, RTA
Galveston County Tax Assessor Collector
722 Moody Avenue, Galveston, Texas 77550
Toll Free All Departments 1-877-766-2284
galcotax@co.galveston.tx.us



Lower Your Property Tax Burden!

Each October you receive a love letter from the county tax office (in the form of a tax bill) and in April you may receive one from the appraisal district (in the form of a notice of appraisal increase). If you need *a little less love*, attend one of the free "Effectively Protest Your Property Value" classes listed below. Don't have an hour and half to attend, follow the simple steps below. No matter what path you take, do something! The statistics reveal that 95% of those who show up benefit from some level of reduction in value – resulting in lower property taxes, so, you have nothing to lose and potentially much to gain – or keep! Further, as a responsible property owner, you have a duty to confirm the information maintained by the CAD is accurate.

Your value will increase if it has been improved (added onto or if lowered recently due to condition, the CAD will assume you completed repairs) or if an adequate number of sales have occurred in the neighborhood that indicate property values are increasing.

If there is an error in the records, you actually paid less (recently) than the appraisal notice indicates, the physical condition is below average for similar properties or the value is higher than others in your neighborhood, you should schedule a meeting with a CAD appraiser (informal conference).

How do you determine whether it is worth your time?

1. Go online to www.galvestoncad.org, locate your property record and print the Datasheet. Better yet, email the GCAD from the website (Contact Us) and request your property "appraisal card." This "card" contains more detailed information than the online version including a sketch of your property. Other options? Visit the GCAD at the Mid-County Annex, 9850 Emmett F. Lowry Expressway, Ste. A in Texas City to obtain the information. You may be assessed a nominal fee for the copy.
2. Review the information for accuracy
3. Compare your value to others on your street, in your neighborhood or similar houses in the area
 - a. On the CAD website search screen, search by address – using just your street name
 - b. Compare your property to others on the street using the spreadsheet available at www.galcotax.com (2014.NeighborhoodComparisonWorksheet). Adjust for differences in size and improvements (i.e. carport versus enclosed garage, deck versus patio, et
4. Call for an appointment with a CAD appraiser before May 31st or 30 days from the date of your appraisal notice. **You do NOT have to receive a notice to meet with an appraiser to protest your property value!**

The CAD uses statistical analysis to determine the value of over 180,000 properties throughout the county. Your goal will be to demonstrate why yours is not like the others in the defined neighborhood. Find the properties you are compared to by locating your neighborhood map on the GCAD website.

For additional information, attend a class – all begin at 6 pm and last less than two hours, depending upon class participation and questions. You will learn techniques – not tricks – and gain a good understanding of the Texas tax process. Updated information will be posted on the GCTO website by April 1, 2014.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
4/22/14	Galveston County Courthouse, 722 Moody (21st St), Galveston
5/1/14	Fine Arts Auditorium Room F-117, COM, 1200 Amburn Road, Texas City
5/15/14	Judge McCumber's Courtroom, North County Annex, 174 Calder Drive, League City
5/17/14	West Galveston Island Property Owners Association Meeting, 9 am, Galveston Country Club, 14228 Stewart Rd, Galveston
5/20/14	Galveston County Courthouse, 722 Moody (21st St), Galveston

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