

Office of the Assessor

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Glossary

Access Code or (BIN)	A distinct and private identification code used for e filing without which online access will not be possible. (BIN - Business Identification Number).
Ad Valorem Property Tax	Taxes imposed on the basis of the property's assessed value.
Assessed Value	The taxable value of a property against which the tax rate is applied. Since 1981-82, the assessed value is 100% of the property's value pursuant to the provisions of the Revenue and Taxation Code. In prior years, the assessed value was 25% of the full cash value.
Assessee	The person to whom the property or a tax is being assessed.
Assessment Appeal	The assessee may file an appeal for reduction of the assessed value on the current local roll during the regular filing period for that year, between July 2 and September 15 with the Clerk of the Board. For supplemental or escape assessments, appeals must be filed within 60 days of the mailing of the tax bill or receipt of the notice, whichever is earlier.
Assessment Appeals Board	A three member panel appointed by the Board of Supervisors, operating under State law, to review and adjust assessments upon request of a taxpayer or his or her agent. (See "assessment appeal")
Assessment Roll	The official list of all property within the County assessed by the Assessor.
Assessment Roll Year	The year following the annual lien date and the regular assessment of property, beginning on July 1.
Audit Escape	The discovery of escape property resulting from an audit of the books and records of a profession, trade or business, for which an assessment is levied outside of the normal assessment period for the lien date in question.
Base Year (Value)	The 1975-76 regular roll value serves as the original base value. Thereafter, changes to the assessment on real property value, or a portion thereof, caused by new construction or changes in ownership create the base year value used in establishing the full cash value of such real property.

Basic Aid	"Basic aid" school districts rely principally on locally derived property tax revenues to fund school operations, rather than on Statewide reallocation formulas based on average daily attendance and other factors. School districts become "basic aid" when the projected level of revenues provided by local property taxes exceeds the state formula.
Business Personal Property	Business personal property is assessable, and includes computers, supplies, office furniture and equipment, tooling, machinery and equipment. Most business inventory is exempt. (see personal property)
Business Property Statement (Form BOE-571-L)	A state Board of Equalization (BOE) prescribed form businesses use to report costs and other related information to their local county Assessor.
Change in Ownership	When a transfer of ownership in Real Property occurs, the Assessor determines if a reappraisal is required under State law. If required, the reappraised value becomes the new base value of the property transferred, and a supplemental assessment is enrolled.
CPI	Consumer Price Index as determined annually by the California Bureau of Labor Statistics.
e-File	An electronic record created, generated, sent communicated, received or stored by electronic means through a Web-site.
e-Filing	A web-based application that will allow users to view, modify, and submit filings on-line.
Electronic Signature	An electronic symbol or process logically associated with an electronic record and executed by a person with the intent and full knowledge that the electronic signature constitutes a valid certification of the electronic record.
"Escape" Assessment	An assessment made outside the "regular" assessment period to correct for property that was undervalued or not valued at all during the regular assessment period.
Exclusions from Reappraisal	Some changes in ownership may be excluded from reappraisal if a timely claim is filed with the Assessor's Office that meets the qualifications. Examples include the transfer of real property between parents and children, or senior citizens over age 55 who replace their principal residence.
Exemption	Allowance of a deduction from the taxable assessed value of the property as prescribed by law.
Exemptions: Homeowners	People who own and occupy a dwelling on the lien date as their principal place of residence are eligible to receive an exemption of up to \$7,000 of the dwelling's taxable value. The tax dollars reduced by the (HOX) homeowner's exemption are subvented by the State of California.
Exemptions: Other	All property in California, not exempt under the laws of the United States or of this State, is subject to

taxation. Constitutional, or 'other', exemptions include religious and church exemptions, college, cemetery, hospital, museum, public schools, and welfare.

Factored Base Year Value	A property's base value is adjusted each year by the change in the California Consumer Price Index (CPI), not to exceed 2%. The adjusted base value is the upper limit of taxable value each year.
Fiscal Year	The period beginning July 1 and ending June 30.
Fixture	An improvement to real property whose purpose directly applies to or augments the process or function of a trade, industry or profession.
Full Cash Value (FCV)	The amount of cash or its equivalent value which property would bring if exposed for sale in the open market and as further defined in Revenue and Taxation Code 110.1.
Improvements	Buildings or structures generally attached to the land. Improvements may also include certain business fixtures.
Lien	The amount owed and created by the assessment of the property, or the amount levied against property by a taxing agency or revenue district.
Lien Date	The time when taxes for any fiscal year become a lien on property; and the time as of which property is valued for tax purposes. The lien date for California property is 12:01 a.m. on January 1st (effective January 1, 1997) preceding the fiscal year for which the taxes are collected. The lien date for prior years was March 1.
Mobilehomes	On July 1, 1980, the Department of Motor Vehicles transferred all mobilehome licensing and registration to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The law requires that mobilehomes be classified as personal property and enrolled on the secured roll.
Net Assessed Value	Taxable amount of assessed property; the total assessed value minus exemptions
New Base Year (Value)	The full cash value of property on the date it changes ownership or when new construction is completed.
New Construction	The construction of new buildings, additions to existing buildings, or alterations which convert the property to another use or extends the economic life of the improvement, is reassessed, establishing a new base year value for only that portion of the property.
Parcel	Real property assessment unit. Land that is segregated into units by boundary lines for assessment purposes.

Personal Property	Any property except real estate, including airplanes, boats, and business property such as computers, supplies, furniture, machinery and equipment. (Most business inventory, household furnishings, personal effects, and pets are exempt from taxation.)
Possessory Interest (PI)	The possession or the right to possession of real estate whose fee title is held by a tax exempt public agency. Examples of a PI include the exclusive right to use public property at an airport such as a car rental company's service counter or a concession stand at the County Fair. In both cases, the vendors are subject to property taxes. Regardless of the type of document evidencing the right to possession, a taxable PI exists whenever a private party has the exclusive right to a beneficial use of tax exempt publicly owned real property.
Proposition 13	Passed by California voters in June, 1978, Proposition 13 is a Constitutional amendment that limits the taxation of property and creates a procedure for establishing the current taxable value of locally assessed real property, referencing a base year full cash value.
Proposition 8	Passed by California voters in November 1978, Proposition 8 allows for the temporary reduction in the assessed value when there is a decline in market value below the property's factored base year value.
Real Property	Land and improvements to the land, which permits the possession of, claim to, ownership of, or right to possess.
Roll	A listing of all assessed property within the county. It identifies property, the owner, and the assessed value of the property.
Roll Unit	A parcel of property or a business personal property account that is assessed for annual valuation.
Roll Year	See "Assessment Roll Year."
SBE	See "State Board of Equalization."
Schedule "A" of Form BOE-571-L	A page of the form used by the filer to provide a detailed list of equipment by classification with costs accumulated by year of acquisition. Includes machinery and equipment used for industry, profession or trade, office equipment, and computers and computer related equipment.
Schedule "B" of Form BOE-571-L	A page of the form used by the filer to provide a detailed list of building costs; building improvement costs; trade and process related fixtures; leasehold improvement costs; land improvement costs; land and land development costs, all with costs accumulated by year of acquisition.
Schedule "D"	A supplemental record for reporting the detail of acquisitions and disposals of property reported on

(Form 571-D)	Schedule B of the Business Property Statement (form BOE-571-L).
Secured Roll	Property on which the property taxes are a lien against the real estate.
Special Assessments	Direct charges, or flat fees against property which are included in the total tax bill but are not based upon the Assessor's valuation of the property. Examples are a sewer charge or a school parcel tax.
State Board of Equalization	The State Board consists of four members elected by California voters by district, and the State Controller whose duties in the field of taxation are imposed by the State Constitution and the Legislature. The State Board regulates county assessment practices and administers a variety of State and local business tax programs.
Supplemental Assessment	When property is assessed due to a change in ownership or completed new construction, a supplemental assessment is issued. This is separate and in addition to the annual regular assessment roll. It is based on the net difference between the previous assessed values and the new value for the remainder of the assessment year(s).
Supplemental Roll	The roll, prepared or amended, contains properties which a change in ownership or completed new construction occurred.
Tax Rates	The maximum ad valorem (on the value) basic property tax rate is 1% of the net taxable value of the property. The total tax rate may be higher for various properties because of voter-approved general obligation bonds that are secured by property taxes for the annual payment of principle and interest.
Tax Roll	The official list of property subject to property tax, together with the amount of assessed value and the amount of taxes due, as applied and extended by the Auditor/Controller.
TRA	The tax rate area (TRA) is a specific geographic area all of which is within the jurisdiction of the same combination of local agencies for the current fiscal year. There are over 3,200 TRAs in Santa Clara County, each one identified by a unique number.
Transfer	Change in the ownership of, or change in the manner which, property is held. Depending on the specific situation, a transfer may trigger a reassessment of the property.
Unsecured Roll	Property on which the property taxes are not a lien against the real estate (real property) where they are situated, including personal property or improvements located on leased land.
Web Site	A site (location) on the World Wide Web. Each site is owned and managed by an individual, company or organization